

## NOW I KNOW YOU

*Job 40:8-9*

***“Would you indeed annul my judgement?”***

***Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?***

***Have you an arm like God, or can you thunder with a voice like His?”***

.....  
It would be difficult to prayerfully read the Book of Job and not be overwhelmed with the realisation of the majestic Sovereignty of God. Here is the Almighty God, saying, in essence;

- Will you really say that you know better than I?
- Will you really trust in your own understanding and reject mine?
- Will you really say that I am wrong to make yourself right?

Maybe this strikes a chord in many of us. We may be aware that there have been times when we have thought that we know better than God, in a particular circumstance when understanding has escaped us and doubting that God really understood and knew what was best!

Job was a man that God spoke of as ‘blameless and upright’ and as his ‘servant’, a man who *“...feared God and shunned evil.”* (1:1)

Life was going well for Job; he had seven sons and three daughters, many servants, much land and an abundance of livestock, *“...so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.”* (1:3)

Suddenly, his world crashed around him. News came to Job that an enemy had swooped down, killed his servants and taken his livestock. Immediately following this, he was informed that a whirlwind had struck the house in which all his sons and daughters were gathered at that time for a party, and that they had all been killed.

Can we imagine the impact of news of such sudden, colossal loss? This man of God, weighed down in grief, bowed down in mourning, fell down and

proclaimed, “...*The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*” (1:21)

More was to come. His bereavements were followed by sickness of the body; Job was smitten with “...*painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.*” (2:7)

In the following chapters, Job stays true in his firm declarations of the sovereignty of God, of His ‘might and power’ and of His rule over all things and all mankind, and he emphatically opposes the perspective of God put forward by his friends, which was that all sufferings were related to sin on the part of the sufferer. They had a perspective that God refers to in Job 42:7, when he states to one of the friends, “...*My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends; for you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has.*”

The fourth friend, Elihu, although strongly reprimanding Job for his self-righteousness, did not go down the path the other friends had taken, of putting the blame on Job himself for his afflictions and Elihu was not included in God’s strong rebuke.

Although having a solid trust in God, Job erred in his thinking in regard to his sufferings. His thoughts dwelt increasingly on justifying himself before God. He continued down the track of thinking that he did not deserve the sufferings and that there was no cause in him for them (9:17).

From Chapter 3 onwards the ‘why’s flow out, with Job continually declaring his innocence (9:20). Job’s complaints flow on, and in Chapter 10, he voices many questions to God.

Then after all his ‘why’s’ God speaks.

Oh, with what patience God communicates to Job. It is indeed a beautiful picture of the Father heart of God, so patiently but firmly putting the record straight!

“*Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?*” is God’s challenge to Job (38:4), continuing on to direct to Job some forty-two or so scientific questions. Didn’t He, God, make everything that was made; didn’t He command their order, set bounds for the sea and put the stars in the sky?

In Job 42:1-4, we see Job humbling his heart as he saw, with new perspective, not only the awesome sovereign power and wisdom of God but the beauty of grace, mercy, forgiveness, and His pure, holy righteousness. He saw, with the 'eyes' of his heart, that, indeed, God is right in all He does. His heart was bowed down within him, bringing forth confession of his own foolishness in comparing his own finite wisdom with the infinite wisdom of the Almighty, eternal Creator, the One who spoke the word and creation came into being.

Job's sufferings were severe but served to enrich his understanding of:

- the heart of God;
- the pure, perfect wisdom of God;
- the pure perfect purpose of God in all things; and
- the absolute righteousness of God.

Job came into the understanding that the One who is perfect love has a perfect purpose woven into every circumstance, and that His perfect will may entail not only the 'sunshine' of blessings but also the 'sorrow' of sufferings, and that his God, who had so graciously drawn Job into closer intimacy with Himself, makes no mistakes!

Job saw the foolishness of all that is not faith. He no longer sought for or needed understanding in human terms of events and circumstances. God gave no explanations in regard to his sufferings, but what He gave was a clearer understanding of Himself. Job became steadfastly grounded in the sure knowledge of the total integrity of God, resulting in a 'rest' of trust and peace.

God had spoken; Job had listened and 'looked unto' Him and was changed forever. Job became a worshipper, in spirit and in truth; a 'beholding' can only ever bring worship.

In spite of Job's complaints and misunderstanding, God knew that Job's desire to know the truth and see his situation rightly was sincere. In chastising Job's friends, He comments twice, (42:7 and 42:8) that they had "*not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has*".

In humble thankfulness for God's gracious revelation to him in his need, and repentance as he saw the foolishness of His own attitudes and words, Job expresses what has happened to him with the words:

*"I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You." (42:2)*

*"...I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." (42:3)*

*"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear but NOW my eye SEES YOU." (42:5)*

*"Therefore, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." (42:6)*

May I add a personal word to this writing? My own reflections now are humble thankfulness for the lessons God has given in the story of Job. I have mused on what devastated Christians any one of us can become if we fail to respond and grasp with the hand and eye of faith the truth of His total righteousness and absolute dependability in all things.

As with Job, God has a purpose of ultimate good in our sufferings, but my own thoughts now are of the many promises He gives to keep in our hearts to sustain us in difficult times. There is a sober verse in Hebrews 4:2. It says, regarding the Israelites, *"...the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it"*.

My challenge and maybe yours, is 'have I mixed it with faith'? Is it a solidly established fact in me that, indeed, *"All things DO work together for good to those who love the Lord"*? (Romans 8:28) The sufferings in themselves are not good but God tells us that they are so in His ultimate purpose.

God was with Job in his trials and He promises to be with us, giving the light of His love and sustaining grace in them. Hope, joy and peace may be ours as we mix His word with faith.

May our thankful declaration be

I have HEARD!

But NOW my eye SEES YOU!

