

The Character and Commitment of Job – Part 2

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – An introduction to Job the man, his character and commitment to righteousness before God
2. aim – To cause us to understand the importance of our place before God by his grace and mercy
3. passage – Job 1:1-5

b. outline

1. The Character of Job (Job 1:1)
2. The Consecration of Job (Job 1:2-5b)
3. The Commitment of Job (Job 1:5c)

c. opening

1. a **review** of the introduction to Job
 - a. Job: a **man** who lived in Uz (Edom) c. 2000BC; a contemporary of Abraham the Patriarch
 1. more **evidence** of this will be seen in **today's verses**
 - b. Job: a **book** outlining the reality of *spiritual warfare*, taking place all around us
 1. **IMO**: the reality of spiritual warfare, as understood through the lens of **Ephesians 6:12**
 - a. how Satan, *not accepting his fate*, inflicts suffering in rebellion against God's decree, yet ...
 - b. how God, who makes men *his own*, *by grace*, allows for such suffering, but gives comfort in that **nothing Satan can do will ever alter what it means to be God's elect**
 - c. Job: a **discourse** in how we are to approach evil and suffering – to confess (like Job!) our absolute confidence that our *"redeemer lives"* (**Job 19:25**)
 1. that Christ Jesus has had victory over what the *first Adam* wrought, in redeeming a people for himself – Satan has been rendered *impotent* against the power of God in this decree
 - d. Job: a **blameless** and **upright** man, one *specifically* set apart to a righteous **nature (1:1)**
 1. a man who feared God and turned away from evil, whose very *state* was such that he *lived out the nature of an "inward" righteousness* in the course of his life (**see below**)
 2. the "axle" around which this book turns – a man who, *by God's unique power*, is made righteous *by nature*, thus (although experiencing Satan's wrath) is held fast by God's *intentions for him*
 - e. so now ... we move from the *character* of Job to his **consecration** and **commitment** (**i.e.** the **evidence** of his inward righteousness as expressed *in concrete ways*)

II. The Consecration of Job (Job 1:2-5b)

Content

a. the wealth of Job (vv. 2-3)

1. the additional (material?) details of his biography:
 - a. he was blessed with *family* – a wife, seven sons and three daughters, and brothers and sisters
 1. the notation of *seven* sons indicates a rich blessing; in an ancient *agrarian* culture, such a number would indicate "solidity" and "continuation", particularly of the family through time
 2. Job had siblings (**see 42:11**; his *"brothers and sisters"* came to him at the end)
 3. and (of course!) Job had a wife, who was *undoubtedly* a blessing, in that she gave him 10 children, and gave him 10 *more* at the end (**note**: three *beautiful* daughters; **42:15**)
 - a. her response to Job's suffering (**2:9**) *seems* to mitigate her as a blessing, but there may be *extenuating reasons* for her response (**i.e.** it may be a bit *unfair* to use this against her)
 - b. he was blessed with *material wealth* – the numbers indicate an *extraordinarily wealthy* man
 1. the indication of *"many servants"* expresses this wealth most specifically (**relatively speaking**)
 2. **note**: the representation of his family and wealth in terms of sons, sheep, camels, oxen, donkeys, and servants is language *evidencing* that this man lived during the **patriarchal period**
 - a. **e.g.** Abram (before the covenant) is described in **Genesis 13:2** as *"very rich in livestock"* – during his days in Egypt, Pharaoh blessed Abram with *"sheep, oxen, [donkeys, servants], camels"* in assuming that Sarai was Abram's *sister* (**Genesis 12:16**)
 - b. **admission**: the description *itself* is not *exhaustively conclusive* – material wealth was measured *for centuries* in agrarian terms (**e.g.** through the early history of Israel), only *later* being supplanted by "proxy" valuables such as gold and silver as measures of wealth

