

**Job 5: 17-27 – “Happy in Correction”, Sermon # 11 in the series entitled –
“Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall
on March 22nd, 2020, in the Afternoon Worship.**

So you see here that Eliphaz the Temanite is attempting to lead his friend Job to repentance over sins that he suspects that Job has committed. And in the previous verses he encouraged Job to seek God in his trial, for God does great things and unsearchable, marvelous things without number. This is certainly true, and all of the words that he gave to Job in these verses were certainly true. But they needed to be understood in the context of Job’s grief and suffering. In this regard, they gave Job no present comfort. For Job knew that God was sovereign. Job knew that it was God who was the One who had permitted this great trial that he was going through. And so he believed that it was God Himself who should address him.

But let us understand that Eliphaz’ words here are true. He was hoping that Job would find comfort in them, and this is why he said to him – “Behold, how happy is the man whom God corrects; therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.” At this time I want to bring out 3 major ideas from these verses, in relation to the chastening of the Almighty. I want to bring them forth in couplets. 1st of all – God’s bruising and His binding up of His saints. (verses 17-20) 2nd – God’s hiding and encouraging of His saints. (verses 20-23) And 3rd – His blessing and His prospering of His saints, with peace and fruit, as the outcome of their receiving this chastening. (verses 24-27) O that we might receive these truths, and glory in the love and power which God exercises towards all of his people during the times that He is chastening them.

1st – God’s bruising and binding up of His saints.

Verse 17 says – “Behold, how happy is the man whom God corrects.” And the explanation in the latter part of that verse says – “Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Lord.” So when God is correcting His people it is something that we should carefully consider, for Eliphaz begins what he is saying here with a “Behold”. Take a look at it, dear Christian, and wonder and marvel over it. Take a look at it and rejoice and be glad in it, for God’s design in bringing it is to make you happy, even though for a time you may be sad, or even downcast about it. “For bruises, and He wounds, it says in verse 18, but He will bind you up after you have learned certain lessons that He wants to teach you; lessons which you would not willingly learn otherwise. He will, in the holy way that He alone can do, make you whole through this process. His own hands will make you whole and He will deliver you in six troubles, yes even in seven troubles no evil shall touch you.

Let us understand that there is a great deal of difference between the way that God deals with the wicked and the way that He deals with the righteous. With the wicked he may prosper them for a time and then, when they will not repent, He may suddenly cast them down to destruction; set them in slippery places, as it says of the wicked rich people in Psalm 73: 18. David had stumbled over the fact that God was blessing the wicked rich, in the first part of that Psalm. He thought to understand it and it was too painful for him – until he went into the sanctuary of God. Then he understood their end. He learned that God may bear long with a wicked man and give him many blessings of His common grace; many things which He blesses and prospers them with, in an earthly sense, even for a long time. But without their coming in faith, to Him and in His promise of Christ, and repenting of their sins, they will lose all.

God shows them this kindness and this goodness, so that it might lead them to repentance, it says in Romans 2, verse 4. In that place, Paul says – “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?” “But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth but obey

unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.” So we are also told here that there is eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good, a person seeks for glory, honor, and immortality. This is certainly what Job was doing, and what all true Christians will do. But sometimes we feel like David or Job because we do not understand what God wants us to learn.

In David’s case in Psalm 73, God wanted to bring him to the place, by his chastening him, that he would say in verse 14 – “For all day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning.” What was he plagued by? He was plagued by seeing the wicked rich people always at ease and not experiencing the difficulties and problems which righteous people face. And so in verse 21 he says – “Thus my heart was grieved, and I was vexed in my mind.” “I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You; nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand.” “You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” The Lord in his chastening of David, wanted him to learn to rely totally on Him for his provision in this life. He wanted him, even though he was being chastened and corrected, that God was always with him, and he was always with God. The had wounded him, but now, He was binding him up.

