

October 09, 2016

- Job 2:1-10-

“When Bad Gets Worse”

Introduction:

Horatio Spafford was a very wealthy Chicago lawyer, he own a beautiful home with his wife Anna, four daughters and a son. He was also a devout Christian and faithful student of the Scriptures. He was friends with Dwight L. Moody, Ira Sankey and other well-known Christians of his day. At the very height of his financial and professional success, Horatio and his wife Anna suffered the tragic loss of their young son in the great Chicago fire. In 1873, Spafford scheduled a boat trip to Europe in order to give his wife and daughters a much needed vacation and to deal with this tragic lost. He remained in Chicago to take care of some unexpected last minute business. Several days later he received notice that his family's ship had encountered a collision with another vessel and sank in twenty minutes. All four of his daughters drowned; only his wife had barely survived floating on the ships debris.

With a heavy heart, Spafford boarded a boat that would take him to his grieving Anna in England. It was on this trip that he penned those now famous words to one of our dearest hymns, *when sorrows like sea billows roll; it is well, it is well with my soul.*

When we last looked at Job in chapter one he too lost his children but he lost seven sons and three daughters. Satan had been permitted by God to take away all Job's children and possessions in an attempt to prove that if a man's possessions are taken away, he will curse God to his face. But Job has survived that first cycle of tests. Chapter 2 opens with another unbelievable day in the life of Job.

I God's Testimony of Job vv. 1-3

1. This chapter is sometimes called the salt chapter. Job has been wounded deeply now there would be salt poured upon these fresh wounds. Note the word "Again" insult to injury. In this chapter we are given a viewpoint of Job and his suffering, one that Job himself is not permitted to have. We are given this because we too at times are not permitted this viewpoint in the times of our trial. A.B. Simpson once said, "You will have no test of faith that will not be a blessing if you are obedient to the Lord."

2. The curtain opens on another appointed day like that mentioned in chapter one when, *"the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord.* They were required to report their activities and duties on the earth to the Lord. Again Satan must report and answer to our God.

3. C. S. Lewis his book *"A Grief Observed"* likened every child of God to an original hand-painted portrait in progress. The Lord is the Master Artist and we are the canvas upon which He creates His pleasure. Our portraits are a statement of His eternal intent. Folks God is doing a work to mold us to Christ image. We note that God boast of His servant Job, this time he adds to the former compliment *"he holdeth fast his integrity"* which means to withstand, prevail, be strong, he perseverance.

The Lord reaffirmed His pleasure in the righteous Job. Like an artist who proudly displays his artwork in an art studio, the Lord takes infinite pleasure in each and every portrait He paints of His righteous sons and daughters. We are created for His glory. Job's integrity held fast, even though he suffered without cause. The paint God used on Job's portrait did not peel or fade. It is as if God was saying, "so what do you think of Job now"? However His portrait of Job was not complete.

II. Satan Persistence of evil vv. 4-6

1. Satan wants to change the rules because, in effect, he says to God, "You didn't go far enough. You put a boundary about Job and said I couldn't touch his body. That's the problem the Devil harasses us, hates us, hammer's us. God however has perfect reasons for the trials we face and His trials never exceed over limit, and He always has our best interest in mine.

James 11:2-3 a perfecting work; **Romans 8:28-29**

2. When Satan uses the term "skin for skin: he was accusing Job of being complacent with the skin of his animals, servants and children so long as his life was spared. Satan says let me take his health and he'll curse you for sure.

3. In fact, when Satan uses the phrase, "touch his bone and his flesh," he asks for access to the total humanity of Job. Satan is asking for access to this man - Job, to touch his body, soul and spirit and he proceed in that order. Satan knows what he is after. He knows that if he can get to Job in every part of his being, he thinks that he can shake Job's faith and cause him to turn from his trust and confidence in God, and curse him to his face. Once again there is a divine limitation in verse 6 to the power of Satan, but this time God moves the boundaries closer. He says, "You can touch him but you can't take his life. He does not have unrestricted powers.

