

**Job 10: 1-12; “God’s Preserving Care over Me”, Sermon # 19 in the series entitled –  
“Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul  
Rendall on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, in the Afternoon Worship.**

Job is speaking here in the bitterness of his soul. He says many things to God about God’s treatment of him in this situation, which although they seemed to be true to him, according to his awful experience of how he perceived God in this situation, they were really not true at all of God, in reality. And so, at this hour, I will be turning whatever is untrue in Job’s statements around, and I make them right according to the New Covenant truth of what Christ has brought to us by means of His righteousness and His sufferings. I will do this so that we might see God clearly, as He really is. He really is, at all times, the righteous and loving, faithful and compassionate God, that He says that He is in His word. His care preserves our spirit in every situation of difficulty and distress that we personally will face.

Let me give you 3 statements which will help you to see the truth that God’s care is what preserves your life and your spirit at all times in your living your Christian life to Him. 1<sup>st</sup> of all – God does not contend with any of His people when they are walking blamelessly before Him. (verses 1-3) 2<sup>nd</sup> – God became a Man so that He would not have to seek for my iniquity. (verses 3-8) And 3<sup>rd</sup> – God having granted me life and favor in Christ, His care preserves my spirit in all situations of my living my life to Him. (verses 9-12) Let us think together of how extensive God’s preserving care is over our lives as believers.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – God does not contend with any of His people when they are walking blamelessly before Him.**

Verse 1 says – “My soul loathes my life; I will give free course to my complaint, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.” “I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me; show me why You contend with me.’” The statements which Job posits here, in the presence of his 3 friends who have grossly misunderstood him, are not right statements of God. Job will repent of them at the end of this book. But we need to see how easy it is for any Christian to draw wrong conclusions about God if they are going through adverse circumstances like Job has been going through; circumstances which lowered him to the dust.

Job is complaining here against God Himself. The reason that he was complaining was because He knew that God was sovereign over all things. He knew that God was sovereign over all the events of his life. He knew that because He was God, that He had ordained all these things that had happened to him, according to the counsel of His own will. Now, it is a really great thing when the Lord opens your eyes as a Christian to understand this precious truth of God’s sovereignty over all things and all people. It is a glorious and precious thing when a person comes to understand that God is sovereign in His providential ordering of all things. He is sovereign in the acts of salvation; in the way that He brings a person to Himself, and changes their heart in the New Birth, so that the course of their life is changed forever for good.

Do you glory in God’s sovereignty, dear Christian? God has loved you with an everlasting love, and with cords of love He has drawn you to Himself. The Lord becomes Your keeper and the shade on your right hand. The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your soul. The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in, from this time forth and forevermore. Precious truth this! Perhaps you have memorized Psalm 121, and you glory in that truth daily.

But what do you do if you come into a situation like Job’s? What do you do when you find yourself in a situation where you lose your children or your possessions or your health; a situation where your godly friends think badly of you because you have lost these people and things, and they think that it is your fault. They think that there must be some hypocrisy in your life which God is judging you for. What do you do, when it seems that in your experience as

though the Lord is not keeping you from all evil, or keeping your soul, but rather He seems to be condemning you and contending with you? What should you think? What should you do? Job was giving free course, it says here, to his complaint to God. Is there such a thing as righteous complaining in the sight of God; in the presence of God? Well, there is no excuse for sinful complaining, as it says in Philippians chapter 2, verse 14 – “Do all things without murmuring and complaining (without complaining and disputing), that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation...”

This is how God would have us behave, knowing as we do, that it says in verse 13 of that same chapter 2, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” But there is a righteous kind of complaining that is mentioned in a number of places in the Bible. It is the complaint that we make when our spirit is overwhelmed with what we are going through. It is when our experience of life has become bitter to us because we do not see God coming to our aid. We do not see Him taking any steps to deliver us from our affliction, or to rescue us from our distress of mind and body, soul and spirit. The Bible does show us what we should do in the difficult times of our experience of what we are going through.

Turn with me over to Psalm 142, and I will read you the whole Psalm. “I cry out to the Lord with my voice; with my voice to the Lord I make my supplication.” “I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble.” “When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path.” “In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me.” “Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul.” “I cried out to You, O Lord: I said, ‘You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.’” “Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.” “Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name; the righteous shall surround me, for You shall deal bountifully with me.”

