

Job 3: 1-26; “Job’s Curse & Christ’s Suffering”, Sermon # 7 in the series entitled – Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on November 3rd, 2019, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

This afternoon before we partake of the Lord’s Supper, I would like to show you that Job’s and Christ’s sufferings are aligned. They are brought close to each other, in juxtaposition with each other, so that Job might endure these sufferings, and even that he might learn to glorify God in the midst of them. Job, in this chapter, is cursing the day of his birth. He was determined that he would not curse God during the time of his sufferings, but he had come to the place where he believed that he could legitimately say that it would have been better that he had never been born. I want to examine this curse and the questioning by Job, of the value of his life, in light of what every believer is given in Christ. Christ has suffered for our sins. He was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But in His going to the cross, He has borne our griefs, and our sorrows also, and thus He gives us hope. (Isaiah 53: 3 and 4)

So let me set before you what a true believer may fall into; that is, cursing and questioning why they are alive, and align this with how they should see Christ during the time of their trial. 1st – of all – A Believer may curse the day of his birth, but he should bless Christ and the day of His birth. 2nd – A Believer may ask why he was ever born, but he should remember why the Lord Jesus was born; why He came into the world. And 3rd – A Believer may question why he was ever given light, but he should glory in Christ who is His Light, when he is walking in darkness. I want to bring to your attention at this hour, the thought that Christ in His sufferings, purchased the grace that Job would need to go through this trial and to glorify God in it. This is what Christ has done for every believer. This is what we will rejoice together in, when we remember our Lord in just a few minutes.

1st of all – A Believer may curse the day of his birth, but he should bless Christ and the day of His birth. (verses 1-10)

Verse 1 – “After this Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day.” “And Job spoke, and said, ‘A male child is conceived.’ “May that day be darkness; my God above not seek it, nor the light shine upon it.” “May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; may a cloud settle on it; may the blackness of the day terrify it.” It appears to me that this cursing of the day of his birth was done as a means to cope with the pain of his mental afflictions. He had lost all of his children in one day, and they were gathered together, probably to celebrate one of their birthdays. But vanity of vanities, they all lost their lives on that one day. Job is saying by his words that he wished that he had never been born, since there was no way to undo the pain and the anguish that he was experiencing concerning the loss of his children. This sense of loss he believed would continue as long as he lived.

He used to look back fondly on all the goodness and lovingkindness of the Lord that had been shown to him over the years, and he used to bless God that God had given him so many days of undeserved blessings. Now, since he was experiencing this living death, there appeared to be nothing that he could do except ask God that the day and night of his creation would be obliterated. He could no longer think upon the goodness of the Lord in his having brought him into the world. “May that day be darkness,” he says in verse 4; “may God above not seek it, nor the light shine upon it,” he says. It is as if he recalls the fact that God had said, “Let there be light” in the beginning, and there was light. But Job would have God providentially undo His ordering of his birth, as there appeared to be no reason for him to go on living. This kind of feeling is something that happens sometimes to some Christians, during their afflictions. They wish that they had never been born, because they do not see how they can go on living. They find it impossible to take any pleasure in their life any longer, because the pain of their affliction is so great.

This reaction of Job’s was a fleshly reaction; that is for sure. There was much human passion behind it. But we must ask ourselves – Would we have reacted any differently, or any better? Well, perhaps, and perhaps not. There was some sin in it; certainly a lack of the exercise of faith in God and

not believing in the wisdom of His Providence. Certainly there was a lack of justifying God in having ordained and permitted this trial for Job's good. But we should see that this cursing was a way for Job to cope with his pain without cursing God. Job's words further show us how much the Devil can accomplish by his attacks upon the integrity of a Christian person. When loss of children, either physically or in a spiritual sense takes place, then that person who has been faithful, as Job had been, feels the darkness that Satan loves to bring to make them think that their cause of righteousness and promoting the truth has all been in vain.

A Christian person may begin to curse the day of their birth and ask for darkness and the shadow of death to claim them. Thinking of the day of our birth, the apparent worthlessness of our efforts to bring truth and righteousness to light, we turn on ourselves and look we look longingly at our life, what we think that we have accomplished, and we wrongly conclude that we have accomplished nothing. "May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; may a cloud settle on it; may the blackness of the day terrify it." "As for that night, may darkness seize it; may it not rejoice among the days of the year, may it not come into the number of the months." "Oh, may that night be barren!" "My no joyful shout come into it! You see, my friends, that these are the thoughts that Satan would bring to a true Christian and establish them in our minds, in order to do as much damage to our faith as he can. He would lead the Christian to despair!

