

**Job 15 & 16; “Christ Pleads For You”, Sermon #28 in the series entitled –  
“Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall  
on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, in the Afternoon Worship.**

I have decided to take these two chapters together so that we might see what Eliphaz says to Job here, and then also see the beginning of Job’s response to him which goes on to the end of chapter 17. I want to use the words of Job in chapter 16, verses 20 and 21 to open up the theme of this passage. The theme is that Job needed a friend during this most difficult trial. He needed a friend who could sympathize with him in his distress. He needed someone who would plead for him as a man pleads for his neighbor. He needed the Friend who sticks closer than a brother. He needed our Lord Jesus Christ.

If only he could have understood better what he did have at that time, through what our Lord Jesus would do, when He would come and lay down His life at the cross. This, our Redeemer would do for Job, some thousands of years later. But even though Job did not know it, He was applying the benefits of His life and death to him at that very hour. He will do the same for you and I who believe in Him now. Let me give you 3 ways in which Christ interceded for Job at that very time of his affliction. I will also apply this to ourselves who are going to observe the Lord’s Supper in just a few minutes.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – Christ was interceding for Job, even when his friends became his accusers.**

From chapter 15 I want to give you, in an overview, Eliphaz’ accusations against Job for the way that He was speaking about God. 1<sup>st</sup>, there is the accusation that Job had cast off the fear of God. (verse 4) In verses 2 and 3 he accuses Job of answering with empty knowledge, and filling himself with the east wind, reasoning with unprofitable talk, and speaking in a way that could do no good. In verse 5 he actually says that Job’s iniquity was teaching his mouth, and that he had chosen the tongue of the crafty in his speeches to them. Eliphaz then says in verse 6 that Job’s own mouth condemned him and not his. Job’s own lips would testify against him.

Now, we must acknowledge the truth of Proverbs chapter 10, verse 19 in this regard. Solomon says there – “In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.” As we read the book of Job we find that at many points, Job should have restrained his lips. Or he should have simply quietly waited on the Lord. But since he knew in his own heart that he was not guilty of any sin that would have brought all these afflictions upon him, he chose rather to speak and to justify himself. He chose to declare his own integrity and righteousness before God and his 3 friends. There was real sin in some of Job’s words, because in trying too hard to justify himself, he was not justifying God in this trial.

One wonders why he could not have chosen simply to wait upon the Lord Himself, with a quiet and expectant spirit. That he would chose to think well of God, even though these things had come upon him. Jeremiah went through somewhat similar circumstances to Job, and he said in the book of Lamentations, chapter 3, verses 25-29 – “The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him.” “It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.” “It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.” “Let him sit alone and keep silent, because God has laid it on him; let him put his mouth in the dust – there may yet be hope.”

This would have been the right way for him to have proceeded. But, if Job had done this, we would not have all of the rest of the book of Job, which is so rich to us spiritually, in truth and application, to our lives. This book of Job is very valuable for us in terms of instruction, because Job chose to hold fast his integrity and to speak of it! Going back to Proverbs chapter 10 once again, in the verses which follow the statement that in a multitude of words there is transgression, it says this

in verses 20 and 21 – “The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the heart of the wicked is worth little.” “The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of wisdom.” We see from these words that Job’s words, since he was an upright man, were feeding many then, and they feed us here today. He was a man who was fearing God and turning away from evil. And his words have fed many people in many generations, because they became a part of the Holy Scripture. God saw to it that this would be the case.

God knew that through the means of Job’s sufferings, we would come to know his thoughts, and see how his faith was tried. And we would see how he came through this trial because our Lord was actually upholding him in it, although he could not see or feel it at this time. What was so troubling to Job was that his own friends could not sympathize with him in the trial because they thought that he had sinned in some way to bring this trial upon himself. They started out well, as it says in chapter 2, verses 11-13. When they saw him they wept with him, and they tore their robes, and they sprinkled dust on their heads. They sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights and they did not speak a word to him.

