

WHAT JOB LEARNED THROUGH SUFFERING

Int.

1. Aim: To show what we can learn from Job's ordeal with suffering.
2. The word Job reminds us of suffering
3. The book of Job - - 42 chapters and 1,070 verses
 - a. First book of poetry - 5 books - one of oldest books of the Bible
 - b. The writer was probably Moses
 - c. It is the most unusual book in the Bible - no other book like it !
 - d. Deals with the oldest problem of man - suffering
4. The man Job
 - a. He was perfect - feared God
 - b. Family - wife - 7 sons and 3 daughters
 - c. Livestock - 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels , 500 yoke of oxen 500 donkeys
5. Satan desires to destroy Job
 - a. Given permission by God to take his possessions
 - b. Lost all - but Job did not sin - Job. 1:22 **"In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."**
 - c. Then Satan asks to touch his flesh - boils over body - still did not sin - Job. 2:10b **"... In all this did not Job sin with his lips."**
6. The friends of Job try to comfort him - but were unsuccessful !
 - a. God gives the answer to the problem - Chapters 38-41
 - b. Series of 60 questions Job 38:37
 - c. Man cannot know with his limited knowledge the real reason

7. In the end all was restored
 - a. Health and family
 - b. Substance was doubled
 - c. Job was a perfect man, prosperous man, praying man, popular man, & proven man
8. What did Job learn from these experiences ?

Discussion

I. **JOB LEARNED SOMETHING ABOUT HIS FRIENDS**

- A. He learned that his friends were fair weather friends
 1. He had a great company and friends when all was well
 2. After he lost all he had some friends who came to try and help
 - a. First Three friends - Eliphaz - Bildad - Zophar -- chapters 3-31
 - (1) You sinned therefore you suffer - Job. 4:7; 8:6
 - (2) All of us sin and therefore we suffer
 - (3) Not always a true reason for suffering - not correct to declare that every time we suffer it is because we have sinned
 - (4) Job. 12:2 **"No doubt but ye [are] the people, and wisdom shall die with you."**
 - b. Elihu - Chapters 32-37
 - (1) Suffering sent to keep us from sin
 - (2) If that was true then God would send suffering to all to keep from sin
 - (3) If God did not then he would be a respecter of persons - Acts 10:34
 3. Offered nothing but discouragement when a friends encouragement would have meant so much
 4. Job. 16:2 **"I have heard many such things: miserable comforters [are] ye all."**

- B. We sometimes discover through suffering that we have fair weather friends
1. When all is well with us we may boast of many friends
 2. When we are sick, in debt, out of work, how many friends do we have who will stand with us and help ?
 3. "Rare as is true love, true friendship is even rarer." Shakespeare
 4. Prov. 18:24 **"A man [that hath] friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend [that] sticketh closer than a brother."**
 5. Prov. 17:17 "A **friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."**
- C. When suffering comes to us we learn something about who really is our friend
- D. "False friends are like our shadow, keeping close to us while we walk in the sunshine, but leaving us the instant we cross into the shade." [New Dictionary of Thoughts - P. 225]

II. SOMETHING ABOUT HIS WIFE

- A. She was not very encouraging
1. She had probably been a fine wife during prosperous years
 2. If he ever needed encouragement from his wife, it was now
 3. But she said why don't you just **"...curse God and die."** Job. 2:9
 - a. Dying is never a solution to any problem
 - b. Especially not the solution after cursing God,
 - c. This could have even suggested suicide
 4. He learned that his wife was not a help but a hindrance in time of suffering and hardship

- B. A good wife is a rare jewel - We learn something about our companion
1. Prov. 31:10 **"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price [is] far above rubies."**
 2. Prov. 31:12 **"She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."**
 3. When under adverse condition a wife remains faithful and helpful a husband learns her great worth
 4. When nothing but her strength and encouragement comes to a man in suffering he realizes her great value.
 5. Woman is to be a help meet [suitable] for man - Gen. 2:18
 6. A man who has a wife who has proved herself under most adverse conditions should reverence her and be thankful to God for the companionship of such a woman.
- C. Suffering helped Job and helps us to learn something about our companion
1. It also applies to a wife learning about her husband.
 2. Helps us to see what kind of companion we are when the other has suffering !

III. SOMETHING ABOUT HIMSELF

- A. Testing is essential
1. Air force can't know how a plane will work until they have tested it
 2. Can't tell how anything will work until tested
 3. Peter was sure he would never deny Christ - - when the first test came he was not as strong as he thought himself to be Mt. 26:31-35
- B. Job learned something about himself through suffering
1. He didn't know if he would be faithful -he feared God and lived righteously
 2. He scraped the bottom of the ocean of human suffering
 3. Yet he said, **"though he slay me, yet will I trust him."** Job. 13:15

- C. We can learn something about our self when we are tested by suffering
1. We don't know if our faith is strong until the test
 2. There is a value in knowing the strength of our faith that more than compensates for the suffering
 3. **"When I am weak, then am I strong"** I I Cor. 12:10
 4. **"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."** Jas.5:11
 - a. Patience is the characteristic most generally associated with Job
 - b. Through his trials, he learned more patience
 - c. He endured until he saw "the end of the Lord; that the Lord is pitiful and of tender mercy."
 - d. "All suffering however great and however long must eventually end, and the righteous will triumph."
 5. Jas. 1:2-4

IV. SOMETHING ABOUT GOD

- A. Job learned much about God
1. He learned more about God in this short period of affliction than in a lifetime of health and prosperity.
 2. Job was very serious and concerned about his relationship with God at this time

- B. There is one side of God we learn only through suffering
1. There is a joy that can only be experienced by those who have shared their darkest hour with God
 2. Ps. 23:4 **"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou [art] with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."**
- C. God shapes us once again into his image not by removing adversity but by bringing us through it.
- D. Suffering helps us learn some valuable lessons about God
1. He cares
 2. God's love is more important than possessions or health
 3. Being right with God is most valuable thing in life
- E. 1 Cor. 10:13 - God will provide the way of escape

Conclusion

1. There is a bright side of suffering and adversity
2. That is the side that teaches us something about:
 - (1) Our friends (2) Our companion (3) Our self (4) God
3. Poem - Shows that suffering teaches us some of the essential lessons of life
4. In the end all was restored: Job was a...
 - a. Perfect Man
 - b. Prosperous Man
 - c. Praying Man
 - d. Popular Man
 - e. Proven Man
5. Ps. 23
6. Rom. 8:31b **"...If God be for us, who can be against us?"**

7. Job. 14:14 **"If a man die, shall he live again?"**

- a. Yes - if he is a child of God - obeyed the Gospel
- b. No - if he is a sinner

POEM - Sorrow

I walked a mile with pleasure
She chatted all the way
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with sorrow
And not a word said she.
But O the things I learned from her
When sorrow walked with me.

- Robert Hamilton

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