

Job 23:1-10

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Preacher: Spencer Baumgardner

[0:00] Good evening. Good evening. I'll be in the Old Testament this evening in the book of Job. Job chapter 23.

Good to see you all this evening. It was a wonderful good surprise to see Miss Sue Selby walking. Actually, I didn't see her walking. She snuck up on me.

Regardless, it's good to have her here with us. We went to church. Missy and I went to church with Sue for a few years in Kingsport. So it was wonderful to see her.

And good to see the rest of you as well. But Job chapter 23. A lot has happened, needless to say, in 22 chapters in Job up to this point.

We should all be somewhat familiar with the account of Job. The Bible describes him in Job chapter 1 as a perfect and upright man that feared God and eschewed evil.

[1:04] Meaning that he shunned evil. And we all know, as far as the biblical account goes, that regardless of that, bad things happen in the life of Job.

We should all be familiar with how all this unfolded. It happens really quick in Job chapters 1 and 2. Where we see a scene where Satan is actually going amongst heaven with the sons of God. And he accuses Job to God. And we all know, Satan is the accuser of the brethren.

And if he is now, he ever has been. But he accuses Job. And he tells God, he says, the only reason Job is worshipping you, the only reason that he fears you is because you've blessed him the way that you have.

And this is Spencer's, I guess you could say, translation of what's going on. This isn't direct quotes from Scripture, but that's exactly what's going on.

[2:12] And God, of course, gives Satan permission to touch his health, to touch his wealth, everything that he's got materially, because God truly has blessed Job.

He has, you know, Job's got many heads of livestock. He's got a large family. He's got children. He's got his wife. He's got all these things going on for him.

And God gives Satan permission. Now, keep that in mind. Satan can't do anything outside of the will of God and outside of the permissive will of God. But God gives Satan permission to touch these things, save his life.

He doesn't give him permission to take Job's life from him. So after all these things happen, then Job is smitten from head to toe with boils and with sores upon his body.

But the thing is, we read in Job's account through all this, Job never once accuses God, never once curses God, such as his wife recommended that he do.

[3:18] And she said, just curse God and die. But Job doesn't do this. He says, the Lord gave him. The Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In the midst of all this, Job worships God.

And that speaks volumes of the character and the integrity of this man, Job. So beginning about chapter 3, we start to see these quote-unquote friends of Job's come.

And we see a man named Eliphaz, which is who Job is responding to here in chapter 23. We see one named Zophar and one named Bildad. And each one of them speak truths to Job, but they're applying them wrongly.

Much of what these men say to Job is absolute truth. Now, as far as God, you know, on the earth punishing the wicked and prospering the righteous, that may or may not be the case.

Because as far as being materialistically prosperous, Brother Paul is a perfect example that that's not necessarily the case. Paul made a living.

[4:31] He made a living as a tent maker. We know that from the Scriptures. But he was not a rich man. So, you know, all these prosperity preachers that say that, you know, if you just do right, and you do right by God, and He'll bless you materialistically and monetarily, and all these other things, folks, that's not Bible.

That ain't Bible at all. But anyway, these three so-called friends come to Job, and each one of them are accusing him of hidden sin. And in Job 22, we actually read Eliphaz's last speech that he gives to Job, and he grows less and less charitable with his accusations.

He grows very pointed in chapter 22 with his accusations. As far as, I mean, going as far as to accuse Job of withholding water from the weary, and breaking the arms of orphans, and sending widows away empty.

These are things that he's accusing Job of, and has zero proof that any of this has happened. And in chapter 23 here, we find Job's response to what Eliphaz has just said.

Now, there's a whole lot of other things that have gone on, those 22 chapters leading up to this. But that kind of paints a little bit of a picture of where we'll be. We're going to read the first 10 verses here of chapter 23.

[6:00] And some of this may be familiar to you. Some of it may not be. But anyway, Job chapter 23, beginning of verse 1, says, Then Job answered and said, Even today is my complaint bitter.

My stroke is heavier than my groaning. 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.

Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he would put strength in me.

There the righteous might dispute with him. So should I be delivered forever from my judge. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there. And backward, but I cannot perceive him.

On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him. He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him. But he knoweth the way that I take.

[7:01] When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. Back to Job 23, verses 1 and 2. Then Job answered and said, Even today is my complaint bitter.

My stroke is heavier than my groaning. So again, this is an answer that Job is giving to the accusations that Eliphaz has given him in the previous chapter.

