

Job's suffering – part 1

Job's suffering – part 1

JOB'S SUFFERING

Praise the Lord that we are still on earth and that there is still hope for us in Jesus Christ. How important it is whether the words of the Lord reach your heart or mine and whether these words do in us what God wants. May the words do this because the Lord sends them to rip us off sometimes, but also to heal us. Sometimes it's necessary to rip something off and to tear away from us what we don't want to let go. The Lord also sends these words to, after healing us, make us even more ready to go through the adversities we will encounter. And may these words also rip something off and let them heal us so that we might experience that God is with us. We are only a snatch of time on earth. We are a generation that has its own time. In the past, there were more generations that also had their own time. They were people just like us. They had their own desires, goals, experiences and they had to win the battle for their life.

To win – this is the first and indispensable thing. If you don't feel that you're at the point where your eternity is decided, whatever you hear, it won't be strong enough for you to break you of anything that might lead you to the lake of fire. As long as it isn't firmly rooted in the heart and in thinking that my fate is decided here, a man will think whether it's worth giving up the pleasures of this world and whether it's worth giving up the pleasure of my body, my ideas and my dreams. However, when the man already realizes that there are only two paths – one leads to eternity and the other leads to destruction, to the lake of fire – then the man decides to catch God to save himself. And we can see it.

We can see if the man begins to believe that there is eternity with God and eternal rejection from God. We can see it because the man no longer looks at other people, but he only looks at God and begins to save himself and take care of his eternity.

There was a man on earth who lived a long time ago – his name was Job. This man wanted to save himself. He believed and he wanted to save himself. He looked after the matters of his life. There might not be people around at all, but he looked after because he knew that there was God.

This is very important both for me and you whether you will personally care about your eternal life, whether you will crave for it, try to get it, do what is possible around you to keep it clean and not to go into evil. It's very important not to think that if other people do it, I can do it too; not to think like that at all because there are only two paths – two places for people and every person is to go either to first place or to the other one. It's not possible that the man was born on earth, lived there and didn't get to any of these two places. It's impossible. From the moment we were born, we are to get somewhere. We have to keep it in mind. If we want to run away from responsibility (“I don't want to know anything”), we will die and nothing will help us that we don't want to know anything (“I don't know and I don't want to know”, “why know?”, etc.).

The thing is to get to know, to learn, to understand what's bad and what's good, to be able to receive strength from God in order to reject evil and choose good.

We will talk a little about what happens in the Book of Job and we will spend some time with this book.

Probably Job lived after the flood, but before Abram, the father of our faith. Notice that back then people also realized that there was God. God also appointed people for Himself. They pondered, wondered and checked how things were going. This man, Job, lived in the land of Uz.

Job 1, 1-3: “And that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. His possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.”

First, we read that this man was fearing God, turning away from evil, blameless and upright. This man was such not when he had so many goods. This man was fearing God before. It wasn't wealth that made him feel so grand to do certain things towards God. The fact that he was with God made that when he became affluent, it didn't control his heart because his heart was protected by the fact that he walked in piety and righteousness before God's face. God made him prosperous because he was a righteous man. He had so much because he belonged to God. Let's see, what words did he say when his wealth was taken from him? Was Job addicted to what he possessed? No. He, as the righteous man, got it from God and it was taken away from him as the righteous man. He said:

“The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Despite all this, Job did not sin, nor did he blame God.” (Job 1, 21)

“Since God gave and has taken away, it's His decision, but I'm fearing God. I turn away from evil, not because He gave it to me, but because **He is God.**”

Not because I have a lot now, so now my God is “cool” and when I don't have anything, my God is no longer nice. Job possessed so much that probably neither of us will possess that much and then so much has been taken away from him that that much won't be taken away from any of us. In this experience, Job turned out to be a winner because he walked with God and he didn't do it for what was visible to his eyes. Job was never addicted to external things. His heart wasn't happier when he possessed and when he didn't possess, it wasn't unhappy. It was just as real when he possessed and also when he didn't possess. Many people had a fortune because they earned it through injustice, fraud, lies and thefts. Job got it from God as did Solomon when he asked: “God, give me wisdom to judge your people”.

