

Cross and the Perfecting work of God



Part Three:
Sojourning through the Darkness

We discovered 7 vital principles in patriarch's sojourn unto the cross

1. We are called out of our 'HOME' to a journey according to Purpose
2. Whatever started us on our sojourn, the LORD arranges to 'meet' us in the way
3. Faith is tested and proven on the sojourn
4. The sojourn teaches us that the true nature of 'Blessing' is spiritual
5. The cross is continually at work in the sojourn decreasing and bringing us to the end of self
6. Through the sojourn one comes to really know the Lord of Mercy
7. A unique testimony is established as the treasure is revealed in the sojourner's life

Sojourn unto Sonship

Last time we looked at
Joseph the Patriarch

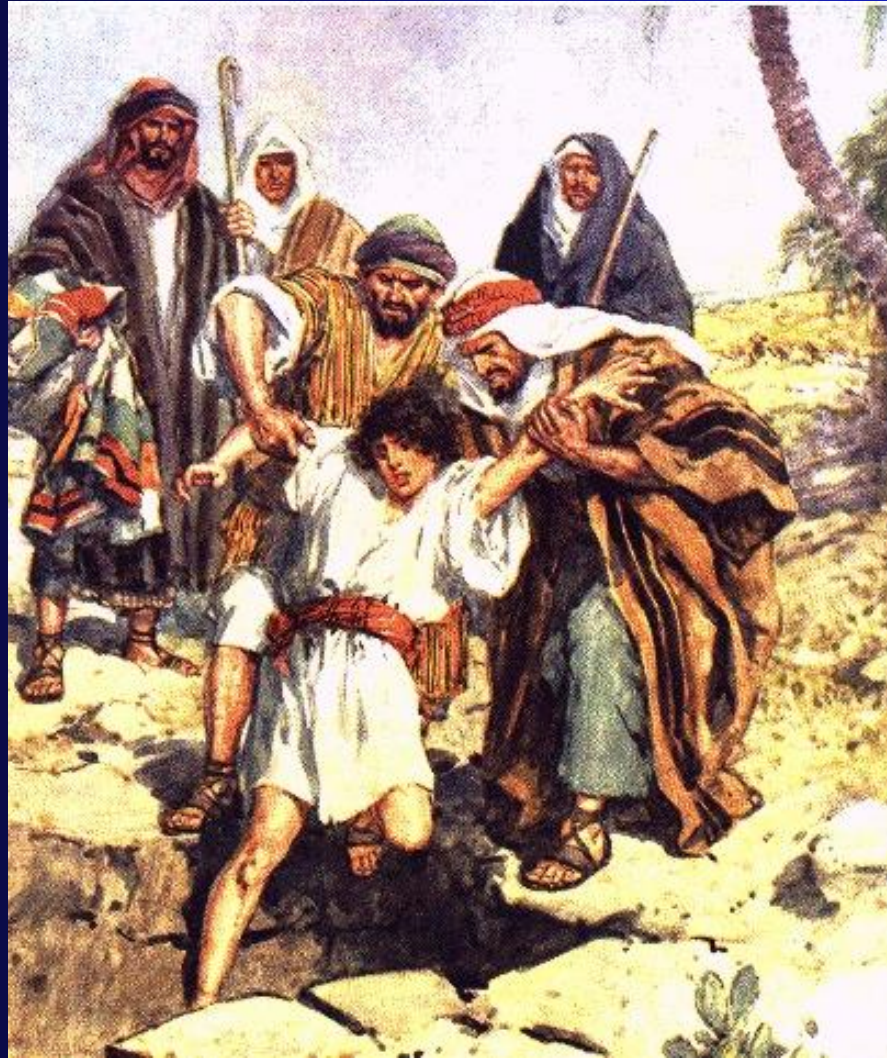
Joseph's sojourn was different from the other patriarchs

1. The work of the cross in respect to sin is not in view with Joseph
2. Here the cross' perfecting work in terms of character and purpose are working upon the 'man of God'

**Joseph's sojourn went
through 3 great tests or trials**

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1. He was betrayed by his brothers and sold as a slave to Egypt