In chapter 22, it says, Job answered and said, Even today is my complaint bitter. Job pulls no punches. There's no holds barred with what he says here.

He says, Even today, folks, even today, he's not talking about a past event. He is talking about presently in his life. He says, My complaint is bitter.

Why is his complaint bitter? Why does he even have a complaint? Because he's been sitting in this heap of ashes using pieces of broken pottery to scrape the sores that are upon his skin because his sons and his daughters have been taken away because all of his oxen and all of his she-asses and all of his livestock has been taken away from him.

[8:12] It seems like Job's entire world has caved in upon him and there is no good answer for the reason behind his world caving in and closing in upon him.

This is why he has a bitter complaint. But he says, Even today, is my complaint bitter? My stroke is heavier than my groaning. He says, What I'm going through right now is more than my words could possibly say unto you, Eliphaz.

And keep in mind here, he is in response to Eliphaz. He is in response to what has just been told him in Job chapter 2. But his response is not only to Eliphaz, but it is also a cry out to the Almighty. It's also a cry out to God, the things that he says here. Even today is my complaint bitter, folks. And God, Almighty God, he has no problem with us coming to him with complaints.

He has no problem with us coming to him with questions. He has no problem with us coming to him. Period. Folks, we are his children. He is not sitting as a judge waiting to throw the sinning scene at us, waiting to throw us in the jail, or throw us under the jail for that matter, or anything along those lines.

[9:25] God is a father to his children, and we should approach him as a father. And we can go to our father with our complaints. We can go to him with our wives. Even the psalmist in Psalm, in chapter 10, said, Art thou a God that standest afar off?

Even Jesus Christ, when he was on the cross, said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? God is not offended when we ask him why, as long as we have done it in faith, and as long as we have done it in the right heart.

But when we go to accusing, Almighty God, of wrongdoing, as we preached this last week, out of Genesis chapter 18, when Abraham said, Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?

Hey, the judge of all the earth will do right. He shall do right. He's never done anything wrong. He cannot do anything wrong. He is perfect in his justice. He is perfect in his mercy.

He is perfect in everything that he does. And for that, we can give him praise. For that, we know that we can go unto him as a father. We can say, I know my complaint is bitter.

[10:30] I know this. I know even today my complaint is bitter. But I know that you will do right by me, Almighty God. And he does everything, everything perfectly, and everything for our own good and for his own glory.

And I'm glad that I've got a heavenly father that I can go to with that kind of confidence in. I have confidence in him, folks. I have no confidence in me, but I have confidence in the father that whatever he works out in my life, whatever good comes my way, whatever bad comes my way, God will work this out together for good to those that love him, to the God which according to his purpose.

Hallelujah. Even today is my complaint bitter. My stroke is heavier than my groaning. My stroke, the stroke that has come upon me. Job felt like a diamond that had been set upon an anvil.

The anvil of affliction. And understandably so, Job has gone through more in his life in just these 21 chapters than I have gone through in my life.

Job has gone through more in his life in these 21-22 chapters leading up to this that you have gone through in yours. We all still have our health somewhat.

[11:46] We all still have our families somewhat. We all still have all kinds of things. Job had none of that. And the three friends that he had on planet Earth have turned against him and are making false accusations against him.

In other words, Job had no one but God. That is the last one that he had. And that's the only one that he needed. Keep that in mind, dear child of God.

If you have nothing else, if you have no one else, you have Almighty God. And we have access to Him through our great high priest that we have in Jesus Christ. Verse 3, Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to His seat.

Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to His seat. This is Job making a cry in his response to Eliphaz, making a cry out to God Himself.

But Job is saying here, Oh, that I knew where I might find Him. Job's saying, I know that He's there. That's what we read just a few verses after this. I know that God is there.

[12:49] Job is not speaking as an atheist. Job is not speaking as a pagan. He's not speaking as a polytheist. He is speaking as someone who has experienced God. He is speaking as someone who has experienced the blessings of God.

He has experienced the healing of God. He's experienced the grace of God. But now, Job feels as if he cannot find God. He cannot feel God. Has no idea where God is.

But he knows that He's there. How many of you have been in that same situation in the past? I know that I have. I know that I felt so close with God there wasn't nothing. You couldn't have fit a hair between me and God is the feeling that I've had in the past.