This is very important for me and you to remember that there is God and for this God I want to do what pleases Him. Job knew he was created by God who sees everything. Job knew that when his children – sons and daughters – played together, God saw it. He sees everything. Job didn't see what was happening there, but he knew there was God who saw everything, so he made sacrifices in case his children did something wrong. Therefore, Job cared about himself, about his children and about his house so that this house would belong to God and so that God could always come to his house. As the psalmist said: “I will walk in the innocence of my heart so that You might come to me.” Job praised God and he practiced it. He walked in the innocence of his heart so that God might always come to his house. This man cared about his entire house, including what belonged to that house. Certainly, his animals also experienced that they were looked after by a righteous man, as we read. None of the animals had ever experienced a freak was in control of them. When Job sheared his sheep, he said: “A poor man didn't lack the clothes of my sheep.” Job was able to make clothes of wool from shorn sheep for a poor man who couldn't afford such clothes. He used his animals to help the poor. He didn't use what God had given him for himself.

Job knew how to use it. He was like a steward who disposes well of wealth that God has given him. Many poor people made use of coming to Job. Many widows received help from him. Later on, in the New Testament, we can read that God appreciates when you care for a widow or an orphan. Job practiced it back then. Job walked before God's face with piety and respect. Yet, there wasn't any written book that we have now and Job walked with God. Job praised God in the same ways as he got to know Him. He got to know God who made the storm. He got to know God who made rain, sun, moon, stars, wind and water. He got to know God who gives health to a man. He also got to know the disease that destroyed a man and that took him from earth.

Job knew that the consequence of desertion was death and that's why he was very careful. He believed that it's good to be with God and receive many things not only on earth. He already knew what the apostle Paul said, i.e. if you pin your hopes on Jesus Christ only on these earthly things, you are the most piteous man because you have to pin your hopes on heavenly things. Job already pinned his hopes on what was to happen later. That's why, he guarded and made sure to achieve a goal about the future that he knew would happen. Job tried to be kind not only on earth. He knew he wanted to be with God forever. Job is a good example also for us – the living – to care about others. He would be the perfect brother for the elder of the congregation. If he lived in the time of the New Testament, he could definitely be the elder of the congregation who would transfer his feelings, kindness that he had for his family and the concern for the sanctity of his home to the congregation. Everyone who had the possibility to meet Job met a part of God. Job didn't take credit for himself. He praised God for who he was. This is what the apostle Paul also said: "What am I, by the grace of God I am".

We can say that Job walked gloriously before God's face in many things. That's why, God put him to the test. It can be surprising for us that God puts to the test a man like Job. As we reread the Book of Job and when we browse through it, let's look at Job in particular and at his statements. Probably, we will talk less about his friends' statements than about his statements. Later, we will look at what God said and at the end of this suffering. We know the Book of Job, but we need also to know the life that this man lived. We need to know how much his heart was afraid not to neglect any issue that he knew God liked or to remove what God didn't like. His life was noble and we can see the Spirit of Christ in it. We can see a man who will go through some experiences that he doesn't know about. However, we – the living – know who experienced the most on earth. Job begins to cost from something more that he has no idea about at the moment. Job begins to cost from Christ's life. This Christ's life had already existed in him, so he could pass the test. God put him to the test. Job accepted it.

Notice that when the devil pleaded to attack Job, it wasn't without God's plan. God has a plan. Note that it was God who said: "Have you paid attention to my servant Job?" It was God who said that. God knew that the devil paid attention to Job. After all, he was a man who irritated the devil on earth. Job obeyed God and he didn't listen to the devil's promptings. He followed God's plans for his life as he understood it. He cared about purity, about walking with God, about people and about his animals.

"Have you paid attention to my servant Job?" Of course, the devil paid attention to him. "Well, ok, but would Job be such a person if you took away it all from him?" God is the one who decided: Job will be put to the test and the instrument that will put Job to the test will be Satan – a fierce enemy, ready to do whatever he can to destroy a man.

Finally, the Son of God comes to earth and this enemy also goes against Jesus Christ. He begins a huge battle to tempt Jesus and keep Him from the will of the Father. And this enemy is allowed to attack Job. See what mechanisms are activated by him. When the messengers, who talk about what happened, come to

Job, we can observe the confusion: “people killed”, “God killed”. The devil confuses the messages to Job to say: “See, God and people are against you.” First, an army beat, then fire fell from heaven, then again an army beat and a windstorm fell from heaven – “God and people are against you, Job – you have lost”. The devil wants to convince Job that God is his enemy and that people are against him as well. “You are left alone. Are you ready to fight?” Job was certainly attacked with many thoughts. It wasn’t that he was just hit and nothing else happened. His main thought, that was on his heart all the time, was that he belongs to God no matter what.

Job wins the battle with the devil by giving himself to this situation. It was something the devil didn’t expect. Job says:

“The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Job didn’t sin, but we know that the devil was allowed to attack what Job got. (...)