Application:

God is faithful; God won't give you more than you can handle. Trials are proportional to our strengths and faith. God's not going to give you any more than you can possible bear. He is faithful. You can bear the load. He knows your load limit. God is confident you can bear it, he wouldn't have given it. He won't exceed it!- **I Corinthians 10:13**

III Jobs Persecution and suffering vv.7-10

1. Here in verse seven is the Satan first attack on the body of Job. Some think it was leprosy; other scholars think it was a form of black leprosy called elephantiasis, which not only covered the body with running, decomposing sores, but also caused the members to swell up and become bloated and distorted. Thus the extreme swelling would make ones legs rough and look like an Elephants leg.

The truth is we cannot truly identify this disease. The Hebrew word for boils means a burning sore we can only use scripture to get a sense of what this is. In Exodus 9:9-11 we this word is used to describe the boils that God used in the sixth plague to smite the Egyptians. Whatever it was, it rendered Job a pitiful spectacle, a repulsive hulk of a man, swollen and disfigured and hurting with these running sores.

2. Job is totally covered with these agonizing sores. He was not only physically afflicted, but he was also painfully humiliated. He is sitting in the ash heap this is where they burn the garbage outside the town. A once rich man now sitting in the garbage heap, he ends up sitting in the ashes, scraping the pus from his sores with a broken piece of pottery.

3. To cap it all, the one to whom he ought to have been able to turn for emotional support turned against him. His wife said to him, in verse nine, "*Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.?*" I can see that her faith has crumbled under this attack. No longer does she believe that God is a loving God thoughtful, and just. She sees this as proof, as many of us have done in times of trial, that God has forsaken his promises, that the Bible is not true. Satan believes the righteous will trade away their integrity and faith when they are faced with pain and death. How about you?

4) She advises him to do two things: "Give up your faith, apostatize and curse God." Actually, in the Hebrew, the word is "bless" God, but it is properly translated "curse" because the word "bless" is steep with sarcasm. "Bless God, and die." She is clearly suggesting suicide. She most likely could not take his condition anymore, it was heartbreaking: "It would be better for you to take your life than to go on like this." So poor Job, bound by physical pain, sits in with a disfigured body, and suffers from a sense of emotional abandonment by his mate.

God knows He has a purpose for it, and it is a proper and right purpose that will end up manifesting more fully the love and compassion of his heart. The test of every trial is always to this end. ---**Duet. 29:[29] -The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.**

a) I do not know if women fully understand how much their husbands depend on them. I think husbands often draw emotional strength from their wives far more than either they or their wives realize. Here was a severe attack addressed to the very soul of Job, in which he felt his wife abandoning him, advocating that he turn from his faith and renounce his God.

4) Job's rebuke is a very gentle one. He did not say, "You foolish woman!" He said, "You speak as one of the foolish women." He is not attacking her, rather, he is suggesting that this is a temporary lapse of faith on her part and that for the moment she has begun to repeat the words foolish women who have no knowledge of the grace and glory of God. In that gentle rebuke you can see something of the sturdiness and tenderness of Job's faith. In this great sentence he again reasserts the sovereignty of God: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job reaffirms that. "Shall we not take both good and evil from the hand of God?" We take his joy and his pleasure, the pleasant things of life with gladness and gratitude. Folks God is sovereign and the work he is doing is His.

Conclusion:

A philosophy that wants to abandon everything as soon as things become unpleasant is a shallow, mistaken, distorted view of life. --- Remember Martin Luther and his bout with depression... His wife said to him dress all in black, “the way you been acting I thought God was dead”. God does not promise us exemption from adversity and suffering, and usually He offers no explanations. We may ask "why?" but an answer is not usually forthcoming. One thing that we must remember when suffering and adversity comes is that God is not in the business of explaining, He is in the business of sustaining.

One reason many people become disillusioned with Christianity is that they have unfounded expectations. Oxford scholar and author C. S. Lewis his book “*A Grief Observed*” tells about the death of his wife. In the book he relates his disappointment with his Christian faith in that experience. However, at the end of the book he says his problem was one of expectation. He had the notions of what should happen, and when it did not he was very overwhelmed. Our expectation should be God will be with me through it all.

I started with the origin of the hymn, “It is Well with my soul” Here is the rest of the story. Today almost 150 years later the faith of Anna and Horatio Spafford has resulted in the Spafford Children’s Center providing healthcare for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. More than 30,000 treat yearly.