And I've had other feelings where I felt like God was a thousand and one galaxies away from where I was. This is the feeling that Job had right here and right now in this scripture while we're reading.

Oh, that I knew where I might find Him. That I might come even to His seat. He has a desire here. A desire to go before the throne of God.

[13:50] He knew that God sat upon a seat. He knew that God sat upon a throne. He says, that I might come even to His seat. I would go straight directly to the throne of God.

Folks, this is a cry for an intercessor. This is a cry for a mediator. This is a cry for these things that is pre-Gospel. Job had no idea about the man Jesus Christ.

I'm sure Job knew that there was a Messiah that was promised over in Genesis 3 and 15. But he had no idea that that Messiah's name would be Jesus Christ. But Job is crying out here for someone to show Him where God is.

For someone to make access to where God is. Someone that can show Him exactly where the seat of Almighty God is. And Job wishes to make His petition known unto God.

We have not. A priest that cannot be touched for the filling of our infirmities. We have that high priest and Jesus Christ. And Job had no idea about Christ Jesus.

[14:51] He had no idea about Calvary. He had no idea about any of these things. Yet he still had the desire to go to the throne. We have access to the throne through Jesus Christ.

And Job is making a petition here. Oh, that I knew where I might find Him. We know where God is. Job knew that he was on a seat somewhere. He knew that he was on a throne somewhere.

But he wanted access to that throne. Why? Not to accuse God. And not to argue with God. Not even in the Scripture we're about to get into. Where it's talking about disputing.

And it's talking about arguments. And these things. He's not talking about accusing God or being mean towards God or anything along those lines. He simply wishes to make His petition known unto God.

Folks, Job has the same desire here that you and I have. Every person on planet Earth has the same desire. We wish to understand and we wish to be understood.

[15:53] And that's exactly what Job is wanting here. He's wanting someone to understand Him because Bildad, Zophar, and Eliphaz are not doing a very good job of understanding Him. His wife's done gone out of the picture because we don't read about her anymore throughout the entire book of Job.

We don't read about anyone else. But Job wants to be understood and he wants to understand. And that is a desire, that's a human desire that every one of us have.

Is to understand and to be understood. Verse 4, I would order my cause before Him and fill my mouth with arguments. Again, when Job says, I will fill my mouth with arguments, he's not talking about arguing against God.

He's not talking about bringing a case against God. He's saying, I wish to plead my case. But why? Because Job knows that he is innocent of the things that he is being accused of by these three men that have come to him.

He knows he is innocent. I understand that in Job chapter 1, as we've already said this evening, the Bible describes him as a perfect man, as an upright man, one that eschewed evil, one that feared God.

[17:01] I get that. But Job still had sin in his life. The Bible also describes David as a man that was after the heart of Almighty God. But we all know that David still had sin in his life.

Paul said, O wretched man that I am, who shall save me from this body of death as holy and as righteous as a man as Paul was, he still had sin in his life.

And you and I are not perfect by any means. We still have sin in our lives. But we have a perfect sinless God that sent a perfect sinless sacrifice with the name of Jesus Christ to a place called Calvary to take your place and my place to suffer a vicarious death in your stead and in my stead. And we can come unto God. We can come to the seat of God as Job's talking about here. We can come with arguments or with petitions or with requests in our mouth unto God.

And God will hear His children. And I praise God for that old or I would order my calls before Him and fill my mouth with arguments.

[18:03] Again, he is not talking about arguing with God here. He is not talking about going back and forth. But notice here. Notice here. He says, I would know the words in verse 5.

Here, first in verse 4, he says, I would order my calls before Him and fill my mouth with arguments. Talking about a monologue with God. I would do this and I would do that but in verse 5, he says, I would know the words which He would answer me.

It's turned from monologue into dialogue. He wants to have a two-way conversation with God. He says, again in verse 4, 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 to me. This is Job saying, I want to go before the seat or before the throne of Almighty God.

I want to make my case. I want to present my case because I know my innocence of these accusations are relayed against me. But not only do I want to tell God about these things, I want to know what God would have to say to me about these things.

[19:07] Hey, Christian, we can learn a lot from what Job has said here. Too many times we approach the throne of God with our petitions and our requests and our beddings and our pleadings but we do not take time out to listen to what God may be saying unto us.