2. He was thrown into prison after being falsely accused by Potiphar's wife



3. Then he was forgotten in prison after interpreting the prisoners' dreams



Joseph sojourned for 13 years under the perfecting weight of the cross

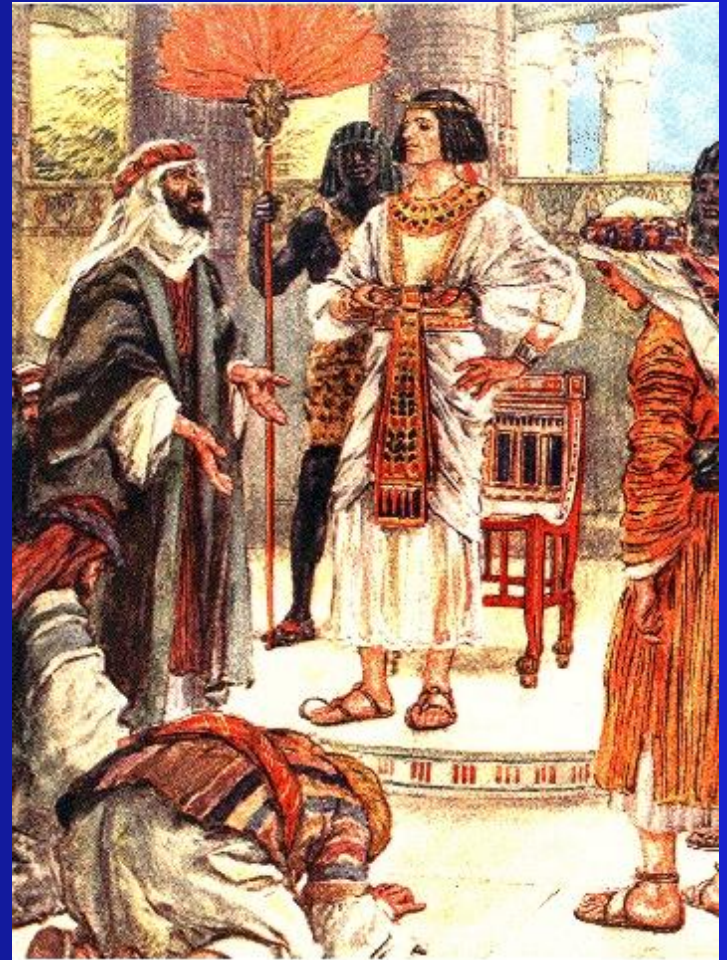
God perfected Joseph in humility, gift
and gave him a servant's heart

**Now as God's mature son, he
would be used to bring his
brethren to glory**

So Joseph's sojourn took on a
corporate dimension with his
family

Israel's sojourn brought them into God's purpose for Israel

- The dreams were realized with thanksgiving
- Their tribe was gathered unto God together as one
- The brothers were made fit sons through the cross upon their lives



III. The sojourn through the darkness



Sometimes the Lord takes his children through the Darkness



- *Is. 43.1-2 ¶ But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel,
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name;
you are Mine!
“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
And through the rivers, they will not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you*

Whom God loves most He deals with most deeply



- *Is. 43.1-2 ¶ But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel,
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
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Israel was taken through the waters in many ways



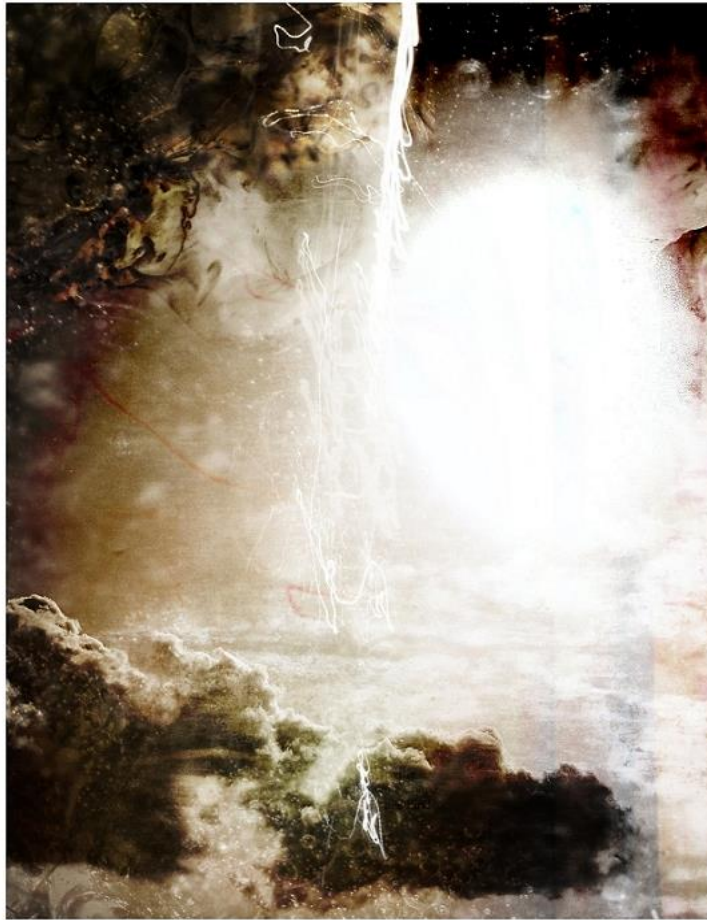
- *Is. 43.2* “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you