God was holding him by his right hand, He was guiding him with His counsel, and afterward He would receive him to glory. David knew this after being bruised in God’s chastening of him. Oh what a blessing this was for him though; to be corrected in his thinking. At first he had wanted to despise the chastening of the Almighty, but now that he had experienced it for himself, he could say in the words of verse 25 – “Whom have I in heaven but You?” “And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.” “My flesh and my heart may fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” This realization made him happy. In Job’s case, he was dealing with something that was similar, but even worse, and at this point he was far from happy. He had been attacked by Satan because he was a man of integrity; not because he was a hypocrite or a wicked man. It seemed to him as though it was God who was bruising him and wounding him.

He really needed to hear these words of verse 19 – “He shall deliver you in six troubles, yes even in seven no evil shall touch you.” And yet, in his experience, evil had touched him. This statement probably seemed to him as a pious platitude with no substance to it, coming from Eliphaz, the man who was supposed to be his friend. What can we make of such words? I believe that the way that we are to understand this Biblically is in rightly understanding what it means for the Lord to deliver his people. He delivers them from being hurt by them in a lasting sense. He delivers them in, and through, and from them, in that order. It is an absolutely true statement in Psalm 121, verse 7, when David says – “The Lord will preserve you, or keep you, from all evil; He shall keep your soul.” “The Lord will preserve, He will guard, your going out and your coming in, from this time forth and forevermore.”

In other words, evil cannot touch you in the ultimate sense, when you are a Christian, because the Lord preserves you, He guards you, He keeps you, so that evil cannot ultimately touch your soul to harm your soul, but rather, even the things that the devil does to afflict you or to vex you, or to grieve you, are all used by God in His holy instruction of your mind and heart, in relation to his chastening, so that you will ultimately be benefitted, and benefitted greatly, by them. This is why James in James 1: 2 says – “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.” “But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

And James also says in chapter 5, verses 9-11 says – “Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned.” “Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!” “My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.” “Indeed we count them blessed who endure.” “You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord – that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.” The Lord delivers us in six trials, yes even seven. Seven is the number of completeness. The Lord delivers us in our trials by

giving us grace, and by being a very present help in time of trouble. But when we look at Job here, we cannot see that he was at all sensing God's presence and help to him in this grievous trial.

Well, I believe that this was a part of God's plan, a part of his chastening of Job. In this case it was all for his good, because God was teaching Job something which is very important for every Christian to understand when they are going through trials. Turn with me to Isaiah chapter 50, and verse 10. It says here – "Who among you fears the Lord?" "Who obeys the voice of His Servant? "Who walks in darkness and has no light?" "Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely upon his God." You see, in this situation that we are studying, the issue was Job's integrity; and Job was a man of integrity. But the Lord would have him look beyond even defending his own integrity, to justifying God's permitting this horrible trial in the first place. Because Job knew that he was a man of integrity, he thought that God should never have ordained this trial in his life. And so because of all of the pressure that the devil was putting on him, and because he didn't understand why he, a man of integrity, should have to go this, he was justifying himself more than God.

God wanted to lead him to, by faith, look outside of himself to Him, and to count the loss of all things as rubbish, and seek to be found in the righteousness of God, even as Paul talks about in Philippians 3: 7-10 – "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ." "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." This was God's object in all the chastening that Job was to experience, for his good. God would wound, but He would also bind Job up afterwards, which is what He does with all those who are His.

2nd – God's hiding and encouraging of His saints. (verses 20-23)

"In famine He shall redeem you from death, And in war from the power of the sword." "You shall be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, and you shall not be afraid of destruction when it comes." "You shall laugh at destruction and famine, and you shall not be afraid of the beasts of the earth." "For you shall have a covenant with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you." Eliphaz continues to talk about God's power to keep His saints when all the while Job has been torn apart by the devil's attack, and seems to be living testimony to the fact that these promises are not applicable to him. When Eliphaz speaks to him of being redeemed from death, of being hidden from the scourge of the tongue, when at many points, he is speaking of something that Job, the man of integrity, was not at this point, experiencing. He speaks of not being afraid of death, when Job just wanted to die. He speaks of laughing at destruction and famine, which great destruction by the devil had lowered Job to the dust, where he could not laugh. All of these things God can do, and bring about the lifting of chastisement, but he hold this out as a carrot to Job, so that he will repent.