Job here had a desire to know what God was saying unto him. We should all have a desire to see what God has to say. How does God speak to us? God speaks to us through the Spirit. God speaks to us through His Holy Word. God does and will and can speak to His children. I would know the words which He would answer me and understand what He would say unto me. Not only would He know the words that God would say but He would understand. Now, this is a man that is suffering greatly and has been suffering greatly.

Again, folks, he has been here upon an ash heap which is a sign of mourning and he's been taking broken pieces of pottery and scraping the source just to try to get a little bit of relief from what is going on with him.

[20:14] And three so-called friends have offered no relief whatsoever. They didn't bring balm with them. They brought vinegar with them. And they've been mentally pouring that vinegar out upon Job here in the Scripture.

I would know the words which He would answer me and understand what He would say unto me. Regardless of what God would say, Job is confident that He would understand what it was. Folks, God is not going to tell you something and you not be able to comprehend it. God is not going to give you a word or a verse or a passage out of His Scripture and have you go to that and have you to read it without understanding.

That is not the way of God. That is not one bit in the way of God. And Job is confident that whatever it was that God would say unto him, he would know it and he would understand it.

And we should have that same confidence in Almighty God. We should not be saying, I think God's trying to tell me something or I think God's trying to do this or do that.

[21:19] Folks, God doesn't try. There is no trial with God. God accomplishes everything that He has set out to do. God does things. He sends famine.

He sends pestilence. He sends sickness. He sends death. He sends sermons. He sends messages. He has sent His Word. He sent messengers of His Word. He's done all these things for planet Earth.

He is not trying to do anything. He is accomplishing exactly what His Word has set out to do as the prophet Isaiah said. The prophet Isaiah says that His Word will accomplish what He set it out to do. It will. There is no doubt about that. It will. And what does the Word of God do? For a child of God, it comforts us. Yes, it convicts us as well. It still convicts me.

And I know good and well I'm a born again child of the King. But it's still convicting. But it's also a comfort. And it's a help. And it's an encouragement to us. We read accounts like Job.

[22:21] We read accounts like David. We read accounts like Daniel. We read accounts all throughout the Scriptures. Accounts of the early church and the book of Acts. We read accounts of people being thrown in prison for doing nothing more than preaching the name of Jesus Christ.

And this should be an encouragement to us. We read these things. These things were written a four times to be an admonishment for us. To help us. To encourage us.

To let us know hey, we're not the only people that's put up with this. We're not the only ones that's been persecuted. We're not the only ones that's been talked bad about. We're not the only ones that affliction has come upon.

It comes upon the children of God. It reigns upon the just and the unjust. Will He plead, verse 6, Will He plead against me with His great power? This is wonderful.

Will He plead against me with His great power? No! But He would put strength in me. Job recognizing that God has great power. Again, He's not speaking as a pagan.

[23:24] Certainly not as an atheist here. He is speaking as someone who has experienced God in the past. He says, Will He plead against me? No, He will not plead against Him.

Will He plead against me with His great power? In other words, I'm putting arguments in my own mouth. I would present my case before Almighty God. Would He plead against me?

There's a lot of legal terminology in the original Hebrew in these ten verses here. They're being used and this is one of the sections. Would He plead against me with His great power?

I praise God every day of my life. As powerful as God is. We're talking about a God that was powerful enough to speak the entire universe into existence.

He is powerful enough to do anything. He is powerful enough to save undeserving sinners out of a place called hell. And He could use that power against us. But He chooses not to.

[24:18] My God chooses to use His power in our behalf, in our stead, for our salvation, for our good, and for His glory. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Amen. Amen.

That's a wonderful God. That's why we can truthfully say God is good. Folks, I could have said that before I was saved because God had every right to cast me into hell at any point up to the point that I was saved.

He had every right in the world to do so. But God in His goodness and God in His graciousness allowed me to live, allowed me to hear the gospel, allowed me to repent, and He saved my soul. Hallelujah. That's a good God. That is a good God. You read about these other gods. You read about other gods that people worship out in the world. You read about the Hindu gods, Vishnu and Brahma.

You read about Allah. You read about any of these other gods. And what do they require? They require you to do things for them. God has done it all for me. God gave His only begotten Son that I could have life, that I could have it more abundantly.

[25:23] He gave His only begotten Son. That I could be saved. That I could forever live with Him. But all these other gods and all these other religions require work of you.

And it's not just those outlandish religions that require that as well. I'm not talking about just the polytheistic religions. Folks, the Catholic Church is bad for that too.

