

**Job 14: 1-13; “For There is Hope for a Tree”, Sermon # 26 in the series entitled –  
“Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall  
on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, in the Afternoon Worship.**

Job is addressing God in these verses. He is making an appeal to God to take pity upon him in his very weak condition. He is weak physically from the sore boils which Satan struck him with. And he is weak emotionally from the loss of all of his children and possessions. And he feels weak spiritually because he cannot get an answer from God as to why he was going through all of these things; why God would not give him an answer, or allow him to die since his pain and grief are so great. Here, he tries to persuade God to look away from him that he might rest, that he might gain some relief from his afflictions, till like a hired man, he would finish his day; that he could somehow be concealed by God until His wrath was past.

Well, in verses 7-9, he compares his hope here at this point, to that of a tree. If a tree is cut down, it will sprout again, he says. Even if it is cut down, it may come back and flourish again. With a tree, he says, there is this hope. But in his own condition, he did not see that happening. And yet, if he could have seen what God would do for him after his trial was over, to revive his hope, he would have thought of himself as a tree of God's planting; the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified. He would see the faithfulness of God by His grace in Christ, giving the person who is trusting in Him, hope. And so, at this time, I would like to show you the faithfulness of God, in Christ, to the suffering saint.

1<sup>st</sup> of all – God is faithful to show men that they cannot hope in themselves. (verses 1-6) 2<sup>nd</sup> – God is faithful to show men that, like trees, he can give them hope through Christ's grace. (verses 7-10) And 3<sup>rd</sup> – God is faithful to give to all who believe in Christ, the sure and certain hope of the resurrection. (verses 10-12) Before we partake of the Lord's Supper, let us now see the basis of our true and lasting hope is only found in Christ.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – God is faithful to show men that they cannot hope in themselves.**

It is no doubt true that Job already knew this truth, but all of his earthly hope had been taken away from him in this trial. And so he comments in the presence of his friends, that man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; he flees like a shadow and does not continue. That is the way that he saw things at this time in his experience. And there is some truth to these words. In comparison to eternity which is coming, our lives, even though made up of many days for a good number of us, still, our life seems all too short when we perceive it coming to an end. There are many places in the Scripture which speak of man's trouble and the shortness of his days in the Bible. Let's look at a couple of them.

Psalms 103, verses 13-18 – “As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him.” “For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.” “As for man, his days are like; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes.” “For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.” “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.” Now, Job had known the tender mercies of the Lord all through his life until this trial came upon him. And we have seen that his trial came to him because he was truly a man of integrity; and upright man who feared God and was turning away from evil.

But what Job could not sense in this trial was that God was pitying him, the one who feared Him. The Lord knew that apart from His providential care, His thoughtful and loving watchcare over Job's life, that Job, like any other man, was but dust. God knew that even though He had blessed Job so greatly, that because of the greatness of the trial, that it was hard for Job to remember all the goodness and mercy that He had shown him in past years. The Lord remembers that each one of us is dust, and like the flower of the field we flourish for a few years and then we

fade away and are gone. After we have lain in the grave for a few years, very few people remember what we were like, or what our life was like. Most people will not know our name or remember our name. This is a reality which is hard for many people, even Christians, to accept.

But, I want you to see, that if you fear God, He will be faithful to teach you about the brevity of life. But even in His teaching this, He will give you hope if you are not trusting in yourself, but in Him. The way to find hope is to remember God's unchanging faithfulness to you; that the Lord's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him. And Job truly did fear Him. In saying the things that he did here, he did not cling to God's faithfulness.

Another example of this is found in Genesis chapter 47, verses 5-10. "Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, 'Your father and your brothers have come to you.'" "The land of Egypt is before you." "Have you father and brothers dwell in the beset of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen." "And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock." "Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh." "Pharaoh said to Jacob, 'The day of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.'" "So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh."

