

Oh that I knew where I might find him (Quality Average)

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- [0 : 00] I will direct your attention to the 23rd chapter of the book of Job, and verses 3, 4, and 5.
- The 23rd chapter of the book of Job, verses 3, 4, and 5. O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat.
- I would order my calls before him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.
- O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat. I would order my calls before him and fill my mouth with arguments.
- I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. The gracious Spirit of God has left this remarkable yet solemn account of the dealings of one of his children, one of God's children.
- [1 : 36] It's left on record for our instruction. And it is a very deep and a very solemn account, really.
- Job, by God's word, was a good man, an upright man.
- He was one that feared God and assumed evil. He was also a very prosperous man in this world.
- His substance was very great.
- He cared for the souls of his own children. He took them to the throne of grace. He watched over their path when perhaps they were unconcerned.
- [2 : 58] And when they met, as the scripture tells us in that first chapter, when they met in each other's house to feast and to drink wine, Job cared for them enough that he prayed for them.
- And he rose up early in the morning, offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, And it may be that my sons of sinned and cursed God in their heart.
- Thus did Job continually. A very gracious father then, who cared not only for the providential concerns of his children, but also for their soul.
- Lest they should sinned against God. But, you know, Job and all the people of God from when time began until time finishes, have an enemy.
- Have one that watches over their path from a different way perhaps than Job. But, is in opposition to them.
- [4 : 12] And against the work of grace in their soul. Job is an illustration to us that even though he prospered in life, even though he feared God and was upright, even though he was such a gracious person, yet Satan noted him, saw him, and came against him in very severe opposition.

It is also noticeable, in fact I don't think I've ever seen it quite like that before, until I read it just now. When Satan had that conversation with the Lord, the Lord said, Hast thou considered my servant Job?

And Satan said, Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? And so on.

It would have appeared as if Satan, at other times, would have touched him, and had caused him these tribulated pathways, but there was a hedge about him.

Job, his own soul was safe in the hands of God. It was safe because it was saved. But the things that surrounded Job, Satan was permitted to touch.

[5 : 38] It's a very solemn chapter, I believe, that first chapter of Job, because the things that happened to Job, and to those that were connected with him, happened in a day.

And if you read from the thirteenth verse onward, you will see there that it was in a day, all such things happened. First, the oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding, and the surveillance fell upon them, and took them away.

While he was yet speaking, something else happened. The fire of God fell from heaven, and burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them. And while he was yet speaking, there came another that said, the Chaldeans came, and fell upon the camels, and carried them away, and slain the servants, with the edge of the sword.

Well, those were the things of providence. Those were the things that Job possessed. Those were the things, that was more able to be parted with.

But then came the worst news. And while he was yet speaking, his sons and his daughters, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters, were eating and drinking wine, in their eldest brother's house.

[6 : 58] And there came a great wind, from the wilderness, and smoked the four corners, of the house. And it fell upon the young men, and they are dead. God saw fit to permit Satan, to touch the nearest and dearest, things, that was in Job's heart.

Though he had prayed for them continually, though he had offered burnt offerings, lest they should have sinned against God, and cursed God in their hearts.

Yet God permitted Satan, to touch their lives. And they were no more. The account then of Job, is a very serious and solemn account.

It's something perhaps, that is not often looked at, because it is, an account where God has given, divine permission, if that's the way to, explain it, to Satan, to touch, Job, and, the people of God, and, the things that concern them.

And, some of the things then, that Job uttered in those chapters, since, that happened, and after this chapter, well, one could understand Job, in his bitterness, and his sadness, and his feelings, in this great trial.

[8 : 24] And then, of course, in chapter 2, Satan touched his own body, with boils, from the sole of his foot, and to the crown of his head. He was the mark of Satan, was Job, and all God's people are too.

You may not, be led into the pathway of Job, in that great way, and extent that Job was, but in your measure, and in my measure, if you've not got opposition, if you've not got Satan, to oppose you, and if Satan doesn't use his agents, to come against you, with one way or another, I would, indeed wonder, whether God's grace, is in our hearts.

Well, Job had opposition, he had an enemy, he had two armies, within his heart. His own old nature, and he had, the gracious nature, that God gives his people.

But, what struck me, particularly, about this, these words, which I have, by way of text, Job having lost, all those things, having, fell under, this great, and deep trial, losing his children, losing, losing those things, which, made up his riches, in those times, those, animals, his, his, substance, having lost all that, what is Job's answer, to all this?

Oh, that I knew, where I might, find him. perhaps, if you, came across, someone in, the world, that had lost, something near and dear, there would have been, a desire to recover, those things, which were lost.

[10 : 18] But the greatest, grief, that Job had, my friends, was an absent God. That was the greatest, grief, that Job had. The Lord, evidently, had hid his face.