It's very works-based salvation within. You do this, you do that. You do it this many times a week or this many times a month. Or you're not going to heaven. Or you throw enough money in the coffer.

And that might help you or some loved one that has gone on. Folks, that is works. And it's a lie straight out of the pits of hell. Amen. Jesus Christ is the land of salvation. He and He alone.

We are saved by grace through faith. And that is it. None of our works lest any man should boast. So I plead against me with His great power. And Job gives an emphatic and wonderful no.

[26:23] But he also says what he would do. But he would put strength in me. Job is being tried here. And Job is coming to that realization. And just in this passage that we read here tonight, Job is coming to the realization that it is not for sin in his life.

And certainly not for the sin that Eliphaz accused him of in chapter 22 for those specific sins. But Job is coming to the realization this is a trial.

This is me being tried. This is me being refined. This is me being purified. This is me being sanctified. Hey, child of God, when bad things come in your life, when sickness comes, when death comes in your family, when hardships come or heartaches come, folks, it is a trial.

It is nothing more than a trial. James says, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations, knowing this is the trying of your faith, worketh patience. Your faith is being tried.

But just as Job said here in verse 10, when we come forth, we shall be as gold. We shall be as gold. We shall shine forth. We ain't got that far yet, but we will. No, but he will put strength in me. [27:35] Will he use his power against me, in other words? No. No, he'll use his power to put strength in me. During his trial, during this trial that Job is going through here, he needs strength to get through it.

And folks, if you're being tried, if you're being tested by Almighty God, if you're being tested by the circumstances and situations in your life, it is God who will bring you through those situations, and it is God who will strengthen you in all those circumstances.

Give praise unto God that He does another sign that He is definitely and certainly a good God. There is nothing wrong.

And many people will see it that way. What kind of God would do that? What kind of God would allow people to go through trial? Folks, what kind of God would save an unworthy sinner?

My God will. The same God that will try our faith. The same God that will test us. The same God that will refine us. The same God that will sanctify us. He will set us to the side.

[28:39] And He will make us into what He wants us to be. He is the God of this universe. He is the God of everyone and everything. Folks, there is no God above Him. There is nothing above Him and no one above Him.

He can do with you and do with me anything that He wants to. And He does not seek nor need our permission to do so. He'll put strength.

Job says, He will put strength in me. Folks, He will put strength in us. In every trial, every affliction. Now folks, you go to doing like I had and you just do something stupid in your life that wasn't of God.

It was of your own choosing. That's not necessarily a trial from God. Now God can still bring good out of that. But don't go pointing the finger at God. Don't go pointing the finger at God when you do something you ain't supposed to.

I said at the church that I used to pastor one time, a lady asked me one time, I forget what the situation was, but she said, well where is your faith? I said, I got plenty of faith.

[29:43] But I'm still going to wear my glasses when I drive home tonight. I got faith in God and I got faith that He'll take care of me. But, I also know that God expects His children not to act stupid and not to do stupid stuff to get ourselves into stupid situations.

And I've done that. And if you're honest with yourself, you've done it as well. Verse 7, There the righteous might dispute with Him. So should I be delivered forever from my judge.

There. This verse begins with there. Where are we talking about? Well, you have to go back to the last where that was brought up in this passage of Scripture. Where is the last where?

At the seat of God. In verse 2. Verse 2, Even today is my, or I'm sorry, verse 3. Oh, that I knew where I might find Him that I might come even to His seat.

That's the last where that we read about in the Scripture. So that has to be the there that we're talking about here. There the righteous might dispute with Him. Where? At the seat of God.

[30:46] At the throne of God. Where God is. Where the power of God is. And folks, where the power of God is, where God is Himself, is the power, is the mercy, is the grace, is the strength, is everything about God that we will ever need in our lives.

He says there, the righteous might dispute with Him. Notice, the righteous might dispute with Him. And again, we're not talking about arguing. We're not talking about God saying, well, you did this and you shouldn't have.

And us saying, well, I had to because of this, because of that. There's many people that think they're going to stand before God one day and make a case for themselves. And say, you don't understand my situation, Lord. You don't understand what I had to go through.

You don't understand my upbringing. You don't understand this. And you don't understand that.

That will not hold water in God's court. Right. That will not hold water. The righteous might dispute with Him.

The righteous might have dialogue with God. The righteous might be able to present their petitions and present their supplications unto God. There, at His throne, it says that the righteous can do this.