Now, when we think of Jacob's life as it is related for us in the Scriptures, we see that he did indeed have his share of trials and troubles. Most of these were due to his own sinfulness; his trickiness in stealing his brother's birthright and the blessing. When he worked for Laban, he was cheated out of being able to marry Rachel, and instead got Leah. And even many of his own children were very sinful men who disgraced him and the family at various points. He had his favorite son, Joseph, but because he loved him more than his other sons, they became jealous and sold him into slavery in Egypt. God overruled all of this sin by raising Joseph up to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> in command to Pharaoh in Egypt, and he actually saved the world from starvation because God providentially ordered it that he would be able to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh.

At many points, he could have said, as Job did in verse 3 of our text – Why do you open Your eyes on such a one, and bring me to judgment with Yourself? It is sadly true that when we come into trials, that we may be tempted to think that God is somehow judging us, and it is more than we can bear. We are tempted to ask "why"? At least a part of the answer to that question "why" is found in verse 4 of our text – "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!" Job is saying, that he knows that since he was born of a woman descended from Adam, he like all men, has a sinful nature.

And even after a person comes to faith in God's promise in Christ, he or she is still going to have days full of trouble because that is what it means to live in a fallen world where sin has affected even aspect of every man's being. We are on a pilgrimage and God is teaching us on the way to heaven, how to have hope within ourselves as we trust in Christ continually. Since we are brought forth in iniquity, and we are conceived by our mother in sin, that is the reason why we are of few days and full of trouble. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing? Job is trying to say to God, that since man comes forth like a flower and fades away, that since he flees as a shadow, as he gets older, and he does not continue, because of death, that God should not open His eyes on him to bring him into judgment with Himself.

That is how Job saw it. Since he knew that all of his days were determined, and the number of the months of his life was with God; that since these limits were appointed for him, that God ought to look away from him so that he might find rest. He was just a man; a man who needed to be pitied. He was a man who needed relief from pain and grief. Dear Christian, when you come into a trial, do not think that God looking at you with eyes of judgment. Do not think that is not pitying you in that trial, just because he has ordained it for you. If you have believed in Christ, He has done this for your good. He does it to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29: 10 – "For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good

word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.” “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

And in Lamentations chapter 3, verses 19-24 we find Jeremiah in a similar position to Job. He says –“Remember my affliction and roaming, the wormwood and the gall.” “My soul still remembers and sinks within me.” “This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope.” “Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.” “They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.” “The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, therefore I hope in Him!” All of these blessings of God’s faithfulness to you will be established to you, over time, because of what Christ did for you in His utter faithfulness to all of God’s commands. He sealed His faithfulness with His death, and by His blood, He purchased for us the gift of the Holy Spirit to be your Comforter in all the days of trial and affliction. These things we need to remember when we are in the midst of them.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – God is faithful to show men that, like trees, he can give them hope through Christ’s grace.** (verses 7-10)

In verse 7 Job says, “For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its tender shoots will not cease. “Though its roots may grow old in the earth, and its stump may die in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant.” “But man dies and is laid away; indeed he breathes his last and where is he?” So Job rightly sees the finality of death in relation to our leaving this earth and leaving behind everything familiar. This is what he was expecting, and even hoping for if you read verse 13. At least in terms of there being an end to his trial. “Oh that You would hide me in the grave, that You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me!

But he sees the earthly tree as having a hope that he did not have, he thought. If tree is cut down, Job says, it will sprout again. That is its hope, because its tender shoots will not cease. Job did not think that in his heart there were any tender shoots left. He thought that the roots of his joy in spiritual things had died. And so he says that a tree may grow old and its stump die in the ground, yet when it sense water, it will bud once again and bring forth branches like a plant. It would bring forth these things, but he could not bring forth anything in regard to his faith and his hope. But I think that Job did not realize at this point in his experience, that he was in many ways, like this tree that he talks about. Men are often compared to trees in the Bible. And in fact righteous men are called “trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified”, in Isaiah 61: 3.

