

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message One : The Great Question in the Book of Job and the Great Answer

I. Overview:

The book of Job leave us with two great questions; what is the purpose of God in His creating of man, and what is the purpose of God in His dealing with His chosen people? The great answer to the great questions is the mystery hidden in God throughout the ages, the eternal economy of God. Job's sufferings were God's stripping and consuming that he might gain God more. Job was self-righteous, and he was contented with what he had become. God's intention was to tear down Job's perfection and uprightness that He might know the living God and the God of resurrection. The move of God's economy is altogether in the mingled spirit. In our Christian life we should live by the Spirit and walk by the Spirit. Job saw God, gaining God in his personal experience and abhorring himself. God whom we look at today is in our spirit. In order to see God, we must deal with our heart. We must be renewed in the spirit of our mind by being reconstituted with the holy word of God to be governed and controlled by God's word. God's purpose in dealing with those who love Him is that they may gain Him to the fullest extent, surpassing the loss of all that they have other than Him.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1

A. Explain Job not knowing the mystery hidden in God.

Job complained that God, knowing that he was not wicked and not acquitting him of his iniquity, ill-treated him without cause. Job could not find the reason for God's treatment of him, but he believed that there had to be some reason hidden in God's heart. Job was right; something was hidden in God's heart. Ephesians 3:9 tells us of the mystery hidden in God. Before the New Testament time He did not unveil to anyone what His purpose was.

B. Expound in the book of Job with two crucial questions.

Job leave us with two crucial questions; what was the purpose of God in His creating of man, and what is the purpose of God in His dealing with His chosen people? To answer this question, we need the entire Bible. The New Testament is God's answer to Job. We may say that it is a message "faxed" from God to Job. It reveals that God was stripping and consuming him in order that Job could be rebuilt with the Triune God.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the words in Job 38:7 why the sons of God shouted for joy.

According to Job 38:7 the sons of God shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of the earth. The angels might have wondered what God's purpose was in creating the earth and man. God kept His intention hidden throughout the ages, not telling any of the prophets; before the New Testament time He did not unveil to anyone what His purpose was.

B. Why does Job 42:7 tell us that God condemned Job's three friends?

The reason is the three friends not speaking concerning Him that which was right, as His servant Job had. However, they insisted that Job's sufferings were a proof that he had done something wrong and was being judged by God. Thus, God came in to condemn them and to vindicate Job to a certain extent. Actually, the concept of the three friends was based on the principle of good and evil, on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Day 3 —

A. Why do we say that the Bible is a book of God's economy?

God's economy is to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity in Christ by the Spirit into us that we may have Him as our life, nature, and everything. When we experience this, it is no longer we who live, but it is Christ who lives in us. This is the principle of the tree of life.

B. Describe briefly the overview of the entire Bible.

The Bible begins with God in His creation as the initiation and ends with the New Jerusalem, which is the mingling of the Triune God and all His chosen, redeemed, regenerated, transformed, conformed, and glorified tripartite people. The New Jerusalem is thus a constitution of God with man to express God for eternity. To see this is to have an overview of the entire Bible.

Day 4 —

A. Explain what we should know about suffering.

Man is prone to error; therefore, suffering is necessary for his correction. Suffering is needful if we are to comfort others, for only they who themselves have suffered can truly help other people. The discipline of suffering is essential if we are to acquire endurance. Suffering is inevitable if we are to be molded into vessels that will be of use to God. The ultimate object of all suffering is the accomplishment of God's eternal purpose.

B. Expound the distinction between the living God and the God of resurrection.

Every saved person has some evidence that God is the living God; though the living God can perform many acts on man's behalf, the nature of the living God cannot blend with the nature of man. When the living God has performed some act on your behalf, after that act as before it, He is still He, and you are still you. On the other hand, when the God of resurrection works, He communicates Himself to man by that which He does for him.

Day 5 —

A. Explain Galatians 3:14 the Spirit is the aggregate of the divine blessing.

Galatians 3:14 shows us that the Spirit is the aggregate, the totality, of the divine blessing of the gospel given to us. Such a blessing includes redemption, regeneration, the divine life, righteousness, justification, sanctification, transformation, and renewing. Today in our Christian life we Christians should just deal with this Spirit. Since we have life and live by Him, we also should walk by Him.

B. Expound the words in Galatians 6:18 and its application.

Galatians 6:18 indicates that the Spirit as the all-inclusive grace is with our spirit. We must treasure the two spirits in Galatians—the divine Spirit as the aggregate of the divine blessing to us and the human spirit as the receiver, the container, the keeper, of the divine Spirit. Thus, we need to take care of our spirit, doing everything by exercising our spirit.

Day 6 —

A. Explain what purpose God allows suffering to come to Job.

Job did not understand the reason for his sufferings, but today we know the reason. It was true that Job suffered, but his suffering was allowed by God for a purpose. God wanted to take away all his successes. Job had attained to a very high degree of perfection and uprightness. However, God took these away in order that Job would pursue God Himself instead of other things.

B. Expound the meaning of the eye of Job having seen God.

Job recognized that he had known God only, "by the hearing of the ear", and to the end in Job 42:5 he continued saying, "but now my eye has seen You." To see God is to receive God into us; this means that God comes into us as our element to renew us, to transform us, and in us for renewing us to discharge all our old element. Eventually, our entire being becomes new. This is transformation.

III. Conclusion:

The experience of Job is also what God is doing in us today through the Spirit. Most people think that Job's suffering was God's judgment. However, this suffering is God's stripping and consuming so that he might gain God more. There are two aspects of the work of the Spirit. On the one hand, the work of the Spirit within us is to constitute a new being for us. On the other hand, the work of the Spirit without is to tear down every aspect of our natural being through our environment. We should cooperate with the operating Spirit and accept the environment that God has arranged for us. The move of the Triune God to deify man for the fulfillment of His economy is altogether in the mingled spirit. By doing everything according to the Spirit, we can experience all that Christ has accomplished. Even in the midst of our afflictions, we must take heed to our spirit. God deals with those who love Him that they may gain Him to the fullest extent, surpassing the loss of all that they have other than Him.