Now this was a Psalm of David. It was a contemplation of his when he was in the cave, hiding from his persecutor, king Saul. Here, he cried out to God with his voice and it was here that he prayed to God, pouring out his complaint before Him, and declaring to Him his trouble. Now, each of us must answer the question whether this is what we do, when we are overwhelmed. For it says in verse 3 – When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. David knew, and you should know it too, that when you are overwhelmed, he knows the set of circumstances which has brought you to that place, and knows that it may not at all be your fault. He knows the way in which you walk.

This ought to be a great comfort to you, and an encouragement to pray to Him, especially when people around you, even Christian people do not acknowledge you, and no one seems to care for your soul. Pour out your complaint before Him. In the secret place of the steep pathway, He will hear your voice. He wants to hear your voice, for your voice in prayer is sweet to Him, and your face looking up to Him, is lovely, it says in Song of Solomon 2: 14. Remind the Lord that He is your refuge, your portion in the land of the living. Tell Him that you have been brought very low. Tell Him all about what your persecutors are doing to you, or how your friends who should know better, are mistakenly understanding what you are going through.

Ask Him to bring your soul out of prison so that you might praise His name, and so that you might be restored to the good fellowship with the saints. God is well able to do this. And pray for something else that is not mentioned here. Pray that the schemes of the Devil would be thwarted and destroyed in regard to you. This was the source of the attack upon Job, not God. God was actually boasting to the Devil in the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter; boasting that there was no man like him on the earth. Again, it does not seem evident to me from the way that Job is speaking here that he knew what the Devil was trying to do to him, and so He prays that God will not condemn him.

Job knew right well that God was sovereign over what was happening to him, but he did not believe that he deserved what he was going through. And in this case he did not. He knew that he was not sinless, but he knew that he was blameless. And this integrity of his, he was going to defend. He was not, as of yet in this trial, able to confidently assert His faith in Christ the Messiah, who He knew was yet to come; his Redeemer who he mentions in chapter 19. And so, we must conclude – How important is the doctrine of justification by faith; not trusting in our own works in any regard, for our acceptance with God. When we know this truth, then we also remember the continual love of God for us, even when because of circumstances we cannot feel His love for us, because of adverse circumstances that we are passing through.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – God became a Man so that He would not have to seek for my iniquity.**

(verses 3-7)

“Does it seem good to You that You should oppress, that You should despise the work of Your hands, and smile on the counsel of the wicked?” “Do You have eyes of flesh?” “Or do You see as man sees?” “Are Your days like the days of a mortal man?” “Are Your years like the days of a mighty man, that You should seek for my iniquity and search out my sin, although You know that I am not wicked, and there is no one who can deliver from Your hand?” “Your hands have made me and fashioned me.” “Yet You would destroy me.” Now, God was not at all intending to destroy Job by permitting him to go through this trial and face off with the Devil. God does not at all despise the work of His hands and smile on the counsel of the wicked.

This perspective Job came to because it seemed that the evidence of it was all around him. But it was not God who was oppressing Job, but it was the Devil. And you and I should understand that in order for us to know God’s great love for righteousness, and His great love for sinners, that His purpose from before the foundation of the world was to send His Son. Because, when He did send His Son, He could say, even though He is impassible in His Being as God, He could say in the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus – I do have eyes of flesh. I do see as a man sees. I will have 33 years of days like a mortal man, and then I will suffer much greater anguish of spirit, even than you did, Job, so that I will be able to completely identify with your sufferings and your anguish of spirit.

Ah, this is the point of all of this, isn’t it? So many people think that God’s hands made them and fashioned them, as an intricate unity, and yet they think that God doesn’t understand what they are going through, and even that He is somehow cruel in his ordaining that we go through certain sufferings so that we might better understand why Christ came into the world, and why He had to die for our sins. It is because God doesn’t despise the work of His hands. It is because He doesn’t smile on the counsel of the wicked. But instead, when we read the gospels, we see that He would use the counsel of wicked men against His own dear Son, our Lord Jesus. He would permit them to treat Him as a deceiver and a wicked man, permit them to condemn Him as a malefactor. The Father would not intervene when they cried out crucify Him, crucify Him.