The reason that Job thought that he was dying inside was because he did not sense the water of life in his soul at that time. But we should understand that God knows how to keep His trees watered with grace, even enough, to bring them through all the calamities that their trial has brought them into. A couple of years ago, you will remember, we had a Derecho storm here in Tama. We had 130 mile an hour winds, and in my case, two trees came down on the front of my house. In the process of one of those trees falling, it crushed one of the three little grace smoke trees nearby it. When Luke and Brian came over to help clean things up, I said to Brian – I think that this tree will not be able to live. It is so crushed, why don’t you just saw it off at the base, and we may plant another one there sometime.

But I was wrong about its being dead. It was very much alive. All that it needed was the scent of water, and it began to grow once again the next spring. It came up so powerfully; that now, a year and a half later, it has 10 individual branches growing out of it! What was it that brought it back? It was the scent of water! And what you and I need to understand is that God knows how to supply His dear people with scent of the water of life in their deepest darkest trials and afflictions. He knows how to take you through them, how to preserve you in them, and how to water your soul, in order to bring you back from these trials and to bring you out of them, having taught you all the mighty lessons that He knows that you needed to learn. The scent of water, spiritually speaking, is the scent of the grace of Christ. Job had temporarily lost the scent of that grace, and thus he did

not feel that he could come back from this trial. It would be better for him, he thought, if he died. And yet he was in a quandary, because He truly wanted God to answer his prayers and give him the hope that needed, by bringing him back and out of this trial.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – God is faithful to give to all who believe in Christ, the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.** (verses 11-13)

Verse 11 – “As water disappears from the sea, and a river becomes parched and dries up, so man lies down and does not rise.” “Till the heavens are no more, they will not awake.” “Oh, that You would hide me in the grave, that You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that You would appoint me a set time, and remember me!” Once again we see Job expressing his thoughts that God’s wrath was upon him. Not His eternal wrath which is on the unbelieving continually until they trust in Christ, but his wrath against Job for something that he had done wrong, which he knew not. He knew that he had not consciously sinned against God. He had held fast his integrity all through this trial.

But he says here in verses 11 and 12 that he wished that these waters of God’s wrath would subside. It is the picture of what took place at the time of the flood when the waters of God’s wrath covered the whole earth for a whole year. But in God’s time they receded, and the land was seen again. Let us understand that because of the work of righteousness and sufferings which our Lord Jesus Christ lived out on our behalf, that the waters of God’s wrath have forever receded from our lives. When we believe in Jesus there is no wrath upon us any longer. When we believe in Him we are remembered forever for good by God, for Jesus’ sake. He no longer remembers any of our sins and iniquities, but He remembers us continually for good.

Before we partake of the Supper, let me read you the words of Isaiah 54: 6-13. “For the Lord has called you like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused, say your God.” “For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you.” “With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you, says the Lord, your Redeemer.” “For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you.” “For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord who has mercy on you.

“O you afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, and lay your foundations with sapphires.” “I will make your pinnacles of rubies, your gates of crystal, and all your walls of precious stones.” “All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.” In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear...” These are the blessings of the New Covenant in Christ. They are blessings which He purchased for us by the giving of Himself for us, in life and in death. May we remember today, anew and afresh that to live is Christ, and to die is gain. May we be looking forward to our resurrection from the dead on the day that Christ returns.

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 21 and 22 says – “For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.” “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.” We are spiritually alive now today because of Christ’s death and resurrection. He will complete that work in our resurrection in a coming day. He has appointed a set time, and He will remember every single person who belongs to Christ. Let us remember Christ now; that this is why He suffered and died; that He might bring us to God, that He might remember us for good in all of our afflictions. Let us remember His faithfulness, that on the Day in which His Son returns, He will arouse us from the sleep of death physically. Our spirit will be joined once again to our body in a glorious resurrection, and we shall forever rejoice in the greatness of all that He has done for us.

