

THEN CAME THE MORNING (THE LIFE OF JOB)

This is an interesting and to us a controversy story about a just and blameless man under a test proposed by Satan to God. He was from the land of Uz. He possessed a host of sheep, camels, oxen, donkeys and a very great body of servants (Job 1). He feared God and shunned evil. He was a wealthy man, but not one prideful and selfish. His life was always a light to his world. God took notice of it and said to Satan: "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and abstains from and shuns all evil; and still he holds fast his integrity although you moved Me against him to destroy him without cause" (Job 2: 3). At Satan's request, God allowed him to touch Job with the death of his family, destruction of his properties and disease on his entire body. As a matter of fact, he was disfigured beyond imagination. To that his friends lifted up their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and they cast dust over their heads toward the heavens (Job 2). Job used a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself, and he sat down among the ashes. His ordeal continued for a long time. His wife suggested him to renounce God and die. In time, his friends from pity to the pointing of the finger, blamed him for his situation.

The time of his illness became a debate time among Job and his friends. He defended himself by saying, "Surely, I wish to speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue and reason my case with God" (Job 13:3); "though He will slay me, yet will I wait for and trust Him". (Job 13:15). "Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and He who vouches for me is on high" (Job 16:19); "Oh, that there were one who might plead for a man with God and that he might maintain his right with Him as a son of man pleads with or for his neighbor" (Job 16:21); "I was living at ease, but [Satan] crushed me and broke me apart; yes, he seized me by the neck and dashed me in pieces; then he set me up for his target; his arrows whiz around me. He slashes open my vitals and does not spare; he pours out my gall on the ground; he stabs me making breach after breach and attacking again and again; he runs at me like a giant and irresistible warrior; I have sewed sackcloth over my skin and have defiled my horn in the dust" (Job 16:12-15).

Job had moments of despair and moments of hope. We see that in his writings. "Oh, that the words I now speak were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book! That with an iron pen and [molten lead] they were graven in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer and Vindicator lives, and at last He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin, even this body, has been destroyed, then from my flesh or without it I shall see God, Whom I even I, shall see for myself and on my side! And my eyes shall behold Him and not as a stranger! My heart pines away and is consumed within me" (Job 19: 21-27). His faith stood tall, expressing the desire to see His Redeemer and Vindicator. Here, he utters prophetic words that fills our heart and his with hope, that of to see our Savior and Lord, for He lives forever. We will not see Him as a stranger as Job mentioned, but as children of the heavenly Father. The Christian Road is hard and difficult to travel. Like Job, we too desire our vindication and freedom from the evil one, who came to rob us of our peace and kill us. Job faced the road of health challenges without denying his faith with sustained courage. He said, "My foot has held fast to His steps; His ways

have I kept and not turned aside; I Have not gone back from the commandment of His lips; I have esteemed and treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food, for He performs [that which He has] planned for me, and of many such matters He is mindful". (Job 23: 11,12,14); and "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to His seat! I would lay my cause before Him and fill my mouth with arguments; Would He plead against me with His great power? No. He would give heed to me. There the righteous could reason with Him; so, I should be acquitted by my Judge forever... But He knows the way that I take. When He has tried me, I shall come forth as refined gold" (Job 23: 3,4,6,7,10).

Through all Job suffered, He never changed his mind about Who God is and was. His friends came to help him, but fell in the trap of pointing their fingers at him, which at the end of his ordeal God told Job to pray for them, for they had not spoken right things as Job did. That was a test of forgiveness on his part. For these friends became his enemies to add to his sufferings. However, when Job prayed for them, all was restored to him. "The Lord turned the captivity of Job and restored his fortunes when he prayed for his friends; also, the Lord restored to him twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:10). His ordeal was then over and Job came to know his God better than before. He said, "I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore, I loathe [my words] and abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42: 5,6). What a beautiful, and meaningful ending to Job's trials! His knowledge of God led him to repent and be forgiven and blessed.

There is not one person in this world that have not faced hardships in life. It is a sure thing we all understand. Many can't understand why they suffer; others can't accept it. However, when we submit our life to the Lord in the condition we are in, it pleases Him. The work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify us must be done. The molding of our heart accomplishes the will of God in the work of sanctification. Paul said, that from the beginning we were chosen to be molded into the image of God's Son, that He might become the firstborn among many brethren (Rom 12:29). So, there is always room for us to believe that there will be a time when we must go through trials for our own molding into the image of our Lord and Savior. Job had many dark nights to go through in order to arrive where he was destined to. Satan was defeated through the testimony of his faith Job held secure. I do realize that many of us are going through the dark shadows of death; just keep moving, for it is not there that God wants you and I to stay. It is just a passing through road. Paul considered that the sufferings of this present time are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us and conferred on us (Rom. 8:19). Our position in Christ allows us to trust and receive what He has for us in this life and in the life to come.

Job's morning finally arrived, for enduring the test that came to him. God was right in His assertion of Job and he proved to be true with his faithful testimony of a righteous life. We too, must realize that every trial is a test of our faith in God. It must pass the tests, or else it will fail. Our walk must be by faith not by sight; then when it is tested, it will prove to be genuine before God and man. Peter said, [You should] be exceedingly glad on this account, though now for a little while you may be distressed by trials and suffer temptations, so that [the genuineness] of your faith may be tested, which is infinitely more precious than the perishable gold which is

tested and purified by fire to redound to [your] praise and glory and honor when YAHSHUA Messiah will be revealed (1Peter1:6-7).

Then our morning, as Job's morning came, will come for us too!