Eliphaz even speaks of the person who receives the chastening of the Lord as having a covenant with the stones of the earth, and even of the beasts of the field being at peace with such a man. In other words, God is faithful in his promises of protection and provision, and he saying - Since all these things have come upon you to prove that you do not have these blessings, then surely Job, you need to repent of something. And when you do repent then you will experience all of these blessings to your joy. But let's consider for a moment some verses, which relate to this verse 23. Psalm 91: 11-13. "For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways." "In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone." Covenant blessings are those blessings which come to God's people because God is faithful to keep them, through Christ. It is because Christ was kept by God the Father and the angels in all of His ways, that He could overcome the devil, and not cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple when He was tempted to prove that He was the Son of God. (Matthew 4: 6) It is through our faith in Christ and not by our faith in ourselves, and our own strength and righteousness, that we are kept from the devil's temptations to us; to destroy

ourselves, or to stumble over what God has providentially ordered for our lives. This is God's covenant with the stones of the field. In Christ, God is able to keep you from stumbling.

Look also at Hosea 2: 18 – “In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground.” “Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely.” “I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord.” This, in the context, is speaking of the conversion of the Jews to Christ in a coming day. God will deal with their bestial enemies and make a covenant for them, through Christ, that they will no longer be harmed by those seeking to harm them, and they will be betrothed to Him; that is to Christ, forever.

We see from this, that when God determines to make a covenant with a nation or to bring someone in particular into a covenant relationship with Himself, He always does so on the basis of Christ being the One who defeats all their enemies, and deals with all of their sins, and God is faithful forever on that basis, to bless the person trusting in Him, looking to Him, to teach them, and to cleanse them from all guilt and the pollution of sin, and guard them, and watch over them, all through this life, and all the way to heaven. God does hide His saints in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, during the time of their trials, and the time of his chastising them. Psalm 94: 12-15 – “Blessed is the man whom You instruct (chasten), and teach out of Your law; that You may give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit is dug for the wicked.” “For the Lord will not cast off His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance.” “But judgment will return to righteousness, and all the upright in heart will follow it.”

3rd – His blessing and His prospering of His saints, with peace and fruit, as the outcome of their receiving this chastening. (verses 24-27)

Verse 24 – “You shall know that your tent is in peace; you shall visit your dwelling and find nothing amiss.” “You shall also know that your descendants shall be many, and your offspring like the grass of the earth.” “You shall come to the grave at a full age, as a sheaf of grain ripens in its season.” “Behold, this we have searched out; it is true.” “Hear it, and know for yourself.” This was no doubt true, but what consolation could this possibly bring to Job after losing everything and not understanding why? The best thing that we can do when we are undergoing a fiery trial to remember the good words of Hebrews 12: 7- 11 – “If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?” “But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.” “Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us and we paid them respect.” “Shall we not be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?” “For they indeed for few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.” “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.”

It is so very good to remember that when we are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ that God is our Father. Every child of God's it says here partakes of chastening, even those like Job of which God could boast that there was no one like him on the earth; a just man, one who feared God and who was turning away from iniquity. If you do not experience chastening at some points in your experience, then you are not a true Christian. Therefore, we should believe that there are many things which our God needs to instruct us about, correct us on, and sometimes chasten us, over. But will you not remember the reason? It is so you might share in His holiness. Chastening is not joyful at the time we are first experiencing it, and perhaps all the way through the trial. But it yields something – the peaceable fruit of righteousness, to those who have been trained by it.

This relates to what Eliphaz said in verse 24 – “You shall know that your tent is in peace.” “You shall visit your dwelling and find nothing amiss.” Although this was not true for Job then, it would be for him in the future. And he would get through this trial and have just as many children and possessions as he once had. Let us rejoice that the Lord God knows how to do all things well.

