

Morning Sermon Outline / October 23, 2022

“Consider God’s Work” Ecclesiastes 7:13-14

I. Note what we are invited to do here, “consider”

¹³ **Consider the work of God; ... Ecclesiastes 7:13 A (NKJV)**

...but in the day of adversity consider: Ecclesiastes 7:14 B (NKJV)

1. The Hebrew word for consider ראה r’ah “ra-ah” means to see; understand; spy, reveal, look at, examine, inspect

2. Here we are invited to consider God’s work

3. Specifically crooked things - for who can make straight what He has made crooked?

A. More specifically those crooked things, which cannot be made straight, those unfixable problems.

B. Unfixable, and unpredictable –

We have days of prosperity but also days of adversity –

¹⁴ **In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, so that man can find out nothing that will come after him. Ecclesiastes 7: 14 (NKJV)**

C. This makes it difficult to plan –

¹³ **Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; ¹⁴ whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead you *ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” James 4:13–15 (NKJV)**

D. This makes it impossible to boast – James 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ **But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.**

E. This consideration should make us humble –

¹⁵ **Instead you *ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” James 4:15 (NKJV)**

II. We love the day of prosperity –

¹⁴ **In the day of prosperity be joyful,**

1. We consider such a day God’s blessing –

²⁴ **“The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;**

²⁶ **The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.” ’ ²⁷ “So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.” Numbers 6:24–27 (NKJV)**

2. Maybe it is God’s reward? –

¹⁸ **The wicked *man* does deceptive work, but he who sows righteousness *will have* a sure reward. Proverbs 11:18 (NKJV)**

3. Usually it is God’s grace –

¹ **Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Psalm 32:1 (NKJV)**

¹⁶ **And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. John 1:16 (NKJV)**

III. *Consider the day of adversity is appointed by God as well –*

but in the day of adversity **consider**: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other... Ecclesiastes 7:14 B (NKJV)

1. *We don't like thinking adversity comes from God / adversity is brought about by Satan, evil men, sin, evil events –*

Job was a rich man both spiritually and materially but God let Satan loose on him –

Job's enemies were:

A. *Satan -*

¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

B. *The Sabeans -*

¹³ Now there was a day when his sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; ¹⁴ and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ when the Sabeans raided *them* and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

C. *Fire -*

¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

D. *The Chaldeans -*

¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

E. *The great wind, probably a hurricane or tornado -*

¹⁸ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

2. *All of these ENEMIES came against Job, yet Job credited both his prosperity and adversity to God -*

²⁰ Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there.

The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." ²² In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong. Job 1:12–22 (NKJV)

IV. *Why? Why did the LORD allow such adversity in Job's life? In our lives?*

1. *To test and prove Job, to show him as a champion of the faith –*

A. *Note, it is God Who we might say, egged Satan on, He definitely loosed him on Job –*

⁶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷ And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." ⁸ Then the LORD 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 shuns evil?"

⁹ So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰ Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹ But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" ¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. Job 1:6–12 (NKJV)

B. Note, even after Job had proven himself once, God gave him over to Satan a second time –

³ Then the LORD 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 shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

⁴ So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!”

⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life.” Job 2:3–6 (NKJV)

C. Satan strikes Job with painful Boils -

⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes.

D. Job’s wife says to him ... Curse God and die!” Commit suicide!

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!”

2. Job proves himself a champion in good and ill -

¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips. Job 2:7–10 (NKJV)

A. We are to praise both in prosperity and adversity, in health and in sickness, in youth and old age, in riches and poverty -

*Two glad services are ours,
Both the Master loves to bless.
First we serve with all our powers—
Then with all our feebleness.*

*Nothing else the soul uplifts,
Save to serve Him night and day,
Serve Him when He gives His gifts—
Serve Him when He takes away.*

CA. Fox

B. In this we serve, as champions, beyond the heavenly living creatures -

⁶ Before the throne *there was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ⁸ The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” Revelation 4:6–8 (NKJV)

- They serve around God’s throne in heaven, we serve below on earth where evil men and Satan rule!
- They serve full of eyes and with wings FLY – / ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)
- They serve in the energizing pleasure of God’s presence / we serve struggling to overcome sin –

¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Revelation 12:11 (NKJV)

3. Job sees his trials as improving him –

¹⁰ But He knows the way that I take; *When* He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. Job 23:10 (NKJV)

A. Gold is refined in the fire, so are believers -

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls. 1 Peter 1:6–9 (NKJV)

B. Trials improve us –

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. James 1:2–5 (NKJV)

- *Our clouds have not only silver linings but golden fillings!*
- *They produce patience*
- *They lead to PRAYER / for wisdom*
- *Wisdom is the ability to see things from God's point of view; He has an eternal viewpoint*

“My wife and I once visited a world-famous weaver and watched his men and women work on the looms. I noticed that the undersides of the rugs were not very beautiful: the patterns were obscure and the loose ends of yarn dangled. “Don’t judge the worker or the work by looking at the wrong side,” our guide told us. In the same way, we are looking at the wrong side of life; only the Lord sees the finished pattern. Let’s not judge Him or His work from what we see today. His work is not finished yet!” Warren Weirsbe

C. Joys and trials are weighed out by God for each of us, to make us more like His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ –

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Romans 8:28–29 (NKJV)

D. If His Son suffered, are adopted children exempt? Here is the word “consider” again, consider Jesus -

³ For **consider Him** who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. ⁴ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. ⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:

*“My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;*

⁶ *For whom the LORD loves He chastens,
And scourges every son whom He receives.”*

⁷ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. ¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:3–11 (NKJV)

Chastening is a sign you are a son / a daughter of God! A brother or sister of Jesus Christ!

“Across the will of nature, leads on the path of God, not where the flesh delighteth, the feet of Jesus trod”

Gerhard Tersteegen