

“THE WIZARD OF UZ”

taken from
the Book of Job



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“Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return hither. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.”

The Sorrow that Worships

Job wrestles with the problem of the meaning of the mystery of sorrow. Whether history or a parable, its worth is the same, as many tortured souls have felt for many centuries, and will feel to the end of time.

There is no picture that was ever painted that is grander and more touching than that of the Man of Uz. In the ancient wealth, and the happiness of his brighter days, rich, joyful, with all children around him, living in a man’s honor, and walking upright with the Lord. Then comes the dramatic completeness and suddenness of his great trials.

One day strips him of all, and stripped of all he rises to a higher dignity, for there is a majesty as well as an isolation in his sorrow. How many souls tossed with afflictions have found peace in this verse? How many quivering lips have tried to utter their grave, calm thoughts? How many of us are they halloved by memories of times when they stood between us and despair?

This verse seems to say everything that can be said about our trials and our losses. To set forth the whole truth of the facts and to present the whole series of feelings with which good men and women may and should be exercised.

I know that while my wife was suffering from cancer, this verse and others like it in Job were always a source of comfort to her and myself. So, see if you can’t find comfort in them for whatever are your afflictions, as many have.

There is the vindication of suffering.

“He rent his clothes,” which are merely the signs and tokens of inward desolation,

now it is meant for us to feel grief. God sends sorrows in order that they may pain. Sorrow has its manifold uses in our lives and in our minds. It is natural. God set the fountain of tears in our souls. We are told not to despise the chastening of the Lord.

“No chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but afterwards it beareth the peaceable fruit of righteousness if exercised thereby.” It is the chastening of the Lord, “who are exercised thereby,” to whom the chastisement is blessed.

Now this principle is sanctioned by the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ Himself wept. He told the women of Jerusalem to weep for themselves and for their children.

Christianity does not destroy the natural emotions, sorrows as little as any other, guides, controls, cures, comforts, and brings blessing out of it.

So do not aim at the impossibility of stoicism, but permit nature to have its way, and look at the many pictures of the sorrow of Job. He was calm, silent, until he was stung by the three undeserved reproaches of his three orthodox liars for God, and going to God and worshipping. **We recognize loss and sorrow as the law of life.**

“Naked came I out of my mother’s womb.” That is the principle, basically that all possessions are transient. The naked self gets clothed and surrounded with possessions, but they are all outside of it, apart from its individuality. It has been without them. The inevitable law of loss is fixed and certain. We are losing something every moment, not only possession, but all our dearest ties are knit but for a time, and sure to be snapped. They go and then after a while we go.

The independence of each soul of all its possessions and relations is as certain as the loss of them. They may go and we are made naked, but still we exist all the same. We have to learn the hard lesson which sounds so unfeeling, that we can live on in spite of

all losses. Nothing, no one, is necessary to us. All this is cold and miserable. It is the standing point of law and necessity. An atheist could say it. It is the beginning of the Christian contemplation of life, but only the beginning.

We must recognize God in the law.

“The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.” Now that is a step far beyond the former. To bring in the thought of the Lord, that makes a world of difference. The tendency of most is only to look at the second cause. In Job’s case there were two classes of agencies, men, the Chaldeans, and the Sabeans, and natural causes, fire and wind. But he did not stop with these. The great corrective of that tendency lies in the full theistic idea that God is the sole cause of all.

The immanence of Deity in all things and events is our refuge from the soul crushing tyranny of the reign of the law. The faithful recognition of God in the law is eminently to be made in regard to death, as Job does in the verse. “The number of his months is with Thee.” Death is not any more or any less than under God’s control than are all other human incidents are. It has no special sanctity, nor abnormally close connection with His will, but it no more is exempt from such connection than all the other events of life. The connection is real. God opens the gate of the grave, and no man shutteth. He shuts, and no man opens.

