

TAKING A STAND!

Intro: Here's Job, suffering the loss of all that was dear to him, in excruciating pain and despair, falsely accused even by his friends, despised and loathsome to all, ignorant of any reason for his suffering, and exclaiming boldly, "I know that my Redeemer lives, and He will take His stand on earth, and I will see Him!" Talk about counter-intuitive. That's faith, even prophetic faith. His faith stand predicting Christ's literal taking His stand on earth for Job's deliverance, yours, mine, and all who will look to Jesus. Let's dig in to this bold proclamation of Job and ask three questions: What did it mean for Job, for Jesus, and for us today?

What did Job's faith-stand mean for him?

- It came from unspeakable pain, suffering, abandonment, and accusation.
 - *All my associates abhor me and those I love turned against me.*
 - *Pity me my friends for the hand of God has struck me.*
 - Not a consequence of what man has done to me.
 - Not a consequence of my actions or sin.
- It came from utter weakness and inability to remedy his own hurt.
 - He feels that his death is immanent. That he's only escaped so far *by the skin of my teeth*.
 - That his strength is spent, that he has nothing and empty of himself before God.
- Yet he wants to make a permanent statement, in a book or more permanently, engraved in stone forever.
 - A confidence that God is bigger than his friends' view of Him as impersonally just.
 - Rather that He is compassionate, seeing, just and loving, a Kinsman-Redeemer.
 - *Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God.* [Redeemer = God!]

What did Job's faith stand mean for Jesus?

- Job's words are prophetic, his life foreshadowing the coming and work of Christ.
 - "*Behold I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart*" (Ps. 40:7f. & 1 Peter 1:10f)
 - The prophets make careful search seeking to know *what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.*
- Job's life and witness predicted:
 - Jesus taking His stand on earth literally in becoming a man in man's sinful plight.
 - Jesus taking His stand at the cross, bearing our sin—nothing of His—before wrath of God.
 - Including abandonment, rejection, pain—all undeserving.
 - And especially bearing sin separation from Father,
 - Entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously (1 Pet. 2:23)
 - Jesus taking His stand before the Empty Tomb, risen, a stand of Victory—for Man, for us.
- As Job's faith stand was a type or predictive example of what God would do, Jesus is the fulfillment.
 - The stance for Job was a deep faith-reliance upon the love of God.
 - For Jesus, it was the perfect fulfillment of God's promised salvation.

What does Job's faith-stand mean for us?

- Your faith-stand matters!
 - Not predicting but reflecting back on what Jesus has done for you. *Have you considered my servant...?*
 - Yet, also reflecting forward to the Return of Jesus to give us new resurrection bodies and be w/ Him.
- Such faith comes—not from great knowledge, skills, accomplishments, will-power, or circumstances, but from pain, sorrow, and a deep realization of our emptiness, helplessness, and undeserving need for God.
- Your faith-stand is a commitment that impacts body and soul.
 - Participation in the life of the church may be the least of faith-stand commitments, but failure in the least should raise questions as to the depth of our faith-stand.
 - When Job says, *I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth,* I'm reminded of Martin Luther's, "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen" (Luther, April 18, 1521). In a similar way, before his accusers and Satan himself, Job takes a stand of faith that he will see his living Redeemer taking His stand on earth.

Conclusion: God calls us today to take such a stand with the risen Jesus in victory over sin and death. Take that stand!