Even now Israel is on a sojourn in the depths

depths of discipline

- *Rom. 11.22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.*
- *Rom. 11.33 ¶ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!*

God sends some on a sojourn beyond the mind's understanding



- Mystics referred to this stage of the sojourn as “the dark night of the soul”
- It actually is walking in great spiritual light but the mind is in the dark about what God is doing

The mind is so limited when it comes to understanding the depths

- Man is afflicted with the lust to understand everything - to have answers
- There are some circumstances of tragedy, loss, loneliness, suffering, illness and costliness for which there are no answers
- Only as we are dealt with by the cross through the dark sojourn do we come to a place of peace and rest

God himself is a mystery called Holiness

- His ways are so much higher than ours
- Job 19.8 *“He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass, and He has put darkness on my paths.*
- Job 3.23 *Why is life given to a man whose way is hidden, whom God has hedged in?*
- Job 26.14 *“Behold, these are the fringes of His ways;*

We must respect everyone whom God has appointed a sojourn

- To judge others in the sojourn is to be found wrong in the end
- To compare sojourns is to minimize God's ability to produce a unique cross for all
- The Lord deposits treasure in the depths of our lives through the sojourn

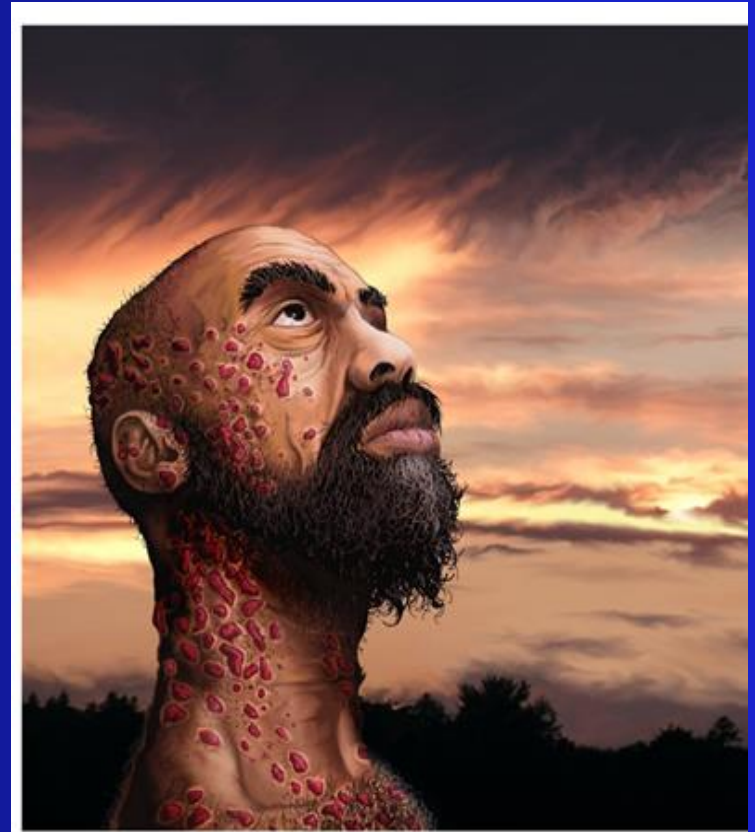


**We want to look at another
sojourn in the days of the
Patriarchs**

Job

Job sojourned in darkness

- The cross was laid upon this servant of God who was ‘perfect’
- *Job 1.1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*
- *Job 1.8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*



Job sojourned in darkness

- His sojourn now makes sense to us because the first 2 chapters were put on after it all happened
- There was a conflict in heaven over God's choicest servant
- God's servants are expendable if they can be used to glorify God in life or death