Job did not forget the Lord’s gifts even while he was suffering under the stroke of His withdrawals. **Sometimes it is necessary to have sorrow to realize that we owe all to the Lord.**

We must remember how much good we have all received of the Lord, and the remembrance should not be a crown of sorrow, but a thankful one. There is therefore a thankful recognition to God’s loving administration of the law. This is one of the highest principles of Christianity. It recognizes in loss and sorrow a reason for praise and thanksgiving. Why? Because we may be sure that all loss is for our good. Because we are sure that all loss is from a loving Lord.

If loss of dear ones, **our gain is drawing nearer to God.** In being taught more to long for Heaven our home, in our relation to them, a loftier love. A hallowing of all the past. And their gain is in their entrance into Heaven, and all the glory that they have reached.

This blessing of God for loss is not inconsistent with sorrow, but anticipates the future when we shall know all and bless Him for all. **The peaceable fruits of sorrows rightly borne.**

“Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For He maketh sore, and bindeth up: He woundeth, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. In famine He shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the Earth. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin. Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the Earth. Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season. Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.”

The close of the book of Job shows that his friends’ speeches were defective, and in part erroneous. They all proceed on the assumption the suffering was the fruit of sin, a principle which, though true in general, is not to be unconditionally applied to specific cases.

They all forgot that good men may be exposed to, not as punishment, nor even as correction, but as trial, to know what was in their hearts.

Eliphaz is the best of his three friends and his speeches embody much permanent

Truth, and rise, as in this passage, to a high level of literary and artistic beauty. There are few lovelier passages in Scripture than this glowing description of the posterity of the man who accepts God's chastisement. And on the whole, the picture is true. But the underlying belief in the uniform coincidence of inward goodness and outward good needs to be modified by the deeper teaching of the New Testament before it can be regarded as covering all the facts of life.

Eliphaz is gathering up, in our passage, the threads of his speech. He bases upon all that he has been saying the exhortation to Job to be thankful for his sorrows. And with a grand paradox, he declares the man who is afflicted to be happy and therein he strikes an eternally true note. **It is good to be made to drink of the cup of sorrow.**

Flesh calls pain evil, but the spirit knows it to be good. "It is good for me to be afflicted for therein have I learned more of Thy Word."

The list of our blessings is not only written in bright ink, but many are inscribed in black. The reason why the sad heart should be a happy heart, is because, as Eliphaz, believed, **sadness is God's fatherly correction, intended to better the subject of it.**

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," which is in full accord with Eliphaz. But his well-meant and true words flew wide of their mark for two reasons: they were chillingly didactic, and it is vinegar upon nitre to stand over an agonized soul and preach platitudes in an unsympathetic voice.

They assumed usual sin in Job's words, which seemed to him full of rebellion, and irreverence and he made no allowance for the wild cries of an agonized heart when he solemnly warned the sufferer against despising the Lord God's chastening. A more sympathetic ear would have detected the accent of faith in the groans. The principle of verse 18, of making sore and binding up, does not merely express sequence, but also purpose. The wound is in order to healing. **The wounds are merciful surgery, and their intention is health.** Like the cuts that lay open

an ulcer, or the scratches for vaccination, the view of suffering in these verses is not complete. But it goes far toward completeness in tracing it to God, in asserting its disciplinary intention, in pointing to the Divine healing which is meant to follow, and in exhorting to submission.

We may recall the beautiful expansion of that exhortation in Hebrews where "faint not" is added to "despise not." So including the two opposite and yet closely connected forms of misuse of sorrow, according as we stiffen our wills against it, and try to make light of it, or yield to it as to collapse. Either extreme equally misses the corrective purpose of the grief.

"Faint not," "Despise not the chastening of the Lord." On this general statement follows a charming picture of the blessedness which attends the man who has taken his chastisement properly. After the thunder-storm comes sunshine and blue and the song of birds. But as lovely as it is and capable of appreciation in many points to the life of every one who trustfully yields to God's will, it must not be taken as a literally and absolutely true statement of God's dealing with His children. If so regarded, it would hopelessly be shattered against the facts. For the world is full of instances of saintly men and women who have not experienced in their outward lives such sunny calm and prosperity stretching to as are here promised.

Eliphaz is not meant to be an interpreter of the mysteries of providence, and his solution is decisively rejected at the close, but still there is much in this picture which finds fulfillment in the devout lives in a higher sense than his intended meaning.

