

100321 "Stand Before God Again" Job 1:1

Today we read Job chapter 1 verse 1. The book of Job is read a lot with the question, "why do good people suffer?" Job suffered indescribable suffering although he feared God and turned away from evil as we just read in the Bible. To some extent, there are many people who speak of Job as the epitome of suffering. Job's name is written "Iyob" in Hebrew which means "persecuted." However, Job does not curse or resent God even in suffering, but still looks to God. Job is well known for his integrity and patience in the history of Jews and Christians. By the way, change the question today "why do good people suffer?" and think of it as "do I still believe in God in times of suffering?"

Three of Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him. But even though they may have come to Job with good intentions, they could not become Job's true companions. Rather, they ended up judging and condemning Job in the name of retribution. It was devastating to lose everything, and the condemnation of his friends. In Job chapter 23 verse 8 Job said, "But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him." Job really felt like it was all over. As we think of Job today, I want you to think of another biblical figure from the Old Testament.

In 1 Kings 19, the prophet Elijah runs into the wilderness after hearing that Jezebel was about to kill him. Elijah was never discouraged or shaken, even when surrounded by 850 Baal and Asher prophets on Mount Carmel. But now he is sitting in the shadow of the wilderness and weeping before God to take his life, and his spirit and flesh are lonely and very arduous. Is he the same

person in Mount Carmel and in the wilderness?

In this discouragement, God said, "go out and stand on the mountain before Jehovah." Even Elijah, who performed many miracles and was zealous for God's work, could not stand before God in troubled times. When you're deeply discouraged, it's easy to lose sight of what's going on. The victory at Mount Carmel was not accomplished with the power of Elijah himself, but in God's plan. So, notice that God is telling Elijah, who is discouraged, to stand before God again!

We must remember that the secret of faith is revealed in realizing how weak we are before God. When we realize and admit to our weaknesses, we are eager to rely on God. Have you thought about how Elijah would have felt before he was driven out? Perhaps he was quietly expecting Israel to return to God with his victory at Mount Carmel. Of course, it's a good thing, but there are many times when things don't work out as we wish. We often make this mistake. If God works God's wonders, things will happen for me. But the result is different from our wish.

In fact, there are not many prophets who performed miracles as much as Elijah in the Bible. He was a prophet who believed and followed God well. Therefore, he was a prophet who believed in God so well that he confidently said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty." But when Elijah is discouraged, we see his actions, covering his face with his outer garment. What does it mean to cover their face with a robe? In the Old Testament times, people dared not speak the name of God, Yahweh or Jehovah. They believed that if they heard God's voice or saw God, they would die. Sinful humans die when they stand before the holy God. In Genesis, Adam and Eve hid themselves after they ate the forbidden fruit, and when God looked for them,

"Where is Adam?" In other words, their first act after sin was to hide. It was to hide their sinfulness from God.

Likewise, Elijah thought that he was very special, but as soon as he heard God's voice, he found himself weak. On Mount Carmel, he relied on God, but now he did not see God but only feared Jezebel. 'Oh, I see! Seeing the world, seeing people, seeing the environment, I feel like I'm alone, I've been abandoned, but when I stand before God, I see my own sinfulness.' More importantly, there is the grace of God.

It is an important principle of faith. It is because the sinfulness seems too small or invisible that the church loses its holiness. This happens because we look at the world and look at people rather than looking at God. This is because instead of listening to the word of God, we listen to the sounds of the world. We should believe that we must stand right before the Word of God. There is no other way! And listen to the word of God every day. When Elijah was driven away by Jezebel and fled and hid in the creek of Horeb's rock, God's presence in Elijah was awakened through a seemingly ordinary voice.

Like Job's confession in chapter 23, "But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him." That was the time of trial for Job. For Elijah, the trial was passing through the wind, the earthquake, the fire, to hear the voice of God. God renewed Job and Elijah through these trials. May we too be strengthened through trials as well. In Job chapter 23 verse 10 said, "Only he knows my way, and after he has disciplined me, I will come forth as pure gold."

[There was a story about King Ludwig in Germany. All of the people in the](#)

castle feared him and disliked him because of his violent nature of treating and harassing people. One day he went hunting and entered a small chapel in the woods. He prayed in front of the altar, and suddenly saw that something was written on the walls of the chapel.

He could only see it for a moment, so he only remembered the front part. It was the number "3", but was not sure if it was three days, three months, three years. But he was sure that there would be judgment in three. Ludwig, who had sinned so much, interpreted his own way, thinking, 'I will stand before God in three days.' So, he acted kindly for his wife and people for three days. Thinking of standing before God's judgment table, he went up to the tall tower on the third day. But nothing happened.

He thought again. 'It was three months, not three days.' So, he did his best to his family and people for three months. But three months later, he didn't die. Now he was convinced. 'Aha! The letter I saw was 3 years!' So, he behaved well for 3 years. Then one day, a sudden delegation came from the German royal family with the sound of a trumpet. At that time Ludwig was a duke, but the royal family crowned him as Emperor of Germany. The rumors of the duke, who lived day after day, thinking that he would stand for judgment three days, three months, and three years had spread throughout the country. It was because of his good deeds that the duke could become the German Emperor. But it was 'waiting' that made possible the good works of the duke. Waiting for God's judgment changed his life.

So how should we wait for the coming of the Messiah? Rather than thinking that we will live in the next few decades, we should be waiting for the Lord, day by day, yearning, and hopeful, thinking that we will stand before the judgment table three days later, three weeks later, and three years later.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, you may be facing the same difficulties and sufferings as Job did. But when you look at Jesus in your life, live in absolute obedience to His Word, and do not lose your sight to other people or the environment, the amazing work of the Holy Spirit may be in your life, your home, your work and your studies. Like the words, "in times of crisis, real power comes forth," I bless you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that we all train and nurture ourselves with the word of God so that our lives will come forth as pure gold in God's eyes. Fairfield Grace, May God's grace and peace and blessing be with you and your family, and your business, and your studies, and with the lives of your children. Amen.