The Lord knew their thoughts; that they would think that they were righteous by their own works in putting Him to death. But who was so righteous as the Lord Jesus in all His speech and in all of His behavior before them? Who so loving and kind and good to people who did not deserve it. Even when the scribes and the Pharisees and the leaders of Israel brought Him up on false charges and condemned Him for saying that He was the Son of God, they were condemning a perfect Man. This was for our sakes, brethren, and for everyone before and after the cross, who would believe in Him. Christ’s dying was so that God would not have to seek for our iniquity, and search out our sin on the Day of Judgment someday. Or, even now, either.

God knows the sins of our hearts as well as the sins of our actions; knows them better than we ourselves do. Therefore, you ought to be very glad, dear Christian, this afternoon, that it is so; that God chooses not to remember Your sins because He sees You in Christ. And He who has begun a good work in your heart in initial definitive sanctification will bring it to completion as

you go through this life, learning of the sinfulness of the remaining corruption which is still in your heart. And also learning righteousness by and through the grace of Christ. Each of us needs this observance of the Lord's Supper today. We need to remember the Lord's death on our behalf. That even though it is true that we have grown in wisdom and righteousness in learning to do the Lord's will and keep His commandments, that even all through that process we will need to have Christ's righteousness imputed to the best of our works, and we will need the blood of Christ to cleanse our minds, our hearts, and our conscience from all that is wrong and sinful.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – God having granted me life and favor in Christ, His care preserves my spirit in all situations of my living my life to Him.** (verses 9-12)

“Remember, I pray, that You have made me like clay.” “And will You turn me into dust again?” “Did You not pour me out like milk, and curdle me like cheese, clothe me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews?” “You have granted me life and favor, and Your care has preserved my spirit.” In verses 8-10 Job is focusing on the fact that it was God who formed him in his mother's womb; an intricate unity of soul and spirit, and body altogether in one person. Job is saying – Did you not make me out of clay, like you did with Adam in the Beginning? And yet You do so now, with all men since, in the womb; forming that body personally, and pouring into it all the vital life and juices, the chyle, the milk of life that the infant needs to be sustained there, pouring into the body the soul and spirit, this life-giving nourishment, curdling it all like cheese in this wonderful and mysterious way of Your working.

You have done this for me, He says, for me personally. Each of us needs to confess the same. We are nothing sound or wholesome in all of our being, without God's working; His preserving care. In His work, there in the womb, God clothes the body with skin and flesh, and knits it together with bones and sinews. God grants life and favor in His common grace to everyone living. And by His good care in and by His providence, He grants that every living thing will be sustained by Him, as well. The God who creates, also then preserves. And in verse 12b, Job says – “Your care has preserved my spirit”. Not only the body is preserved, moment by moment, and day by day by His common grace to all humanity, but the spirit is sustained as well, and it is sustained in a very special way, by God's special grace, His saving grace, in the life of every Christian.

Verse 12 in the King James version reads this way – “Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.” I want you to be able to see, dear Christian that God's care of you is established very particularly by His visitations to You on a moment by moment daily basis, through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is what Christ purchased for you by His death, and what He brings to you now because of His resurrection from the dead. This is what we want to remember when we partake of these elements, the body and the blood of Christ. Yes, there is a physical upholding of our body which keeps us in life until our days are complete, and God does sustain our bodies in many ways. But the soul, eternal soul and spirit of man is the most important part of us.

When God visits to save, He gives spiritual life and favor. In the original Hebrew it reads – You have given me “lives” and favor; meaning, that there is natural life created in the womb, and then there is also, for everyone believing in Jesus, spiritual life which is created by God in our heart, that life which is given in the New Birth. And this life is also cared for and sustained through the visitations of God to us in our spirit on a continual regular on-going basis. Let us glory in this special care to us which is based not on a general love which God has for us, but is based upon a particular personal eternal and everlasting love for us, which will keep us and help us to learn all that He would have to learn, to grow up into Christ, even as Job did in his day.