The first point is that the faithful soul is exempt from calamities which assail those around it. These are such as are ordinary in Scripture recognized by God's judgments upon a people. Famine and war devastation. But the faithful believer's soul abides in peace and is satisfied.

Now is it not true that faith and submission makes a wall round a man, so that he escapes from such calamities? In the supernatu-

ral system of the Old Testament such exceptions were more usual than with us, though this very book of Job and many a Psalm show that faithful believers had even then to wrestle with the problem of the prosperity of the wicked and the indiscriminate fall of wide-spread calamities on the good and on the bad.

But in its deepest sense, which however, is not Eliphaz's sense, the faithful man is saved from the evil which he, in common with his faithless neighbor, experiences.

Two men are smitten down by the same disease, or lie dying on a battlefield, shattered by the same shell, and the one received the fulfillment of the promise, "there shall no evil touch thee," and the other does not. For the evil in the evil, is all sucked out of it, and the poison is wiped off the arrow which strikes him who is united to God by faith and submission.

Two women are grinding at the same millstone, and the same blow kills them both. But the one is delivered, and the other is not. They who pass through an evil, and are drawn away from God by it, but brought nearer to Him, are hid from its power. To die may be our deliverance from death.

Eliphaz's promises rise still higher in verses 22-23, in which is set forth a truth that in its deepest meaning is of universal application. The wild beasts of the Earth, and the stones of the field will be in league with the man who submits to God's will. Of course the beast comes into view as destructive, and the stones are injuring the fertility of the fields. We have here probably an allusion to the story of paradise and the fall.

Man's relation to nature was disturbed by sin. **It will be rectified by his return to the Lord.** Such a doctrine of the effects of sin, is perverting man's relation to creatures, run all through Scripture, and is not to put aside as a mere symbol.

But the large truth underlying the words here is that, if we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are masters of everything. "All things work together for good to them that love God." All things serve the soul that

serves God. In serving God, everything serves you. And on the other hand, all things are against him who does not, and "the very stars in their courses fight against those who fight against the Lord." All things are ours, if we are Christ's.

The many medieval legends of saints attended by animals, from St. Jerome and his lion downwards to St. Francis preaching to the birds, echo the thoughts here. A gentle soul, pure, living in amity with the dumb creatures was wonderful power to attract them. They who are at peace with God can scarcely be at war with any of God's creatures. Gentleness and GRACE are stronger than iron bands. Cords of love draw most surely.

Peace and prosperity in home and possessions are the next blessings promised. "Thou shalt look over, visit, thy household and shall miss nothing." No cattle have strayed or have been devoured by evil beasts, or stolen, as all Job's had been.

Eliphaz knew nothing of commercial crises, and the great system of credit by which once scoundrels fall may bring down hundreds of good men and patient widows, who look over their possessions and find nothing but worthless shares. Yet even for those who find all at once that the herd is cut off from the stall, their tabernacles may still be in peace. And though the fold be empty they may miss nothing. Because in the empty place they find God. Now that is what Christians can make of these words.

In like manner the next blessing, that of numerous prosperity, does not depend on moral or spiritual condition, as Eliphaz would make out. In modern days is not always regarded as a blessing. But note the singular hearlessness betrayed in telling Job, all whose flocks and herds had been carried off, and his children laid dead in their festival chamber, that abundant possessions and offspring are the tokens of God's favor.

The speaker here seems surely unconscious that he was saying anything that could drive a knife into the tortured man, he is so carried along on the waves of his own

eloquence. So absorbed in stringing together the elements of an artistic whole, **that he forgets the very sorrows which he came to comfort.** There are not few pious exhorters of bleeding hearts who are chargeable with the same sin, "Miserable comforters, are ye."

The only hand that will bind up without hurting is a hand that is compassionate to the very finger tips. No eloquence or poetic beauty or presentation of undeniable truths will do as substitute for that.