This is confirmed when we read verse 8 – "May those curse it who curse the day, those who are ready to arouse Leviathan." The word in the King James is "mourning". "Let them curse it, who curse the day, those who are ready to raise up their mourning." But the word is translated Leviathan in a number of other places in the Scriptures and may certainly be understood this way here in this verse. Why? Because, Job is speaking about the greatness of the calamity that had befallen him, and how this great calamity was like a Leviathan, a great sea-creature that had destroyed so much of his life. He did not know how to deal with him. But let us understand that God does know how to deal with Leviathan for He has created him.

Turn with me over to Psalm 104, verses 24-26. "O Lord, how manifold are Your works!" "In wisdom You have made them all." "The earth is full of Your possessions – this great and wide sea, in which are innumerable teeming things, living things both small and great." "There the ships sail about; there is that Leviathan which You have made to play there." We need to see from these verses that God is the One who has created all things, all creatures for His good pleasure. The sea of life contains many things in it, which are called here – His possessions. In this sea are things small and great. And one of the greatest creatures that God has created is Leviathan. It says that he plays in the sea which God has created. But if you will turn over and read Job 41: 1-10, you will find out how terrible a creature he is to those who are trying to deal with him. It says here – "Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, or snare his tongue with a line which you lower?" Well, obviously not.

Verse 2 – "Can you put a reed through his nose, or pierce his jaw with a hook?" "Will he speak softly to you?" "Will he make a covenant with you?" "Will you take him as a servant forever?" "Will you play with him as with a bird, or will you leash him for your maidens?" "Will your companions make a banquet of him?" "Will they apportion him among the merchants?" "Can you fill his skin with harpoons, or his head with fishing spears?" "Lay you hand on him; remember the battle – Never do it again!" "Indeed, any hope of overcoming him is false; shall one not be overwhelmed at the sight of him?" "No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up." "Who then is able to stand against Me?", God says. So Leviathan, as he is portrayed for us in Job 3: 8, is the great trial which Satan brings, that comes upon a Christian for his testing. And it is impossible for a Christian person to face him on their own, or by themselves. But the Christian must remember that God has created the Leviathan and He is stronger than him.

And so turn with me over to Isaiah 27 and verse 1. "In that day the Lord with His severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; and He will slay the reptile that is in the sea." Who is the prophet talking about here? He is speaking of Satan. In verse 2, he says – "In that day sing to her, A vineyard of red wine!" "I the Lord keep it, I

water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I keep it night and day.” What does the vineyard of wine represent? It represents the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ; God’s elect people in both Old Testament and New Testament times. And it is referring to the fact that God will watch over her in all of her trials and afflictions, and He will keep her from being utterly destroyed and eaten up by Leviathan, and the mourning and grief that Satan tries to bring to Christians.

How does God do this? He does it through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Lord Jesus binds the strong man at the cross, and bears the curse of the law for us. He cast the prince of this world out when He went to the cross (John 12: 31). And, He is in the process of destroying all the works of the Devil during this whole church age. He will eventually bind him and place a seal on him so that he will deceive the nations no longer with false religion, during the time of the Millennium, as it says there in Revelation 20, verse 3. That is the reason that He came into the world it says in 1st John 3: 8, to destroy the works of the Devil. And this is what we will remember at the Lord’s Table when we come to observe what He has done for us by His death.

2nd – A Believer may ask why he was ever born, but he should remember why the Lord Jesus was born; why He came into the world.

(verses 11-19)

“Why did I not die at birth?” “Why did I not perish when I came from the womb?” “Why did I not perish when I came from the womb?” “Why did the knees receive me?” “Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?” “For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep; then I would have been at rest with kings and counselors of the earth, who built ruins for themselves, or with princes who had gold, who filled their houses with silver; or why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, like infants who never saw light?” “There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.” “There the prisoners rest together; they do not hear the voice of the oppressor.” “The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master.”