His presence, was not felt, with Job, at that time. And so, Job's complaint, was in this, in the words, of our text, Oh, that I knew, where I might, find him.

Yes, he had lost, a lot of things. He had lost, things which were, very close to his heart. He had lost, his own children. Satan was permitted, to touch, his own body, and bring him, into deep affliction.

But his grief was, that he had lost, his God. He had lost, his presence. Job's soul, was eternally safe. If you notice, what, God said to Satan, but touch, not his life.

Job was not permitted, Satan was not permitted, to touch his life, to remove his life. He was not, permitted, to, allow Job, to sin, that, unpardonable sin.

[11 : 37] He was kept, he was stopped, in that, final act of, evil against Job. But Job, in his sorrow, the greatest things, he saw it, was, that, he didn't know, where God was.

Oh, that I knew, where I might find him, that I might come, even to his seat. A chapter or two, previous to this, Job was in a better frame.

he, he, was, in answer to, many of the complaints, of his friends, and they, came and spoke to him, of all the things, that had happened, and, accused him of sinning, and various other things.

But, prior to this chapter, that we, this text, that we have, he, finds something, in his affliction, that many do not know, in prosperity.

And, the blessings, that God had, granted him, at that time. He says this, amongst, many things, Oh, that my words, were now written, oh, that they were, printed in a book, that they were, graven with the iron pen, and lead in the rock, forever.

[12 : 59] And, this was the blessing, that Job knew. For I know, that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth. And, though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh, shall I see God, whom I shall see, for myself.

And, mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins, be consumed, within me. Now then, in your trials, and tribulations, that would be, a sanctified blessing, if you knew, that after this, time, state that you were in, was finished, with and dissolved, that you have, in heaven, a Redeemer.

Job believed, in the resurrection, for I know, that my Redeemer, living, and he shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth. And he knew too, that when he died, he would be laid, in a grave.

And that, though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh, shall I see God, whom I shall see, for myself. And mine eyes, shall behold, and not another.

That was the blessing, that was in Job's heart, at that time. And he said this, and too, in deep affliction, and often, the Lord's people, in deep affliction, have to, question even God's work.

[14 : 25] But ye should say, why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter, is found in me. That's why, Satan couldn't touch his soul.

That's why his life, was not taken by Satan. He had the root of the matter. Now, my friends then, you and I, if we are the Lord's people, will walk pathways of tribulation, one way or the other.

The Lord will see fit that it is so. Christ Jesus said, before he went back into heaven, that in the world, ye shall have tribulation. But what did he say before then?

In me, ye shall have peace. Now, Job was now walking a pathway, of deep tribulation. And I say again, his greatest complaint was, that, oh, that I knew, where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat.

There is a hymn that we sometimes sing, and I quote it often these days, because I feel it seems suitable to the people of God.

[15 : 33] Job, Temptations everywhere and I, and sins and snares up make me sigh. My earthly joys are from me tall, and often absent, God I mourn.

Job walked that pathway, friends. Earthly joys were from him tall. And now in this chapter, he mourned an absent God.

Oh, that I knew where I might find him. It's a very beautiful chapter, this 23rd, because although he speaks the feelings of his soul, he says, under the influence of the Lord, the gracious spirit of God, but he speaks also of some certainties.

He says this, would he plead against me with his great power? No, but he would put strength in me. Now that's gracious faith in exercise. When this poor man had lost the presence of his God, and yet he knew that if he could come to his seat, if he could come to the Lord and find his presence with him, and the access to him by prayer, he knew this, that God wouldn't plead against him.

Satan had been against him. His three friends, miserable comforters they were called, seemingly gave no help whatsoever. And yet, he knew if he could get to God with his trouble, this absent God, that God wouldn't plead against him.

[17 : 13] And he then says, oh, that I knew where I might find him. Nothing would satisfy Job, but a return of the presence of the Lord.

Nothing would do Job good. How is it with you this morning? How is it with my soul? As you've come up to the house of God, what have you come to listen for?

Have you come to listen to what God the Lord will speak? Is it with you, as it was with the psalmist? Be not silent unto me, lest if thou be silent unto me, I'll become like them that go down into the pit.

You know, God doesn't speak audibly to the world. He doesn't speak to vain professors. He doesn't speak to those who are nominal professors.

Those who come and go, because they always have, whose duty it is to be found in a house of worship. But he does speak to the people and children of God.

[18 : 20] It's an evidence of grace if he spoke to your soul. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

Job couldn't find him in his trials at this time. Yes, he had been blessed, as we read in that chapter 2 previous. He had a little encouragement.

He saw a little light in his darkness. He knew that when time was to be no more, he would be in heaven with his Redeemer. And that he knew that in that great day of the resurrection, he would be there.