The last blessing promise is that which the Old Testament places so high in the list of good things... long life. The lovely metaphor in which that promise is couched has become familiar to us all. The ripe corn gathered into sheaf at harvest time, suggests festival rather than sadness. It speaks of growth accomplished, of fruit matured, and of the ministries of the sun and rain received and used. And of a joyful gathering into the great storehouse. Firstfruits.

There is no reference in the speech to the uses of the sheaf after it is harvested. But we can scarcely avoid following its history a little farther than the grave, which to Eliphaz seems the garner.

Now are all these matured powers to have no field of action? Were all these miracles of vegetation set in motion only in order to grow a crop which should be reaped and there end? What is to be done with the precious fruit which has taken so long time and so much cultivation to grow? Surely it is not the intention of the Lord of the harvest to let it rot when it has been gathered. Surely we are grown here and ripened and carried there for something.

But that is not all in this passage. This however may be drawn from it. That maturity does not depend on length of days. And however Eliphaz meant to promise long life, the reality is that the faithful soul may reckon on complete life, whether it is long or short. Full age.

God will not call His children home till their schooling is done, till they graduate. "The GRACE of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us to deny

ungodliness," teaching us until we graduate from GRACE to Glory.

And He promotes us, takes us home, no matter how green or young the corn may seem to our eyes. He knows which heads in the great harvest field are ready for removal and gathers only these. Every home going is a partial rapture.

The child whose little coffin may be carried under some boy's arm may be ripe for harvesting. **Not length of days, but likeness to God, makes maturity.** If we die according to the will of God, it cannot but be that we shall come to our grave in a full age, whatever be the number of years carved on our tombstone.

The speech ends with a somewhat self-complacent exhortation to the poor, tortured man. "We have searched it, so it is." We wise pledge our wisdom and our reputation that this is true.

An ounce of compassion would have done more to commend the doctrine than a tone of dogmatic self-confidence. "Hear it and know thou it for thyself."

Take it into your mind and take it for your good. It is a frosty ending, exasperating in its air or patronage, of superior wisdom and in its lack of any note of feeling.

So, of course, it set Job's patient alight, and his next speech is more desperate than his former.

When will well-meaning comforters learn not to rub salt into the wounds while they seem to be dressing them?

"No chastening for the present seem to be joyous, but afterward it bears the peaceable fruit of righteousness if exercised thereby."

The end of the Lord..

"Then Job answered the Lord and said." "I know thou canst do everything and that no thought can be withholden from Thee." "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." "Hear I beseech Thee, and I will speak, I will demand of Thee, and

declare Thou unto me. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

"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." "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 Me the thing which is right, like My servant Job."

"So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naanathite went and did according as the Lord commanded them, the Lord also accepted Job. And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayer for his friends. Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."

The close of the book of Job must be taken in connection with its prologue, in order to get the full view of its solution of the mystery of pain and suffering. Indeed the prologue is more completely the solution than the ending is, **for it shows the purpose of Job's trials as being, not his punishment, but his testing.** The whole theory that individual sorrows were the result of individual sins, in the support of which Job's friends poured out so many eloquent and heartless common places, is discredited from the beginning.

The magnificent prologue shows the source and the purpose of sorrows. The epilogue in this last chapter shows the effect of it in a good man's character, and afterwards in his life. So we have a grim thing lighted up, as it were, as the two ends.

Suffering comes with the mission of trying what kind of stuff a man is made of, and it leads to closer knowledge of the Lord, which is blessed to lowlier selfestimation, which is also blessed, and to renewed

outward blessings which hide the old scars and gladden the tortured soul.

Job's final word to God is in beautiful contrast with much of his former unmeasured utterances. It breathes lowliness, submission, and contented acquiescence in a providence partially understood. It does not put into Job's mouth a solution of the problem, **but shows how the pressure is lighted by getting closer to God.** Each verse presents a distinct element of thought and of feeling.

First comes, remarkable enough, not what might have been expected, namely, a recognition of God's righteousness, which had been the attribute impugned by Job's hasty words, but of His omnipotence. **"God can do everything."** **"And none of His thoughts or purposes can be restrained."** There had been frequent recognitions of that attribute in earlier speeches, but these had lacked the element of submission and been complaint rather than adoration.