**Let's start at the end of the
sojourn for further
perspective**

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The “end” of the Lord

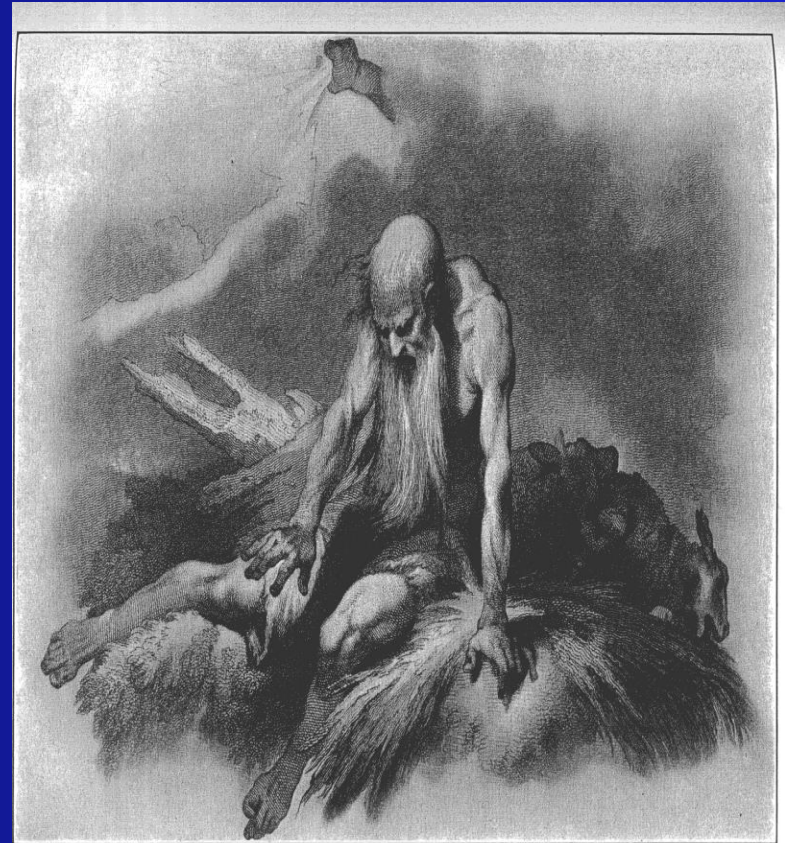


Job 42.10 ¶ The LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold.

James 5.11 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.

But to get to the end he endured the sojourn of darkness

- Job 19.8 *“He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass, and He has put darkness on my paths.*
- Job 3.23 *Why is life given to a man whose way is hidden, whom God has hedged in?*