But as they sat with him for some days, while he poured out his complaint to God, they wrongly began to believe that these things had come upon him because of some great sin or hypocrisy in his life. And then they began to act more like prosecuting attorneys than godly friends. This aggravated Job’s pain in his mind and heart exceedingly. Eliphaz led the charge in this regard. Since Job would not confess his sins before him and the others, he begins to justify himself and his own wisdom before Job in his speech. In verse 7 he says – “Are you the first man who was born? And verse 8 – “Do you limit wisdom to yourself?” “What do you know that we do not know?” “What do you understand that is not in us?” “Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, much older than your father.” “Are the consolations of God too small for you, and word spoken gently with you?” “Why does your heart carry you away, and what do your eyes wink at, that you turn your spirit against God, and let such words go out of your mouth?”

But Job was a man who feared God. He feared Him more than any other man on the face of the earth in that day. And yet, these men were blind to it. They ought to have known better than to speak this way to their friend. Eliphaz went on to speak in verses 14-16 about purity. He said – “What is man that he could be pure, and he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous?” If God puts no trust in His saints, and the heavens are not pure in His sight, how much less man, who is abominable and filthy, who drinks iniquity like water?” It appears that Eliphaz thought that Job was abominable and filthy, in this situation, and at this time.

But you and I should understand something which Eliphaz did not appear to, in regard to his speech with Job. When God justifies the ungodly through Jesus Christ our Lord, all of our sins are washed away in His blood. We are declared righteous in God’s sight, for Jesus’ sake. Moreover, we are born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And further yet – Because we know God by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, He becomes our Advocate before God and our Intercessor with the Father so that we will be cleansed and purged of our sins on an on-going basis from the moment we first believe. God watches over and protects us all the days of our life. Surely His goodness and His mercy follow us all the days of our life.

So we can be pure because of the work of Jesus our Redeemer. He does buy us back from our sins when we have faith in Him. God does approve of His saints when they are cleansed of their sins for Jesus’ sake. In regard to this trial, God had put His trust in Job who was one of His saints, that he was a man of integrity and that he would be able to defeat Satan in this great spiritual battle that was being waged against him. God would uphold Job and bring him through it, and He would prove to Satan that Job would not curse Him to His face. Eliphaz’ view of Job was wrong, and His view of

God Himself was wrong. The heavens are pure in God sight, because He Himself is perfectly pure. The angels who did not sin are perfectly pure. Eliphaz needed to have a better understanding concerning God and His holy work in men's lives. Yes, it is true, that in our sinful selves there is much sin. In our flesh is no good thing. But in Christ, and through His redemptive work, men are forgiven of their sins, and as they confess them, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

In all the rest of the verses of chapter 15 from verse 17 to verse 35, Eliphaz spends all that time trying to show Job the doom of the hypocrite, as though he was the one who knew Job's heart. But at the end of the book, Eliphaz will be forced to confess that what He spoke of God Himself was wrong. And the things that were true that he said, these things he misapplied. May it not be the case with any of us, that we fall into such God-dishonoring speech concerning any of our brethren who are going through trials. May we all remember Christ, and what He has done for all of God's saints, both Old Testament and New. He died for their sins and was raised for their justification. And to the pure, He shows Himself pure. And they will be pure by Christ's grace.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – Christ was interceding for Job, even when he wrongly conceived of what God was doing to him.**

In chapter 16, verse 1 it says – “Then Job answered and said: ‘I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all!’ “Shall words of the wind have an end?” “Or what provokes you that you answer?” “I also could speak as you do, if your soul were in my soul's place.” “I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you; but I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the comfort of my lips would relieve your grief.” Perfect words thus far. And we ourselves should think this way of any of our brethren going through a great trial in their life. What can I say that would strengthen them, comfort them, encourage them, and relieve their grief.

But in verses 6-17 Job once again makes the terrible mistake of attributing to God that which belonged to Satan. “Though I speak, my grief is not relieved; and if I remain silent, how am I eased?” “But now He has worn me out; You have made desolate all my company.” “You have shriveled me up, and it is a witness against me and bears witness to my face.” “He tears me in His wrath, and hates me; He gnashes at me with His teeth; my adversary sharpens His gaze upon me.” “They gape at me with their mouth, they strike me reproachfully on the cheek, they gather together against me.”