Now, the same conviction has different companions in Job's mind, and so has different effects, and is really different in itself.

The Titan is on the rock with the vulture tearing at his liver, suddenly recognized Jove's power, but was a rebel still. Such had been Job's earlier attitude. But now that thought comes to him along with submission and so is blessed.

Its recurrence here, as in a very real sense a new conviction, teaches us how old beliefs may flash out into new significance when seen from a fresh point of view. And how the very same thought of God may be an argument for a vindication of His providence.

The prominence given, both in the magnificent chapters in which God answers Job out of the whirlwind, and in this final confession, to power instead of goodness, rests upon the unspoken principle that the Divine nature is not a segment, but a circle. Any one Divine attribute implies all others.

Omnipotence cannot exist apart from righteousness. A mere naked omnipotence is not God. **If we understand His power, we**

can rest upon it as a hand sustaining, not crushing us.

“He doeth all things well.” That is the same conviction closely connected with, “I know that Thou canst do all things,” as light is with heat.

The second step in Job’s confession is the acknowledgement of the incompleteness of his and all man’s materials and capacities for judging God’s providence. Verse 3 begins with quoting God’s rebuke. Job 38:2, “Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?”

It had cut deep, and now Job makes it his own confession. We should thus appropriate as our own God’s merciful indictments and when He asks, “Who is it?” we should answer with all lowliness, “Lord it is I.”

Job had been a critic. Now he is a worshipper. He had tried to fathom the bottomless, and been angry because his short measuring line had not reached its depths. But now he acknowledges that he has been talking about what has passed his comprehension. And also that his words had been foolish in their rashness.

Is then the solution of the whole only that the old commonplace of the unsearchableness of the Divine judgments? Not altogether, for the prologue gives, if not a complete, yet a real key to them. But still, after all partial solutions, there remains the inscrutable element in them.

The mystery of pain and suffering is still a mystery, and while general principles, taught us even more clearly in the New Testament than in this book, do lighten the weight of all this unintelligible world.

We still have to take Job’s language as the last word on the matter, and say, “How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.” For individuals and on the wider field of the world, God’s way is in the sea. But that does not bewilder those who also know that it is also in the sanctuary.

Job’s confession as to his rash speeches is the best estimate of many elaborate attempts to vindicate the way of God to man. **It is better**

to trust than to criticize, better to wait than to seek prematurely to understand.

Verse 4 like verse 3, quotes the Word of God. Job 38:3, “Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou Me.” Job 40:7, “Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me.”

They yield a good meaning, if regarded as a repetition of God’s challenge, for the purpose of disclaiming any such presumptuous contest. But they are perhaps better understood as expressing Job’s longing, in his new condition of humility, for fuller light, and his new recognition of the way to pierce to a deeper understanding of the mystery by illumination from God granted in answer to his prayer.

He had tried to solve his problem by much and sometimes barely reverent thinking. He had racked his brain in an effort, but he had learned a more excellent way. As the psalmist said, “When I thought, in order to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God. Then understood I.”

Prayer will do more for clearing mysteries than speculation, however acute, and it will change the aspect of the mysteries which it does not clear from being awful to being solemn, the veils covering depths of love, not clouds obscuring the sun.

The center of all Job’s confession is verse 5. Job 42:5, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee.” He contrasts his former and present knowledge of God, as before being mere hearsay, and eyesight now, personally. A clear understanding, but still more a sense of nearness, and an acquaintance at first hand are implied in these bold words, which must not be interpreted as any outward revelation to his senses. But of the direct, full thrilling consciousness of God who makes all men’s words about Him seem poor.

That change was the master transforming in Job’s case, as it is for us all. Get closer to the Lord. Realize His presence. Live beneath His eye and your eyes fixed on Him, and the

ancient puzzles will puzzle no longer, and wounds will cease to smart. Instead of angry exposition, or bewildered attempts at construing His dealings, there will come submission, and with submission, peace.

The cure for questioning of God's providence is experience of His nearness, and blessings therein. Things that loomed large dwindle and dangers melt away. The landscape is the same in shadow and in sunshine, but when the sun comes out, even snow and ice sparkle, and tender beauty starts into visibility in grim things.

