

ONE WHO CARES AND UNDERSTANDS

March 5, 2017

In urging his Christian audience to patiently await the Lord's return, James makes this statement: *"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 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 KJV)

Think of all that Job endured: all for which he had worked and earned was lost, all the children he raised and loved died, his health was failing, he was plagued with irritating boils, insects and dogs were attracted to his sores, his wife who should have encouraged him, had lost hope and urged him to give up, his friends added to his misery by accusing him of bringing this upon himself by wicked living. Yet, through all of this ... Job did not sin (Job 2:10).

Like a nurse I overheard in a hospital say, *"God have mercy on her, hasn't she suffered enough,"* Job thought his misery was caused by God. He reasoned within himself that God was being unjust, *"I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth? Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days, That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?"* (Job 10:2, 4–6 KJV) Job reasoned that God could not relate to his pain since He is not flesh nor does He suffer the afflictions of the flesh, His days are not numbered.

God rebuked Job for the accusation against Him, yet He indicated that Job had spoken right concerning Him *"... 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."* (Job 42:7 KJV). Though Job did not understand his plight, though he thought God was treating him unfairly, he did not disobey or denounce God. In the end Job was blessed with twice as much as he previously had (42:10).

At the base of Mt. Sinai, in the Horeb mountain range, while God was speaking to Moses, the thunder, lightning, loud noise, and smoking scared the people, *"And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die."* (Exodus 20:19 KJV) Later when Moses is retelling the next generation of these things, a prophecy of Christ is given, *"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, **They have well spoken that which they have spoken.**"* (Deuteronomy 18:15–17 KJV)

God, in these two occasions in the Bible, admitted that He did not have a practical knowledge of what it was like to be human. That of course all changed when deity was robed in flesh and dwelt among us (Jn. 1:14). Of Jesus the Hebrew writer said, *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* (Hebrews 4:15 KJV)

Consider again the patience of Job. He desperately wanted one who could identify with him. Those at Horeb wanted one to minister to them who was like them. They did not have as do we, the ability to pray to the Father through Christ; knowing that He can feel our tears, He has experienced bodily pain, He has shed tears for others pain, He has endured pain He did not deserve. One might have screamed out that day as Christ hung on the cross after being beaten nearly to death, *"God have mercy on Him, hasn't He suffered enough!"* God did not cause Christ's pain, sin did. Just as sin caused every other pain and woe in our lives.

Are you in the midst of a sea of sorrow? If you are looking for someone who understands, pray to the Father through Jesus Christ, they both will hear you. If you are looking for someone to blame, do not blame God, blame sin and Satan. If you want to retaliate, renew your fervor in the battle against sin and Satan, where the

spoils of victory are smiling faces of thankful people you have helped find peace and hope in the midst of pain and sorrow, and an eternal reward for which we can have hope.