

5. Curse the Day (4Q 2016—Book of Job)

Biblical material: Job 3:1–10, John 11:11–14, Job 6:1–3, 7:1–11, James 4:14, Job 7:17–21, Ps. 8:4–6; Rev. 4:11.

Quotes

- Every blessing ignored becomes a curse. *Paulo Coelho*
- There are no such things as curses; only people and their decisions. *Yvonne Wood*
- No one can curse and bless anybody at the same time. *Toba Beta*
- Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. *William Shakespeare*
- The common curse of mankind, -- folly and ignorance. *William Shakespeare*

Questions

Was Job right to curse the day he was born? Doesn't this question God's gift of life? Job also blames God for his situation, accusing God of shooting him with poisoned arrows. How do we relate to this? How does Job's experience reveal issues in the great controversy and their resolution? Why doesn't God answer Job's complaint earlier?

Bible summary

In Job 3:1–10 Job curses the day he was born, wishing it had never happened, even saying God should forget it. He continues the theme in many chapters. In chapter 6 he says his troubles weigh more than the sand of the sea, and that God has shot poisoned arrows into him. He goes so far as to say he hates his life (Job 7:16). In Job 7 he compares human life to hard labor, and that it is like a breath, passing quicker than a weaver's shuttle. He argues with God, saying "Why are human beings so important to you; why are you so concerned about them that you inspect them every morning and test them every moment? Won't you ever stop staring at me? Won't you ever leave me alone long enough to catch my breath? What have I done wrong? What have I done to you, Watcher of Humanity? Why have you made me your target, so that I'm a burden even to myself?" Job 7:17-20 FBV. John 11:11–14 makes it clear that Jesus considered death as a sleep. Our lives are like a mist that vanishes (James 4:14). So what is humanity that God should care, being made a little lower than angels (Ps. 8:4–6). We are all created by God (Rev. 4:11.)

Comment

There's much in Job to make us think! When Job complains to God about what is happening to him, and wishes he had never been born, he reflects a common human experience. In Job 1:22 it says, "In all of this Job did not sin, nor blame God." But it certainly sounds like he did! While we can certainly understand the depth of Job's feelings, was he right in what he said?

The fact that God does not condemn Job and his rant should encourage us. Though we may express ourselves in emotional language, God is not provoked. He still deals with us in his true nature of love and kindness. The fact he did not answer Job immediately is also important—for Satan's charges needed to be answered. We are also a

“spectacle to the universe” and so we too may need to wait for answers and resolution of the challenges we face.

Job’s defense of God, unaware of his position as divinely-appointed spokesperson for humanity on God’s side, spans our experience. He argues with God. He argues with his so-called friends. He regrets the day of his birth. He allows his feelings to speak. He does not pull the punches when questioning what is happening to him, representative of all humankind.

From Job’s experience we can conclude that God does not consider even our arguing with him as wrong. In fact, he even invites it. At the end of Job’s experience, God does have to remind him that he is not all-knowing, and that some of his words have not really been in accordance with God’s wisdom. But in contrast with the others, who want to ascribe to God the “punishment,” God himself declares that “Job has said of me what is right.”

Though Job does seem to blame God, he is not aware of what has happened in the heavenly council and God’s endorsement of him—and Satan’s opposition. He is an unwitting participant in this “experiment” to discover the basis for Job’s trust in God. For God to intervene would have negated the evidence. For when Job’s trust in God is vindicated as based on truth and right, God is also vindicated.

Job’s anguish comes through his speeches and while his physical pain is clear, he is more concerned at the silence of God. This causes Job the greatest sadness of all, and is at the heart of his “cursing the day” since he so misses his communion with his Lord.

Ellen White Comments

Very early in the history of the world is given the life-record of one over whom this controversy of Satan’s was waged. Of Job, the patriarch of Uz, the testimony of the Searcher of hearts was, “There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil.”

Against this man, Satan brought scornful charge: “Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?”

The Lord said unto Satan, “All that he hath is in thy power.” “Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.”

Thus permitted, Satan swept away all that Job possessed,—flocks and herds, men-servants and maidens, sons and daughters; and he “smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.”

Still another element of bitterness was added to his cup. His friends, seeing in adversity but the retribution of sin, pressed on his bruised and burdened spirit their accusations of wrong-doing. . . . {SD 95}

Satan is always trying to press the soul into distrust of God, and therefore we must educate the mind to trust him. Talk faith and hope when Satan says, as did the wife of Job, “Curse God, and die.” If you trust God, you will see more reason to trust him. As you talk of his goodness, you will see more of his love to talk about. Thus the mind may be trained to live in the brightness of the Sun of righteousness, and not in the shadow which Satan casts athwart our path. Hope in God, who is the health of our countenance, and our God. {RH, September 1, 1891}