Job 1:1-5; Psalm 1; Consider Job I. Job’s Piety II. Job’s Wealth III. Job’s Offering

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, why do bad things happen to good people? This well-known question gets to the heart of our book- and it is fitting to meditate on this question. Instead of simply saying- well, no one is really good- it is fitting to slow down and really think about this question. The fact is, evil events do fall on righteous people! Tragedy strikes not only the wicked- but also the upright! As we begin our series through Job, we are going to wrestle with questions like this. All of us know someone who pretends to have all the answers. They know why and they will tell you why everything happens. For example, maybe you have heard that God spared Trump’s life because Trump is going to save our nation as the next president. I don’t know if that is true or not- but it is dangerous to presume that you know why something happened. The fact is, we do not see everything that is going on behind the scenes. In Job, there are really 2 distinct settings. One on earth and the other in heaven. Like Job, we only can see what is going on here below. The events in glory and the rationale behind events remain secret to us. As Dt. 29 puts it, the hidden things belong to the LORD. So as we begin our series through Job today, we have to be careful not to be too hard on Job or his friends since can read information that they did not have. As we consider Job today, we will contrast his life with what befell him. At the end of the day, does it matter more to you what other people think about you or what the LORD says about you? One of the clear applications of this book will be this; we must continue to obey the LORD even when hard times come, and we do not have all the answers we still must submit to His hand. So as we start our series today, we start by considering Job the man of God. As the LORD says in 1:8- have you considered my servant Job? So we consider Job the servant of the LORD. We will look at this theme: Jesus Christ vindicates His people who entrust themselves to His care.

**I. Job’s Piety**

In our first point we consider the character of Job. What was he like? We can understand it when God pours out His wrath on the wicked- when suffering falls on the rebel as a foretaste of their eternal destruction. But that is not what we find here. Job we a righteous man from the land of Uz. Now the land of Uz is not specific location known today- it refers to the land of the east and perhaps the land of trees. Now the people of the east were known for their wisdom- as in the days of Jesus’ birth – the wise magi of the east came to worship the newborn king. We also do not have a specific time stamp on this book either- but it seems to indicate a very early time period- perhaps around the time of Abraham. Although written later, Job covers a very early time period. And Job had great character. As v. 1 begin, we find that he was blameless and upright. He was perfect in the sense of being complete- he was a consistent man of obedience. He was also upright- a righteous man above reproach. As v. 1 continues, He both feared God and turned away from evil. He obeyed the LORD and he refused to do evil. He was a man after God’s own heart- a real Psalm 1 kind of person. Refusing to do evil- rather loving God and serving fellow man. No one could bring a charge against him. He was consistent- not a pharisee but a real man of God. As we will see later- he was a man of pure faith! Loving God with all heat heart- believing in the Lord. This does not mean that he was perfect or that he was free from sin- he will confess sin 7:20-21 and again in chapter 13 and 16. But the issue is this- Job is a man that the LORD calls blameless and upright as we find in 1:8. One who fears God and turns away from evil. And as such- according to Psalm 1- that man is to be blessed! Blessed is the man who does not walk in the way the wicked. So whatever hardship falls on Job is not because of Job’s sin. Job is not under the curse or wrath of God. As Jesus taught in Luke 13, when the tower of Siloam fell on certain men it was not because they were more wicked than others. So Job is not going to endure suffering because he was such a bad guy- because the opposite is true! He was a good man- a man of faith and obedience! He knew God as the sovereign one- Elohim- and as the God of the covenant- Yahweh. Even though he lived after the flood and before the time of Moses- Job was a man of faith! God has preserved for himself a remnant. James 5:11 commits Job to us as a faithful prophet who remained steadfast- even in the midst of trouble. Ez. 14 says he was one of the most righteous people to ever live- on par with Noah and Daniel! So Job was a prophet of the LORD who remained faithful to the end!

**II. Job’s Wealth**

But Job was not only a righteous man of faith, he was also a mighty man- a great man of old. As v. 3 says- he was the greatest man of all the people of the east. He was not only a prophet- he was a king among men. We can draw some similarities between Job and Melchizedek- they lived around the same time. Both Job and Melchisedek come from unknown lineage- both were not from the line of Abraham- but both men are prophets and kings who knew and served the LORD! We could say that Job was both a pillar of the church and a pillar of society! He was a very powerful man of renown- who had great possessions. V. 3 says that he has 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 female donkeys and so on. He had enormous prosperity. Everyone knew about Job- he was hard to miss. He was the Elon Musk of his day. His influence spread and his name was known in all the land. His house was the center of commerce- his family the cornerstone of society. When Job spoke- people listened! When Job suffered- people took note! He was like Abraham- a man whose household filled the land! Added to this, and unlike Abraham, Job had many children. Job was blessed with 7 sons and 3 daughters. His bank account and his house was filled. 10 children from the LORD- and as we will see- he was raising these children in the fear and knowledge of the LORD as well. So Job was a great man- and his greatness was a gift from the LORD. It was the LORD who prospered Job- even as Satan rightly said in 1:10- God had indeed put a hedge around him and his house. It was indeed the LORD who had blessed the works of this hand so that he increased in the land. God had seen fit to richly bless Job and make him great! But as we will see- the LORD as the sovereign One can bring up and put down. As the sovereign one, He is free to exalt and humble according to His plan and design. Being extremely wealthy, Job takes his place alongside others like Abraham and Solomon. But let it be known, Job did not serve 2 masters! No, Job loved the LORD and not the wealth of this world! His heart was dedicated to the LORD God alone! His wealth was not his idol- He served the LORD in truth.

