

A REFINED HEART

JOB 23

Text:

Introduction:

Most Christians, after being saved a short length of time become familiar with Romans 8:28:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”

Time and again we read and quote this verse. We are especially good at quoting it to others who are experiencing trials.

Perhaps no man illustrates the principle of Romans 8:28 like Job.

The early verses of Job tell us of his trials.

Job 1:18-19

¹⁸ While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: ¹⁹ And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of

the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Then his wife turned against him.

Job 2:9-10

⁹ Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. ¹⁰ But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

The book of Job is the story of God's refining work in the heart of man.

As Job's trials continue, one of his 'friends', Eliphaz, tells him that trials are due to sin.

Note some other false accusations:

Job 22:6-10

⁶ For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. ⁷ Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. ⁸ But *as for* the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honourable man dwelt in it. ⁹ Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. ¹⁰ Therefore snares *are* round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee;

In Chapter 23, Job's answer to these accusations reveals his True Heart.

1. HIS HEART WAS REVEALED – (VSS. 1-9)

A. Job desired the presence of God

Job 23:3-5

³ Oh that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his seat! ⁴ I would order *my* cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. ⁵ I would know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

Job 23:8-9

⁸ Behold, I go forward, but he *is* not *there*; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: ⁹ On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him*: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him*:

- Job's godliness is seen in the fact that even while grief stricken he sought after God.
- We rarely see someone's true heart revealed during the good times; it often takes trials to reveal someone's true spiritual heart.
- Job's heart desired the presence of God

Paul had the same desire.

Philippians 3:10

¹⁰ That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

B. Job desired the strength of God

Job 23:6

⁶ Will he plead against me with *his* great power? No; but he would put *strength* in me.

- He had not lost faith in his God!

Isaiah 40:31

³¹ But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

- Don't give upon God – His word, His will, His church, His plan.

2. HIS HEART WAS REFINED – (VSS. 10-12)

A. When he trusted in God (10)

Job 23:10

¹⁰ But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

- God's refining work begins when we totally trust Him.

Psalms 139:1-2

¹ O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*.

² Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

- Job said, "You know me Lord, better than I know myself – I trust you.

B. When he saw God's purpose

Job 23:10

¹⁰ But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

- God's purpose in trying us is to refine us.

1 Peter 1:6-7

⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: ⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

James 1:12

¹² Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life,

which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

- The heat of the trials / like an iron removes the wrinkles of immaturity.
- Only when a rose is crushed, does it dispel its fullest odor.
- Trouble, will refine us as gold if we will stay true to Him in the fire. The fire may cease tomorrow – but if not, Trust Him.

God is able to deliver
From my weariness and pain,
and he will deliver swiftly
If it be for lasting gain'
But if not – my heart shall sing,
Trusting wholly in my King.

God is able to supply me
With abundance from his store,
And he will supply my table
Though the wolf be at the door
But if not – my heart shall rest
In the thought “He knoweth best.”

God is able to defend me
From my foes who throng around,
And he will defend me surely

When their rage and hate abound,
But if not – I'll bless his name
And confess him just the same.

God is able to save dear ones
From the world and self and sin,
And he will both save and keep them
In his fold safe gathered in,
But if not – he'll hold my hand,
Teaching me to understand.

C. When he trusted in God's Word

Job 23:11-12

¹¹ My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept,
and not declined. ¹² Neither have I gone back from
the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the
words of his mouth more than my necessary *food*.

- Job made God's word The Priority during his trial
He kept remembering the promises of God.

3. HIS HEART WAS RENEWED – (VSS. 13-17)

A. By God's Sovereignty – verse 14

Job 23:14

¹⁴ For he performeth *the thing that is* appointed for
me: and many such *things are* with him.

- Job's heart was renewed in the fact that God is in control.
- Our trials do not catch God 'by surprise.'

B. By God's softening – verse 16

Job 23:16

¹⁶For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:

- As Job's heart was softened – renewal came.
- Too many people today are hard hearted.

Close:

Job reveals the fact, that there is blessing through suffering and through calamity comes discovery...God will Reveal, Refine, and Renew.

We must remember when we fail to see God's purpose this statement:

"We cannot, Lord, thy purpose see, but all is well that is done by thee."