



The Second Sunday in Lent.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The first day of Lent, commonly called
Ash Wednesday.**

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ This Collect is to be said every day in Lent, after the Collect appointed for the day, until Palm Sunday.

1 Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 2 I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. 3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. 4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. 5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. 6 Wherefore I

abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. 7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. 8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. 10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. 12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. 13 He had also seven sons and three daughters. 14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. 15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. 16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. 17 So Job died, being old and full of days. (Job 42:1-17)

Needless to say, we close our study of Job with some reluctance for it is always probable that we have not gleaned as much bread from the table it provides as we should have done. I develop a particular love for every Book of the Bible that I study and, so, always dread completing the work. Of course, our studies are never complete of any book of the Bible for our wisdom and knowledge increases and our understanding matures as we continue to read the other works of God. We may return to Job after two years and discover that we understand much more of it than we did two years past. May God forgive us for any omission of meaning which He would have us to know of Job, and may He forgive, as well, any commission of error plainly stated in our interpretation of it. There is one salient truth that stands out starkly in all of Scripture to our eyes – every Word of it is as much intended for our own souls as it was for Job, or Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or Paul. The Bread of Life in God's Word does not grow stale, but is ever fresh and nourishing to all who partake thereof.

We have seen how Job was considered a righteous man in the eyes of the Lord. How Satan desired to tempt Job, and God consented with the stipulation that, first, Job's body would not be hurt and, then, that his body might be tormented but not unto death. Under the duress of loss, pain, and the unfair criticism of his friends, Job begins to surrender to his fleshly and carnal nature in claiming himself to be more righteous and just than God. It is at such a moment that God cannot view us as righteous before Him – that is, the moment we rely upon our own righteousness - for we have none – only that imputed righteousness of Christ can be our own righteousness. We cannot blame Job for any lapse of faith under the tribulation he has faced. If we can overcome our pride, we will realize that we have committed at least the sins of Job and, perhaps far greater ones. In the final analysis, we, too, are Job absent the torment and loss that he suffered. Though the ordeal of Job begins with the devil's counsel and continues to reveal weaknesses in Job's righteousness, it ends with a God's revelation to Job of his admission of himself and the sin that he abhors. That is a function of the Word of God as a mirror to our souls. We hold up the Word and look into it. In the David we see our own incredible sinfulness. We see our treachery in Absalom and Judas. We see our

adultery – both physical and spiritual – in the woman taken in adultery. We see our thirst for Christ in the Woman at the Well; and we see our false self-righteousness in Job.

The final result of Job's trials is a better-oriented Job. In the end, he sees himself with a keener spiritual eye than before, and he sees God in a clearer vision than ever before. His growing wisdom results in confession: 1 Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 2 I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. 3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. It seems to me that Job's greatest failure in wisdom has resulted from his miscalculation of the GREATNESS of God. With his puny brain (the same with which we are equipped), Job knows of God's PHYSICAL power, but he has misjudged the knowledge and wisdom of God. He has learned that the knowledge of God so far exceeds that of man that man's knowledge is simply negligible in comparison. **GOD IS OMNISCIENT!** Our mouths are not like God's. We speak before we know. He knows before He speaks.

Now Job's increased understanding results in Job's prayer. 4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. 5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. How does a man's perspective change once he has both heard and seen God? We **SEE** God in Jesus Christ – we **HEAR** Him in the Word – the whole Word which is Christ! We realize that we are silenced before Him...just as silenced as the woman taken in adultery. There is no justification we can offer. Like Job, we **ABHOR** ourselves. 6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. Our repentance will not be a little, neat daub of ashes on our foreheads by which we boast of our righteousness; nor will our cross be a shiny golden one around the neck; but our repentance will be a dirty pile of ashes (our sins) in which we know we sit in misery (for all are in misery who are sitting in their sins). Our cross will be a heavy and rough-hewn one which bears into the flesh of our shoulders, for this is the kind of cross Jesus bore. The only difference is that we will not need to carry our cross the distance He did, or hang upon it as He hung upon His. Only when we abhor ourselves and our sins are we ready to be received of God. When is God most near to us? 18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit (Psalms 34:18) Though she was with Him often, when was Christ closest to Mary Magdalena? It was when her tears of sorrow flowed most prodigiously that He approached her by the open tomb and called her name – **MARY!**