He would be there. And he would be safe, and his soul would be safe. But he's gone back into dark times. Oh, that I knew where I might find him. He'd lost his law.

And I might come even to his seat. Now, what does that mean? Well, there's one place that God has said he will meet his people, and that's the mercy seat.

[19 : 20] That I might come even to his seat. What did God say to Israel of old? There will I meet with thee, and there will I commune with thee, from above the mercy seat.

Now, Job felt that prayer was but empty words. Do you not feel so sometimes? Do you not feel at times when your heart is cold, when trials and troubles seem come against you, that your prayer doesn't go past the ceiling, does it?

That's how it feels. The heavens are like brass, as the scriptures describe them. Well, that's where Job was. So great was his complaint. Even today is my complaint bitter.

My stroke is heavier than my groaning. Well, on such a day as that, he could not find his God. Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat.

It was to Job as if the mercy seat was beyond him. It was as if there was no access to the mercy seat. It was as if he'd lost sight of the way of grace.

[20 : 27] And it seemed to Job as if all things were then hopelessly lost. Oh, that I knew where I might find him. I thought that that dear woman in the gospel, who was in a very similar pathway than Job, apart from these deep trials that cause this feeling of separation from his God.

And that was Mary Magdalene. You may remember that when Christ was crucified and was laid in a tomb, and then the third day rose again, there was those disciples and Mary that went to the open tomb, went to the tomb and found it open.

And you will recall that the disciples then noted these things and went away again to their own home. Job, in his complaint, was that he wished, Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

Mary stood at the sepulchre weeping. And she didn't seem to want to go back home as the disciples did. And those angels that were there, the two angels in white, said to her, Why weepest thou?

Because they've taken away my Lord, and I know not where they've laid him. And she turned herself, when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus.

[22 : 06] Jesus said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She supposed need to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. Now that's all was needed. He didn't need. Jesus didn't. Give her a long dialogue of why she should be so faithless.

Jesus didn't say, Well, didn't I tell you these things before I was crucified on a cross? He didn't go into such details. He spoke one word, and that touched her soul and broke her heart.

If she wept before, it was in grief. If she wept before, it was in love to Jesus. Because Jesus wasn't there. But if she wept afterwards, it was in true love to him.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. Now, I don't know how you are this day. You who fear God in this house of prayer. But there are times in your life when you come into the place in measure that Job did, as did Mary Magdalene, and that you feel an absent God.

[23 : 26] My friends, if you feel an absent God, you've known his presence. You've known the comfort of it. You've known the times of blessing. He's spoken to you, maybe through the word, maybe when you're on your own, in your home, or wherever it might be.

He's communicated to you and to your soul, and you know his voice. But there comes a time in the pathway when he's absent. Well, what causes, first of all, the Lord to absent himself from his people?

Well, there's one real great thing, and one terrible thing, too, that causes the separation between God's people and himself, and that sin.

Why, when you walk the pathway of the people of God, why is it so? You know, when it's left on record in Holy Scripture, that Jesus Christ came to the cross and was crucified on that cross at Calvary, and he says this, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Do you know why? Because it was sin. Not his, ours if we were amongst the people of God. There's, that's why, uh, Christ Jesus realized why it's left on record.

[24 : 52] Uh, because of sin, the Lord saw faith, uh, to absent himself from his very son on the cross. The Jews with thorns his temple crowned and gnashed him when his hands were bound, but thorns and knotted whips and bands by us were furnished to their hands.

They nailed him to the accursed tree. They did, my brethren, so did we. The soldier pierced his side is true, but we have pierced him through and through.

Now, that's why the Lord, uh, hid his face from his own son on the cross. Because he can't look upon sin in any degree of allowance. Because, when Christ was nailed to that tree, he took upon him the sins of all the people of God, the whole election of grace, the whole number that no man could number, the burden of that sin was laid on him.

He suffered in their room place instead. And because of sin, and because that sin was nailed to his cross, God hid his face.

Now, my friends, if you know in your soul, uh, what it is to mourn an absent God, look into your heart, look where you've been, look what you've said, look and ask God to reveal to you why he's absent.

[26 : 28] You feel his absence. You feel, you know, it's the most blessed thing to a poor sinner to feel the presence of Christ. It's the most gracious indication of the Lord's mercy and love when you feel that he is with you.

It might be in tribulation. It might well be in affliction. It might be at some quite surprising moment of your life when you feel the Lord is with you.

You're comforted. You're strengthened by it. And you can go on no matter what is before you, what trial or difficult it is. But you know, you can also feel his absence.

Job felt his absence and he mourned it. And he didn't know where he was. He said in this chapter, Behold, I go forward and he is not there and backward but I cannot perceive him.

On the left hand where he does work but I cannot behold him. He hideth himself on the right hand but I cannot see him. Now that's what Job felt. He looked in providence.