“God has delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over to the hands of the wicked.” “I was at ease but He has shattered me; He also has taken me by the neck and shaken me to pieces; He has set me up for His target, His archers surround me.” “He pierces my heart and does not pity; He pours out my gall on the ground.” “He breaks me with wound upon wound; He runs at me like a warrior.” “I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, and laid my head in the dust.” “My face is flushed from weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death; although no violence is in my hands, and my prayer is pure.”

Here we find Job's worst misconceptions about God. They are a long list of misconceptions and misrepresentations of God from verse 7 to verse 14. God had done none of these things to Job. It was all the work of Satan who was trying to destroy Job without a cause. And I would suggest to you that it was also Satan who was succeeding in deceiving Job's friends in regard to their thinking that he was a hypocrite. And it was Satan who was deceiving Job in terms of his conceiving of God's setting him up for a target, and taking him by the neck and shaking him to pieces. The words of Job in these verses are actually much like those of the Lord Jesus on the cross.

Although here, we must see, that Christ's sufferings go beyond Job's, and they do so for the reason that He was dying for Job, and all who would go through great trials for His name's sake. Christ died for all who suffer for righteousness sake; all those who would do battle with the Devil,

and would be made strong in the midst of the trial to prevail over him. Psalm 22, verses 6-8 and 12-16. “But I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people.” “All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!” “Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.” “They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.”

“I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me.” “My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought me to the dust of death.” “For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.” “They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all my bones.” Now, in the course of just a few hours, our Lord was reduced in His Humanity to this awful state, before devils and men. Why did He do it? He did it for sinners like you and me. He did it also, so that when we became righteous people by His grace, that we would know that His sufferings went deeper than anything that we will experience at the hands of men or the Devil.

His sufferings atone even for our sinful misconceptions of God; the sinful things which we speak out of frustration in the midst of going through the trial, and in the midst of thinking that God has deserted us. He has in no wise deserted us. Christ is right there with us, upholding us by His might power and grace, so that we will be able to endure it.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> – Christ was interceding for Job, even when he wanted someone to plead for him.**

Verse 18 – “O earth, do not cover up my blood, and let my cry have no resting place!” “Surely even now my witness is in heaven, and my evidence is on high.” “My friends scorn me; my eyes pour out tears to God.” “Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor!” “For when a few years are finished, I shall go the way of no return.” So, as you can see here, a man pleading with God for his neighbor would be someone who knew Job well. He would know him like his near neighbor. He would know Job’s character and would be a person who could perceive that he was living his life to God.

Job’s own friends had scorned him, and his eyes were now pouring out tears to God for this. Little did he know, that the Pre-Incarnate Lord Jesus Christ was doing this very thing for him at that time. He was pleading with His Father in heaven that dear Job would be forgiven for these misrepresentations that he had spoken against the Father. And, that the Father would in a coming day, when He was on the cross, that He would remember to punish Him for these false words that Job had spoken. That the Father would remember His own perfect righteousness, and He would impute it to Job. That He would remember His own sufferings, of being falsely accused, which would lead to His death for Job, so that Job would eventually come through this trial and be mightily blessed on His account.

Job was crying out that that the earth would not cover up his blood, and that his cry would find no resting place. But in Psalm 22, verse 1, our Lord Jesus cried out – “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” “Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?” “O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; and in the night season, and am not silent.” “But You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.” “Our fathers trusted in You, they trusted, and You delivered them” “They cried to You, and were delivered.” “They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.”

This was the worst part of Job’s trial; when he thought the worst of God. And yet, here is Christ dying for Job’s sins; bearing his griefs and carrying his sorrows, smitten by God and afflicted for dear Job. His wounds and words would plead for Job. And it is the same for you, dear Christian, in your

darkest hour, when you think that God has forsaken you. But it is not so. Because Christ died for this. This is why He Himself has said – I will never leave you, nor forsake you. (Hebrews 12: 5)