**You know the story:
catastrophe struck in one day**



his fields and cattle were destroyed: bankrupt

**You know the story:
catastrophe struck in one day**



VI-28

his children were all killed

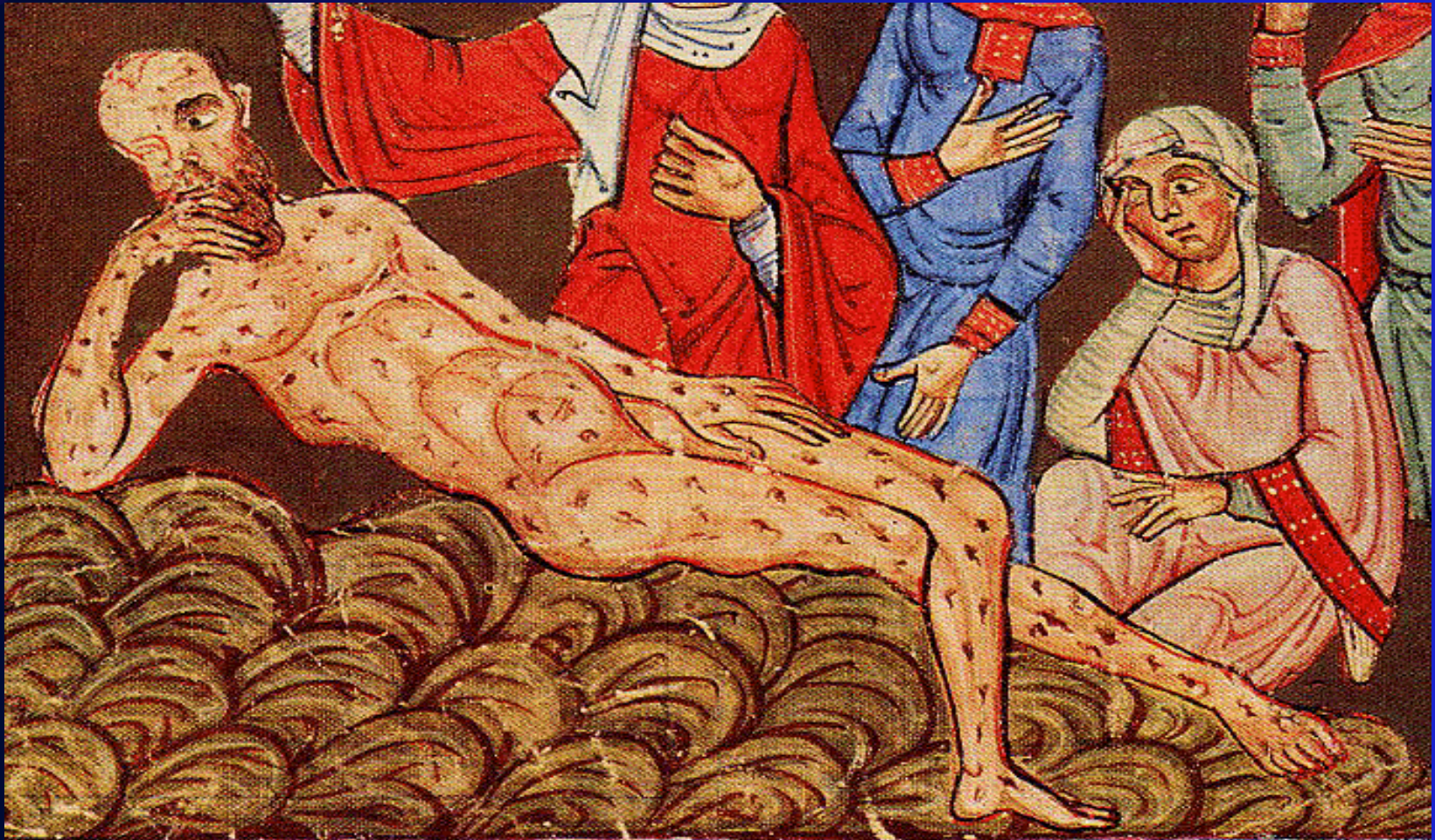
Still Job trusted in God

Job 1.20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Job 1.21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

Job 1.22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Then Satan touched his body



His wife told him to curse God



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He was broken and in agony

- Yet he still trusted God
- *Job 2.9 ¶ Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!”*
- *Job 2.10 But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.*

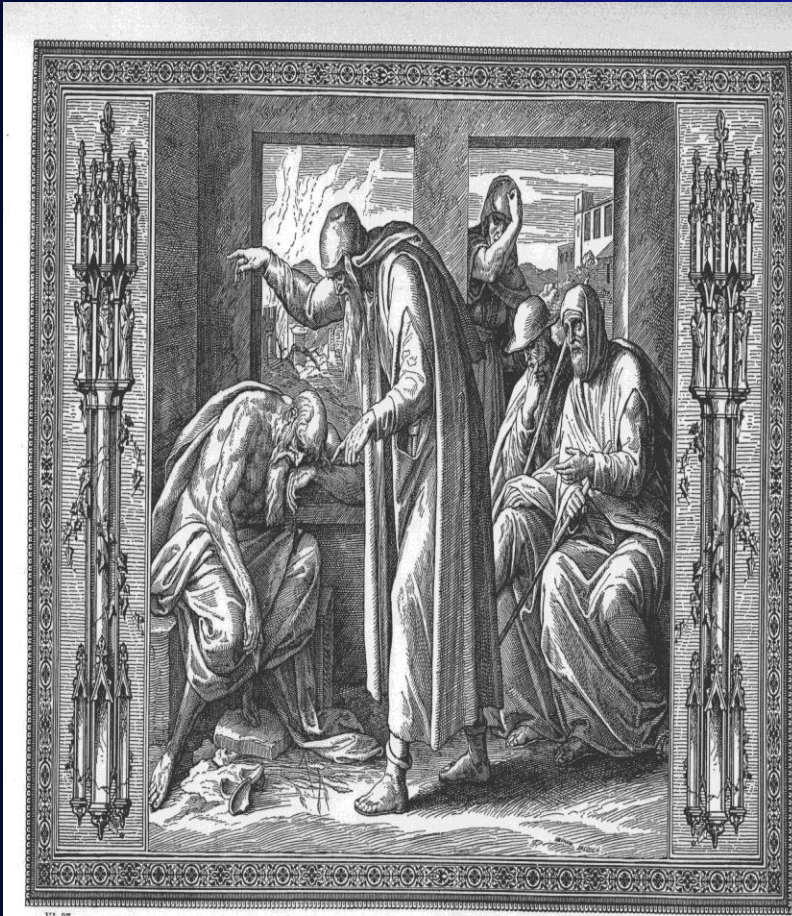


His friends came to see him

- There was a awesome silence for 7 days
- Everyone felt Job's pain
- Then they broke the silence and Job went deeper into darkness
- Job could take catastrophe, pain and misery but he couldn't stand the advice of his friends