[31:49] Folks, the wicked cannot. The unsaved cannot. Those that are not in right relationship with God cannot do this. Why? Because they haven't been saved yet. They are not gods.

They are not righteous. You cannot do righteous things unless you are a righteous person. You cannot do godly things unless you are a godly person. Period. He says, there, the righteous might dispute with Him.

So should I be delivered forever from my judge. Job's saying, I'm a righteous person. He says, there, the righteous might dispute with Him. There, at the throne of God, he says, so should I be delivered forever from my judge.

Folks, again, I said it a little while ago. We don't approach God like He is our judge. God is judge. Don't you get me wrong. God is judge.

He has been judge. He is right now and He will be judge in the future. Right. The Bible describes Jesus Christ in Revelation 19. It says He doth judge and make war. God judges everything.

[32:54] He judges the righteous. He judges the wicked. He judges works. Talked a little bit about that this morning in Sunday school. Yeah. He judges everything. And Christ says in the last chapter of Revelation, He says, Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me to give unto everyone according to His works.

Yeah. God and Christ, they are the judge of all things. And God is the judge that is being spoken of here. But He says, so should I be delivered forever from my judge.

In other words, I can approach His throne and I can present my case. That's what Job is thinking. Christ presents our case for us. And I thank God that I have a lawyer like Jesus Christ. I thank God that I have Him as my mediator because maybe by myself outside of Jesus Christ, I will be consumed by the holiness and righteousness of Almighty God.

Even Job though, even Job before Christ, before the Gospel, even Job had an idea that this wouldn't happen to the righteous. That's amazing to me.

It's amazing that someone, someone so many years before the Gospel and before the birth of Jesus Christ, so many centuries before this, had an idea that the righteous would not be consumed by the holiness of God.

[34:19] So should I be delivered forever from my judge. Folks, we are delivered forever from judgment once we are in Christ. There's one of the greatest verses in the New Testament.

Romans 8.1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those that be in Christ Jesus. Amen. There is no condemnation toward me. There is no condemnation in me.

But God is judge. God is judge. But He is not saying here I'll be delivered from God. I'll be delivered from the judgment aspect of God is what Job is getting at here.

Behold, I go forward, but He is not there and backward, but I cannot perceive Him on the left hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him. He hideth Himself on the right hand that I cannot see Him.

Folks, this is some of the most heart-wrenching, if not the most heart-wrenching Scripture in the book of Job. These two verses here. Behold, I go forward, but He is not there.

[35:16] I go forward, but I move forward. Job here is saying, I'm looking to the future. I'm pressing toward the mark as Paul wrote it in the New Testament. I'm going on.

I'm going forward. I'm looking to the front or to the future, but I cannot see God. I cannot find God. God doesn't seem to be there.

That's how Job feels. He says, I go forward. I go forward, but He is not there. And backward, but I cannot perceive Him. So he's looked to the future.

And he cannot see God. He says, I move backwards and I cannot perceive Him. In the past, as I've already stated tonight, Job was highly blessed of God and highly favored of God.

And folks, if you're here and you're saved, born again tonight, you are highly blessed and highly favored of the Lord. You may not feel it as far as certain circumstances that come your way or certain situations that may come your way, but if you have been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ that flowed from Calvary's cross, if you have been cleansed, if you have been made clean and whole and pure in the eyes of Almighty God, you are highly blessed and highly favored of the

Lord.

[36:29] Amen. Don't matter what comes our way. But here Job says, I look to the future. I look forward or I go forward and He says, I am backward, but I cannot perceive Him.

I look back to where I could feel the closeness of God when I was blessed. When I would go to God on behalf of my children.

You read about this in Job. Amen. Job made sacrifices on behalf of his children. He acted as a priest on behalf of his children in case they had sin.

Right. And God heard him. And God blessed him. He says, I am looking back and I cannot perceive Him. Folks, have you ever been there? Have you ever been there?

You move forward. You look toward the future but it does not look like God is there. All you see is a hazy fog. You look toward your back or you go in the past and you think, I could feel Him here.

[37:25] I could feel Him there. I know that He's redeemed me. I know that He has healed me. I know that He healed this one or that one when I prayed about it in the past whether it be a year ago, a week ago, or ten years ago.

I know that God has moved. But now, I move back and I cannot feel God. I can't perceive God. He says, I look on the left hand where He does work.