So if we see God, the black places of life are lighted, and we cease to feel the pressure of many difficulties of speculation and practice, both as regards His general providence and His revelation in law and in the Gospel.

The end of the whole matter is Job's retraction of his words and his change of mind. Job 42:5, 6, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

I abhor, has no object expressed, and is better taken as referring to the previous speeches than to "myself." He means thereby to withdraw them all. And the next clause "I repent in dust and ashes," carries the confession a step farther. He recognizes guile in his rash speeches, and bows before God, confessing his sin, totally void of spiritual assets. Where are his assertions of innocence gone now? One sight of God has scattered them all as it ever does.

A man who has learned his own sinfulness will find few difficulties and no occasion for complaint in God's dealings with him. It is much different to see God's dealings with us more clearly when we are in fellowship than when we are out of fellowship. If we would see accurately the meaning of our sorrows, we must look at them on our knees. Get near to God. Get back in fellowship with God, and that will teach our sinfulness and will explain the meaning of sorrow, and to make the unexplained residue not hard to endure.

The epilogue is prose which follows Job's confession, and tells of the Divine estimate of the three friends, of Job's sacrifice for them, and of his renewed outward prosperity. The men who had tried to vindicate God's righteousness are charged with not having spoken that which is right. The man who has passionately impugned it is declared to have thus spoken.

Job 42:7, 8, "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. 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."

Job 42:9, 10, "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. 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." No doubt Eliphaz and his colleagues had said a great many most excellent pious things, and Job as many wild and untrue ones. But their foundation principle was not a true representation of God's providence, since it was the uniform connection of sin with sorrow, and the accurate proportion in which these bore to each other.

Job, on the other hand, had spoken truth in his denials of these principles, and in his longings to have the righteousness of God set in clear relation to his own application. We must remember, too, that the friends were talking commonplaces learned by rote, while Job's words came scalding hot from his heart. Most excellent truth may be so spoken as to be wrong, and it is so if spoken heartlessly, regardless of sympathy, and flung at sufferers like a stone, rather than laid on their hearts as a balm.

God lets a true heart dare much in speech, for He knows that the sputter and foam prove that. The heart's deeps boil in earnest.

Job is put in the place of intercession for the three, a profound humiliation for them and an honor for him. They obeyed at once, showing that they have learned their lesson, as well as Job his.

An incidental lesson from that final picture of the sufferer became the priest requiring accusations with intercession is the duty of cherishing kind feelings and doing kind acts to those who say hard things to us. It would rather be harder for some of us to offer sacrifices for our Eliphazes than to argue with them.

And yet another is that sorrow has for one of its purposes to make the heart more tender, both for the sorrows and the faults of others. Note too, that it was, when Job prayed for his friends, that the Lord turned his captivity. That is a proverbial expression, bearing witness, probably to the deep traces left by the exodus, for reversing calamity. Job 42:10, "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." The turning point was not merely the confession, but the act of GRACE in ministering to others, then one's own grieves may be soothed.

The restoration of the outward good in double measure is not meant as the statement of the universal law of providence, and still less as a solution of the problem of the book. But it is putting the truth that sorrows, rightly borne, yield peaceable fruit at the last, in the form appropriate to the stage of revelation which the whole book represents. That is, one in which the doctrine of immortality, though it sometimes rises before Job's mind as an inspiration of faith, is not set in full light.

To us living in the blaze of the light which Jesus Christ has let into the darkness of the future, the end of the Lord is that

Heaven should crown the sorrows of His children on Earth.

We can speak of light, transitory affliction working out an external weight of glory. The book of Job is expressing substantially the same expectation. When it paints the calm after the storm and the restoration in double portion of vanished blessings.

Many desolate yet trusting sufferers know how little such an issue is possible for their grief, but if they have more of God in clearer sight of Him, they will find empty places in their hearts and homes filled.

Job 42:11-17, "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. 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. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. 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. After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

Job 5:26, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

The Wizard of Uz.

Buddy Dano, Pastor

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