[27 : 32] The left hand, have you looked for God in your left hand blessings? The blessings of providence and you can't see his hand. You can't see him directing you and leading you. And it seems as though he's absent there and you look at the best of blessings, the right hand blessings and it seems as if God's not in your religion.

It sometimes is, my friends, that you come and go to the house of God and you mourn that he's not there with you. I pray, I think every time I stand in a pulpit, that the Lord Jesus may be amongst us and if his presence is here, well it's a waste of time us being here.

Oh that I knew when I might find him that I might come even to his seat. You know, when the Lord begins a gracious work in a sinner's heart and shows them in a measure what they are by nature and the work of the Spirit goes on, you will find that he will give you those desires after him.

You will come and go to the house of God in a far different way than you did before. You'll come seeking a blessing for your soul. You'll come listening for the voice of God to speak mercy to you and as deeper and deeper he shows you what you are and how great your sins are and how unlikely it is and he will lead you along that you will feel in your own soul how unlikely it is that you'll ever have mercy and yet you can't give up listening and you can't give up looking and you can't give up watching and you won't give up waiting either my friends and you'll go out after him and as one dear servant of God used to say he'll be precious to you in the want of him and that's how you'll go and come to the house of God and the day will dawn when he will reveal himself to your soul and then you found him I mentioned to someone yesterday that in in the

Song of Solomon there is that account where of the church seeking in for Jesus and that seems to be the pathway when you're in a seeking condition of soul and I would pray and trust that such are here today like it that this account in the Song of Solomon seems to describe that condition by night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loved I sought him but I found him not I will rise now and go about the city and the streets and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loved I sought him but I found him not the watchman that go about the city found me to whom I said saw ye him whom my soul loved it was but a little that I passed from there but I found him whom my soul loved I held him and would not let him go now that's what it is like when you're seeking that's when you'll go and come to the house of God you'll be disappointed at times that you haven't had what you're seeking for but it'll keep you coming to the house of God it'll keep you listening and you'll see too as I said last Lord's

[31 : 11] Day you'll see others get the blessing the blessing that you're after the blessing that you're seeking for that you might know him you'll find that sometimes others have the blessing first I thought last week as I was speaking about that occasion in Joseph's life where he was wrongfully in prison and there were those two men there with him and one was delivered and the other one was executed you may I'm sure you will recall the incident but did you recall this the one that was set at liberty and went back into the occupation that he was before as butler to Pharaoh he said this to him when it's well with thee think on thee and the man forgot him two whole years went by and and Joseph was still in prison oh that I knew where I might find him that I might come even to his seat so

Job had this great complaint amongst all the trials and troubles of his pathway that he was he mourned an absent God now my friends where are you seeking him that's the question you want to look into your heart for the answer oh that I knew where I might find him where are you looking for him I tell you where you won't find him you won't find him in the world the song of Solomon we just read there she went about the broad ways you won't find him in the broad ways you won't find him amongst worldly people either you won't find him where he's not loved you won't find him amongst the people that don't love him either I will rise now and go about the city and the streets and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul love it you won't find him in the world you won't find Jesus

Christ there oh that I knew I might find him I might come even to his seat if you're a seeking soul my friends you will be found at the footstool of his mercy if you've got the burden of sin on your conscience the Lord will lead you to a place where you will find mercy and I say it over and over again it's almost repetition but I hope I know sometimes the sweetness of it if you know the burden of sin and if you are taught by God that the only place where mercy can be found the Lord the Holy Spirit will lead you to a place called Calvary that's where you'll find him oh that I knew where I might find him you'll find him there because that's where mercy is to be found that's where his precious blood was shed and that's where he suffered in the room place instead of these seeking souls that I might come even to his seat there was one that came there my friends in the eleventh hour of his life wasn't there the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day and there may I and there have I the hymn writer says but there may I as vile as he wash all my sins away now that's where you'll find him at the cross at a place called Calvary that's where the fountain was opened for sin if you need cleansing that's where it began at Calvary's tree if you need pardoning and I'll tell you something else his precious blood will do for you it will draw you nearer to him there's a word that's come to my mind that's in the second of Ephesians another word which I'm thankful the

Lord the Spirit wrote in his word because I'm glad of it and now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ for he is our peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross having slain the enmity thereby and came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh now his precious blood will bring you nigh when you go to God when in your the burden of your sin when you desire to know him that I oh that I knew where I might find him you'll go to God through the sacrifice of his son and that's where you'll find him the time is disappearing oh that I knew where

I might find him that I might come even to his seat I would order my calls before him and fill my mouth with arguments I would know the words which he would answer me and understand what he would say unto me may the Lord pardon what has been amiss may he forgive every sin and bless his own word Amen