Once God has gotten the attention of His favored man or woman, He will gather the attention of those nearby: 7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite I am reminded in tenderness the woman at the Well of Jacob. She had no reputation of honor to commend her words to others. She was, essentially, a harlot, yet the men and women of the village **BELIEVED** her when she told them about Jesus. Why did they believe a woman who cheated on her men, and caroused in the night? It was because she had found the Water of Life! That Water had changed the woman in stark contrast to her previous self. She now spoke with the authority of one who **KNOWS!** So God now turns to the village Samaritans (Job's friends). See, He will not abandon us, either, in our ignorance if we will hear His Voice! He is nearby us and He speaks! We have pointed fingers at the **JOB's** of this life, yet, He turns to us to correct us – not for hurt, but for our good! My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath The whole issue here, I believe, boils down to **MOTIVE**. Though Job spoke amiss of his own righteousness, yet he **KNEW**

God and believed he spoke truth. The friends spoke only with condescending stance ABOUT God and not His true nature. God will take the side of His favored man and will reveal to those around the truth they need to know – like it, or not!

What is the result of bearing up under hardship and tribulation? 8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. Those who have ridiculed you for groundless reasons will be forced to repent and repay, and the Lord will accept you back to the favored place.

Now we see an astonishing truth regarding Job's losses and gains. 10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. This is not to be construed to mean that the result of our prayers will always be greater material wealth, and this is NOT the result for which JOB prayed. He repented and prayed even for those who had been accusing him. Let us look at the riches of Job at the beginning: *And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.* (Job 1:2-3) Now observe the final and restored riches of Job: 11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. All from which he had been parted, and not actually lost, was restored to him.

12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep (he had seven thousand before), and six thousand camels (he had three thousand before), and a thousand yoke of oxen (he had five hundred before), and a thousand she asses (again, he had five hundred before). 13 He had also seven sons (he had seven before) and three daughters (he had three before). But wait; did JOB not have the same number of daughters and sons as before his troubles? Yes he did, so how can this be double the previous number? It is because those sons and daughters JOB had before, he still has in heaven. He shall go to them even though they cannot presently come to him.

The lesson of Job is OUR lesson, too.

1) We learn PATIENCE: 10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11 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. (James 5:10-11) We learn to have the PATIENCE of Job from his experiences. (Job 1:21, 2:9,10)

2) We learn that the wisdom of the world availeth nothing, but the wisdom of God is all in all. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. (1 Cor 3:19) Compare Job 5:12-13.

3) We learn to **despise not chastening** (see Job 5:17): *5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: (Heb 12:5)*

4) We learn the loss of **hypocrisy** (see JOB 27:8): *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt 16:26)*

5) We learn from Job **God's deliverance**: *He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. (Job 5:19) Confirmed in 1 Corinthians 10:13 - There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

6) We learn **assurance**: *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: (Job 19:25) Compare - For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. (2 Tim 1:12)*

7) We learn our **LIFE** comes from God: *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. (Job 12:10) Compare: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (Acts 17:28)*

And many more points innumerable do we learn from Job. If you think deeply as you read, you will discover many not covered here. So, we now say a temporary adieu to Job and leave him there in the joy of a redeemed heart on the slopes of the Land of Uz. But we do not leave him forever for Jordan Waters loom ahead for each of us, and after our crossing that turbulent river, we shall learn perfectly all that is shrouded in mystery at present. We shall fellowship with Job, with each other, and the One who brought us over the Flood.