On the left hand. But folks, this is so important. This is so important. On the left hand where He does work, Job is recognizing that God is still active.

On the left hand where He does work, He does work. That is present tense. On the left hand where He does work. It's not that Job says God isn't there. He's saying, I don't see God.

I don't perceive God. But I know He's there. I know that He's still active. Hey, Christian, we should have the same thoughts about Almighty God. If you can't feel Him, it doesn't know that He's there.

[38:26] Most days, I really don't feel saved. But I know that I am because I know that I've called upon the name of Jesus Christ. And the Bible says, Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jesus Christ shall be saved.

Amen. Just because I can't feel Him doesn't mean He's not there. And as Job says here in verse 9, on the left hand where He does work. Not only is that present tense, that's present perfect tense.

He's constantly working. The God that watches over Israel never sleeps. He does work. It's so important to see that although Job cannot see, although he cannot feel, although he cannot recognize that God is anywhere around him, he is recognizing that God is still active.

He knows that He is still active. And what is He actively doing? My goodness. Go back up to verse 6. No, but He would put strength in me. He is currently acting on behalf of Job.

On the left hand where He doth work. On the left hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him. I can't see Him. But I know He's there and I know that He's working.

[39:38] He hideth Himself on the right hand that I cannot see Him. On the right hand, my goodness, that's the side of favor. That's the side of strength. That's the side of power.

We've got the left hand where He knows that God works. We've got the right hand where Job would know that power and strength and favor come from. And Job has experienced all these things of God.

But He says, I cannot behold Him. I cannot see Him. But Christian, no matter what has come at you in your life, no matter what hardships has come your way, or that may be coming your way sometime down the path, you remember the words of Job here.

He says, on the left hand where He doth work, He knew that God was there and He knew that He was active. And He says, on the right, excuse me, He outeth Himself on the right hand that I cannot see Him.

Folks, it is no different than the stars and it is no different than the sun. Even when it's black dark or pitch dark over here on our side of the world, we know that the stars and the moon are up there in the sky, but there's a light shining on the other side of the world somewhere.

[40:47] Even when it's pitch black in your own life, even when it seems like all hell has come against you, know that God is still there. Know that He's still working on your behalf. Know that He's doing it for your

good and for His glory.

Hallelujah. Amen. I know what this feels like, folks, and every one of you in here probably know what this feels like. Where is God? Where is God? And God, hey, God welcomes you to come to Him.

As long as it's done in faith. As long as it is done in faith, such as Job. You say, God, I can't feel you. I know that you're there.

I can't feel you. God welcomes that. And He wants us to come to Him with every supplication and every petition. Verse 10, and we'll be done.

This is a wonderful verse. This is the diamond that's in the middle of the ash heap here. But He knoweth the way that I take. When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

[41:49] Now, a lot of emphasis and a lot of sermons has been put on the last half of that verse. And rightfully so, when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. But folks, in the context of this, in the context of everything we've been over tonight, but He knoweth the way that I take.

He has just got through saying, I've looked to the future. I've moved forward. And God doesn't seem to be there. I look back or I go back.

And God doesn't seem to be there. I look to the left where He does work. And I cannot see Him. I look to the right. And I cannot see Him. But this word, but.

But He knoweth the way that I take. He is recognizing not only in verse 8 that God is still active. Or in verse 9, that God is still active.

But He recognizes in verse 10 that God is still omniscient. And He knows everything about us. He knows our path. He knows the way that He has set before us.

[42:53] He knows what way we are going. He knows every hill. He knows every valley. He knows every stream. He knows every pond. He knows every pile of dirt. He knows every hole.

He knows every hiding place of the enemy. He knows it all! He says He knows the way that I take. But, He knoweth the way that I take. Folks, take comfort in that.

Take comfort in that. God knows the road that you are on. I don't know, I don't, I don't know what road you might be on. I don't know what hardship you might be suffering through right now. Or what hardship may come in the future.

But know this, God does. God knows the way that you take. He is the one that has ordained that path. He is the one that has said it's okay for you to walk on that. And if He has said it's okay for you to walk on it, if you don't have the strength currently to do it, He will supply that strength at some point in the future.

He will not abandon His children. He will not do so. He says, I know, He says, but He knoweth the way that I take. Take comfort in that. It's just like He told the Israelites over in the book of Isaiah.