Job asks why he was ever born; why he could not have died as a stillborn child, and like an infant who never saw the light of this world. This would have brought great comfort to him, he thought, because he could have lain still and been quiet, and been asleep in death to the troubles of this world. Actually, we can find great encouragement from these verses regarding those who die as infants, because Job is telling us that they are indeed in a better place. He says that they are at rest there in heaven. Indeed, he tells us, all of those who are weary of this world and yet are trusting in God through Jesus Christ our Lord, shall find eternal rest when they die. Job longed that he might find that rest of spirit, rest of heart and mind, of his being able to be with God, and his children who had gone to the house of death before him. Perhaps you find yourself in this same place spiritually, or you fear that someday perhaps you will be in that position. What should you do?

The wonderful thing about being a Christian; the truth that will sustain the you, dear believer, in your time of trial, is your remembering why Christ came into the world. And you should avail yourself of that knowledge as you encounters various trials. Let me read 1st Timothy 1: 12-17 for you. “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.” “And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.” “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” “However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me, first, Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering as a pattern to those who going to believe on Him for everlasting life.”

A believer must always remember the reason that Paul received mercy and then apply it to his own heart and life. Paul considered himself the chief of sinners because he had formerly been so sinfully bad; persecuting the church. But he obtained mercy. He had been violent like that because he honestly thought that Jesus Christ was not the Messiah; not the Savior of the Jews or Gentiles. And then the Lord saved him. He didn’t “decide” for Christ. Christ decided for him. And why would Christ show him, Paul, such mercy? Well, one of the reasons was that he wanted to show in him, first,

all patience as a pattern, for those who are going to believe on Christ for everlasting life. Don't you see, dear believer, the Lord Jesus is patient in his dealing with you and teaching you His better way of living unto God. He has things for you to learn in every trial that you go through for the sake of righteousness.

This was what Job had to learn. It will take him some conversations with his friends, and finally it will take conversation with God Himself who finally intervened to teach Him that he needed to justify God, to tell others that He is wise and righteous, especially when they are going through very serious trials. This is why Jesus Christ came into the world; to save sinners. And this means, not only saving you from your sins, but saving you at times, even from yourself and the false conclusions that you might draw about Him, and why you are going through what you are going through. I would have you to come down front now, and when we gather there, I will give you a few more words in my third point.

3rd – A Believer may question why he was ever given light, but he should glory in Christ who is His Light, when he is walking in darkness. (verses 20-26)

Verse 20 says – “Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, who long for death, but it does not come, and search for it more than hidden treasures; who rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?” “Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in?” “For my sighing comes before I eat, and my groanings pour out like water.” “For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, and what I dreaded has happened to me.” “I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes.” You can see here that Job was a child of light walking in darkness. He was not walking in the darkness of sin; he was walking in the darkness of not experiencing God's presence and blessing; not knowing what God's purpose was, in all that he was going through.

This is an awful place to be in, but I want you to see that God would have you to trust in Him at all times. Turn with me over Isaiah 50, and verse 10. “Who among you fears the Lord?” “Who obeys the voice of His Servant?” “Who walks in darkness and has no light?” “Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely upon his God.” As we come to partake of the Lord's Supper, let us remember how our Lord Jesus overcame the Devil and purchased our redemption. Let us remember that one of the reasons that He had to die for our sins was so that He could give us grace, and then teach us by His Spirit to be able, ourselves, to be a child of light, overcoming, when we are walking in darkness. How did Jesus do it? Look at verse 4 of chapter 50.

“The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary.” “He awakens Me morning by morning.” “He awakens My ear to hear as the learned.” (or as a disciple) “The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.” “I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.” Let us understand that the Lord Jesus did not suffer for his own sins and failures to do the Lord's will; He suffered and bled and died for our sins, so that we might be forgiven, and learn to do His good will in all situations, even when we are attacked by the Devil, and when we feel that it would be better if we could die.

The Lord Jesus goes on to say here in verse 7 – “For the Lord God will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced (or confounded); therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed.” “He is near who justifies Me; Who will contend with Me?” “Let us stand together.” “Who is My adversary?” “Let him come near Me.” “Surely the Lord God will help Me; who is he who will condemn Me?” “Indeed they will all grow old like a garment; the moth will eat them up.” Well, Satan was Christ's main adversary, and he did come near to Him. But the Lord God helped Him, by raising Him from the dead. Look at the strength of our Lord Jesus as He suffered for you, and you by His grace will come to understand how to suffer for His name's sake as well, and to rejoice and be exceeding glad to do so. It will be by Christ's resurrection power. Let us glory in Christ as our Light, when we find ourselves as children of light walking in darkness.