- c. however, the description of his influence (**see below**) based in *agrarian terms*, and the nature of the “feasts” (**see below**) of his sons (and the offering afterwards) *seems* to point to (**IMO**) an early period in human civilization
 - d. and, the fact that he sat in ashes and scraped himself with a piece of broken pottery, after being struck with sores (**2:8**), *also seems (to me!)* to picture a very ancient time
 - c. he was blessed with *influence* – he was “*the greatest of all the people of the east*”
 - 1. “east” = probably, the area around the Dead Sea on the E (**i.e.** the various peoples that lived in this area around Sodom and Gomorrah and further E; the lower end of the Negeb)
 - a. **i.e.** the *eventual* territory of the Edomites
 - b. **remember:** the destruction of the area around the Dead Sea occurs during the lifetime of Abraham; prior to it, the area was amazingly lush and prosperous (**i.e.** why Lot wanted to go live there; **Genesis 13:10**)
 - c. so ... Lot *appears* to be a man of great influence in this area, which implies (**IMO**) that he lived *before* Abraham (**i.e.** before the area was turned into a relative desert)
 - 1. **note:** he is comforted in the end by “*all who had known him before*” (**42:11**)
 - 2. “greatest” = *probably* a reference to the influence his great wealth would thus have ...
 - a. and, if we *combine* this term with Job’s blamelessness and uprightness, it is *probably* an influence that extends to *much more* than just “material” influence (**i.e.** the effect of money)
 - b. **e.g.** when Job’s friends come to “comfort” him in his suffering, they invariably draw *spiritual conclusions*, in a time when the knowledge of Yahweh was *scant* – implying that Job had influenced them *spiritually* during the course of his life, and they “apply” that in their “comfort”
 - 1. **remember:** *if* Job lived (**see above**) 600 years before the writing of the first books of Scripture (**i.e.** the Pentateuch), the “knowledge” of Yahweh would have been scarce, without any significant revelation since the days of the Tower of Babel
 - 2. thus, the “influence” of Job was *probably* far more significant for its *spiritual value* than its economic – Job was a revealer of Yahweh, as *he himself had been seen God*
 - 2. Job was **deeply blessed by God**, materially and spiritually
 - a. if we accept the premise that his *spiritual state* (**v. 1**) was entirely *from God*, than it stands to reason that his *material state* was *also from God*, as a part of the plan of God over his life
 - b. **i.e. vv. 2-3** are designed to *connect* Job’s *outward life* to his *inward state* – God *blesses* Job *physically* (too!) as a part of his *grace* – Job’s *material wealth* is a significant part of the story of his life about to unfold, as much as is his *spiritual wealth* ...
 - c. or ... although Satan will attack Job’s outward life, and *succeed* in destroying it all (including his *physical health*), the grace of God in *restoring it all* (at the end!) is *another* reminder that **Satan cannot change what God has purposed a man to be**
 - d. **thought:** as Christians, we use terms like “spiritual warfare” to describe what’s going on around us ... but such a term *implies* that there are *two sides* fighting against one another ...
 - 1. however, in reality, this is a **one-sided battle**: God is *not* “fighting” against Satan; God has established what *he* has decreed, and it is *Satan* (and fallen humanity with him) that is in *rebellion* against his plans – God sits *confidently* knowing that all his plans *will come to pass*
 - 2. thus, the book of Job *reminds us* that the *entirety of our existence* (**i.e.** materially, physically, and spiritually) is *determined* by the purposes and plans of a sovereign God (**to be continued**)
- b. the consecration of Job (vv. 4-5b)**
- 1. consecration = typically: something set apart (n.), or to set something apart for a sacred purpose (v.)
 - a. **i.e.** Job was (himself!) consecrated unto the Lord by virtue of his state of righteousness – Christians are *consecrated* unto God by virtue of being included in Christ (as *saints*, same root)
 - b. however ... by the “consecration” of Job I mean this: Job *extended* his righteousness *outward* by “setting apart” his own family unto the Lord, and *doing what was necessary* to assure what he knew about God was also *characterized* in his family (not just in himself)
 - c. **e.g.** the **term** is used in **v. 5** about his **response** to his son’s feasts, as they are described in **v. 4**
 - 2. “a feast in the house of each one on his day” (**v. 4**) = celebration feasts or commemorations
 - a. “on his day” = special days/events to be commemorated (**e.g.** birthdays, wedding anniversaries, coming-of-age rituals, milestones, etc.) – **note:** the description is not *specific*, but *general*
 - b. “a feast” = family gatherings *around food* – gatherings around food have *long* been at the heart of human civilization (**e.g. Gen. 19**; Lot and the angels), *and even central to religious activity* (**e.g.** the feasts of the law; **Exo. 12:17**: the Feast of Unleavened Bread)
 - c. **ITC:** general feasts by the sons of Job celebrating life and its various milestones – by inviting “*their three sisters*” the feasts are recognizable as *family events* (**e.g.** one of **Perry’s** favorite things)

3. “offer burnt offerings” (v. 5ab) = a *sin offering* by Job on behalf of his sons
 - a. he would “send and consecrate” them = he would have the son who *hosted* the feast come and, *with him*, offer a burnt offering to “cover” any *possible* sin that may have been committed
 1. **again:** this language sounds *very early* – similar to the sacrifices of **Genesis 4 & 22 (Isaac)**
 2. Job understood the reality of sin *against the backdrop of a holy God* – to offer a “burnt offering” to the Lord (even at this early time!) is to recognize the nature of rebellion against God
4. **IOW:** Job, *as an upright man*, “extended” his righteousness *outward* by “setting apart” his sons, making sure that *they* understood the nature of sin and the holiness of God, *and providing atonement*
 - a. **dads:** under the Covenant of Grace, *your job is not* to make atonement for your children, but to **lead them to the provision of atonement found in the cross of Christ**
5. **Job was a consecrated and consecrating man, the grace of God flowing through him**

III. The Commitment of Job (Job 1:5c)

Content

a. the commitment of Job

1. “*continually*” = without end; without stopping; all the time – Job *continued* this work of consecration for his family; it was *a part of who he was* – this was his **commitment**
2. **principle: the work of God, by grace alone, to transform rebel sinners into the objects of his love and mercy produces within them an utter commitment to the things of God**
 - a. **i.e.** the transformation *by God* is to *commitment, to God* and his ways (period!)
 - b. Job was *committed* to the task of consecrating himself and his family – he did it “*continually*”
3. **IOW:** the character of Job showed in his continual commitment to consecration – **who he was showed up in what he did – the true nature of righteousness is commitment unto God**
 - a. and ... it is *this* that sets the stage for what is about to come ...
 - b. Job’s commitment to God (his righteousness) will stand at the *center* of what is to come ...

b. graduate recognition

1. we recognize three (3) graduates, and we offer them a token of congratulations – for the purpose of encouraging them to *continue in consecration to the Lord*, in the face of what is about to come ...
 - a. Jeremiah Gordon ... Sonia Landas ... Joseph Lopez