[44:01] Folks, that promise goes straight forward to me and you both where He says, when thou passest through the water, I will be with thee. And through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest across the fire, thou shalt not be burned.

Neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Folks, that was a promise to God, to the Jewish people, but we can bank on that promise as well because Jesus Christ will never leave us nor forsake us. He will be with us always, even to the end of the world. Hallelujah. Amen. And if we come across those things on our path, Christ will be right there with us.

Folks, you think about what we heard about last Sunday about the account of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. If you're going through the ferns, God will be right there with you. God will be walking amongst those flames with you.

He will be there. He will protect you. He will help you. You say, well, it might get hot. It might hurt. It might do this.

[44:58] And it might do that. Folks, if it is for your good, just let it happen. If it is for God's glory, just let it happen. Yes, it might hurt. Yes, it might hurt.

It might squeeze. It might bite. It might burn. It might do any number of things. But folks, if it is for the glory of God, don't fight against it.

And that's it. I understand that's a whole lot easier said than done. But he knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. Notice, Job doesn't say here, I might come forth as gold.

He doesn't say, after this trial that I'm going through, I might be alright. After this trial I'm going through, I could be okay. After this trial that I'm going through, things might get a little bit better. That is not what Job says here. He doesn't even insinuate that here in verse 10. But he knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

[45:59] And again, he is recognizing where this trial is coming from. And it is not a trial because of sin. It is a trial to the glory of God and to the good of Job.

It is a trial to refine him, to make him even more pure, to conform him even more into what God wants him to be. And folks, whenever we are put through trials here on this earth, whenever it is God that is doing the trying, as Job said here in verse 10, when he hath tried me, when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

If it is God that is doing the trying, and it is God that is doing the refining, if it is God that is doing these things, it is God that has given us the strength to make it through, it is God that is guiding us on our way through, it is God that will bring us through whatever trial comes our way.

When he hath tried me, not when we put ourselves into a stupid situation that I said earlier, and we're bad to do that, when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Folks, you've got to insert the gospel somewhere. Yeah. And I've done this in the gospel a couple of times and I understand that. But Jesus Christ, while he did, while he was on the cross, say, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

[47:19] And I made the comparison. Job here felt forsaken. He couldn't find God. But Jesus Christ entered a trial. His entire life, truth be known, was a trial.

Yeah. We don't have an account of his entire life. We have an account from his birth to the time he was just a toddler. And then we don't hear nothing about him again until he was about 12 years old. And we don't read much about him again until he was about 33 years old, or 30 years old when his ministry began. Yeah. But folks, he entered a trial in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Yeah. It was a major trial. The Bible says, Luke said, that his sweat became as great drops of blood. He entered a trial there. He entered a furnace there.

And he went through the fire on the cross. And he done it not, kind of like Job here, not because of sin. And Jesus certainly didn't do it because of his sin.

[48:18] Right. Jesus entered into that furnace in Gethsemane. He said, let this cup pass from me. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but thy will be done.

Nevertheless, not what I will, but thy will. Folks, he entered the furnace there. And he done it not because of any sin that he had. He done it for your sin and for my sin. He done it for my transgression and your transgression and our trespasses and all of our iniquities.

He suffered the wrath of God. He suffered this furnace of affliction. He suffered the fire of affliction on your behalf and on my behalf.

He suffered these things. Job here suffered through a lot. But Job did not suffer what Christ did. And Job, although the Bible describes him as perfect and upright and a man that feared God and ensued evil, still had sin in his life.

He had sin of some kind. And God points that out to him towards the end of the book of Job. But Christ entered a furnace and suffered through a fire.

[49:28] Suffered through death itself and overcame death on behalf of you and I. And I praise God for that. He knoweth the way that I take.

When we hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. Folks, Jesus Christ was tried. And he was found to be true. He was found to be the Messiah. He was found to be the Son of God.

He was found to be everything that he said that he was. And when he was tried, he was put in a bar of two. He rose again to the third and appointed morning.

And he rose to glory. That's coming forth as gold. If nothing else in the Scriptures is coming forth as gold, that would be a description of Jesus Christ coming out of the furnace, coming out of the fire, and rising to glory.

To sit at the right hand of glory and the right hand of majesty, God the Father. To forever make intercession on behalf of all those that have repented of their ways and trusted in Him and His Gospel.

[50:30] God bless you all. That's the message for this evening. I appreciate your attention.