**III. Job’s Offering**

So Job was a mighty man- the greatest in the land. With a large family and an expansive portfolio- he was a busy guy to be sure. But the blessing of God upon his house does not go to Job’s head- his earthly possessions do not blind him from what is truly important. So we find in our last point that Job leads his family to the throne of grace. As v. 5 reveals, Job would consecrate his children and offer burnt offering for them. So Job is a prophet! He is a king in the land- and he offers sacrifices as a priest for his family. In this offering of a sacrifice, Job makes it clear once again that he may be an upright man who is blameless, but he is not perfect! In other words, he still needs a redeemer! He will say in Job 19- I know my redeemer lives! Added to this, he knows that blood needs to be shed. Even though he lived before the Mosaic Law was delivered, Job still knew that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins! Job knew that his sins and the sins of his family needed to be atoned for! In this he was also very consistent- consecrating them and sacrificing for them early in the morning and doing this continually. This just goes to prove that the OT saints were saved by grace through faith- the same faith that Abraham had as well as the same faith that we now share! Job and his family were sinners saved by the blood of the atoning sacrifice! Somehow it had been made known to him- perhaps he had heard from his own father- the things of the faith passed on from generation to generation- from Noah and now down to Job. By way of a brief application, parents have a vital role in the spiritual development of their children. Particularly fathers, you need to teach your children how to repent- what faith and repentance looks like! The dedication to church attendance is impressed upon children by their parents example! Job consecrated his kids and offered a sacrifice for them- teaching them of their need for cleansing and their need for atonement. If you have godly parents, it is wise to listen to and learn from them! God has placed them in your lives for a reason. And parents, you must take this calling to heart! As the hymn goes, parents tell your children, age to age the same! Or a Dt. 6 puts it, parents are to teach their children God’s Law- instructing them in the way of righteousness! So parents are not only called to teach their children life skills- but also morality and spirituality! Parents must not only demand respect- they are teach their children to respect others. Parents, you cannot save your children, but you must point them to the cross! For in His sacrifice alone will they find life! Job would say along with Joshua- as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!

So Job sets an example of morality and spirituality for his children. We have only begin to consider the life of Job- and we already see a wonderful example and encouragement towards godly living. Remember, Job did not have the benefit of Redemptive History and yet he knew of the need for a sacrifice for his sins. Living before Moses, he still trusted in the God of his forefather Adam and Noah. Job is a patriarch of the faith- even a small picture of the coming prophet, priest and king. We see that God is not going to inflict these hardships on Job because Job deserved it- rather it was the righteousness of Job that set him apart! As God will say in 1:8- have you considered my righteous servant Job? The destruction of Job’s possessions and the death of Job’s family will become a great temptation to Job. Will he curse the LORD and die- or will Job hold to his faith even in the mist of the trail. Like Christ who will come many years later, the piety of Job sets the context for his temptation! We do not always know why things happen in this world- why God’s righteous people are tried and tested. But we do not one good result that God brings. As I Peter 4:19 says, those who suffered are to entrust their souls to a faithful savoir and continue to do good. In this way, I Peter 4 continues, those who suffer share in the sufferings of Christ as they are being made like Christ! You see, Job’s suffering was not just a fore shadowing of the suffering Christ would endure- the fact is God uses suffering to make us like Christ! So Job is being made more like Christ- God is sanctifying His servant through this trial! It is for this purpose that God will say- have you considered my servant Job?!

To conclude, we the readers of this book will get a behind the scene look at what is taking place. There are two stories going on here- one in heaven and the other on earth. Like Job, we are often left in the dark about why things happen as they do. We may not see and we may know why these difficult times fall on God’s righteous servants. But we can rest assured- as Job does- that God is God and He is both sovereign and good! Jesus Christ vindicates His people who entrust themselves to His care. This vindication may not happen in this life- but rest assured that the Judge of all the earth will do what is right. Our works are seen and they will follow us! Our reading in Job 1 opens by revealing the heart of Job- a righteous man who feared God and fled from evil. As our study continues, we will ask this question- will Job hold on to his integrity? Will his faith hold? One closing point is this- do not let hardships drag you away from your God. But rather let the work of God have its good effect in your- to sanctify you and make you more like Christ who suffered in His righteousness and remained without sin.