His friends gave the usual religious prescriptions



- When tragedy strikes, everyone becomes a judge and tries to find the hidden sin
- But everyone's opinion was wrong and just made the darkness deeper
- Job knew he was in the presence of God but THAT'S ALL!

His friends, like all men, have been complicated by the TREE



- Eliphaz ate peyote fruit and hallucinated about God the Judge
- Bildad ate the lemon and was bitter in his judgment of Job
- Zophar ate the durian and his whole lying evaluation 'stunk' with hypocrisy

God was perfecting patience in Job through the darkness



The Patience of Job

God always has a victorious plan

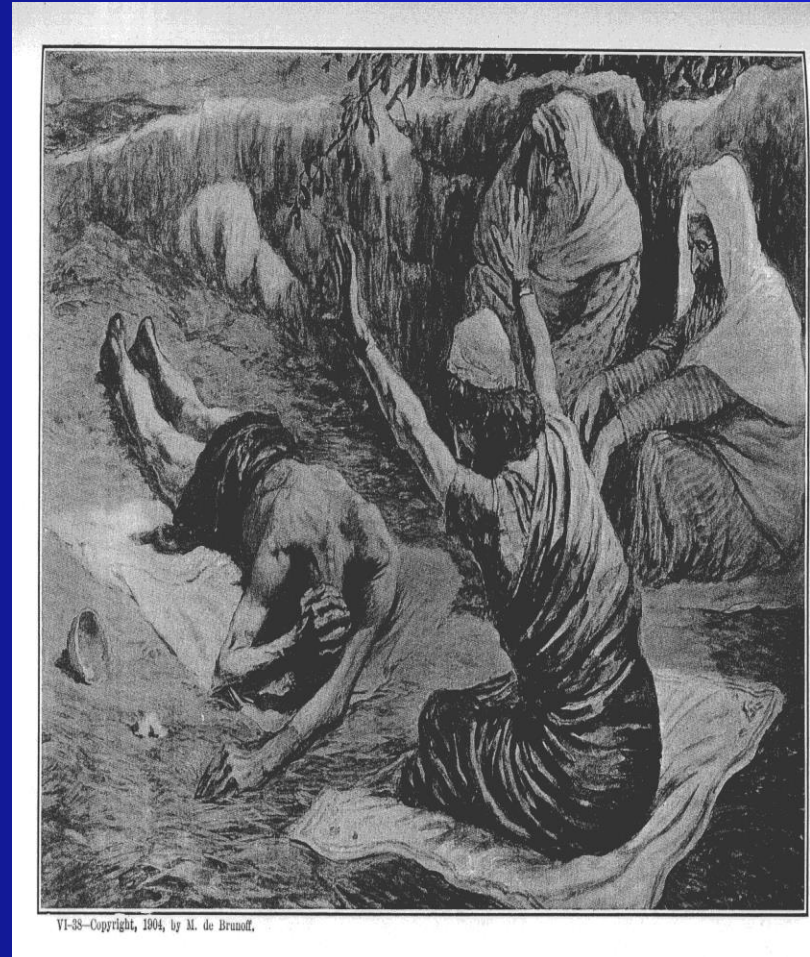
1. First, he would shame Satan for his lies and insinuation
2. Then at the same time he would perfect Job through the darkness in relation to his:
 1. MIND
 2. HEART
 3. SPIRIT

#1: Perfecting the mind through the darkness



The mind in darkness must grasp only one thing

- The servant of God knows “nothing” until he sees the face of God!
- How complicated and dark the tree of the knowledge of good and evil has made our lives



The 'format' of the book of Job illustrates the problem

- There are three chapters of PROSE (1-2,42) in which God acts - this is the reality
- There are 39 chapters of the best HUMAN philosophising, religious speculation, science, botany, biology and mythology that has ever been written
 - which, incidently, did no good for Job
 - Which only caused an agonizing of emotions, reasoning and criticisms

Man can't help himself

- Unredeemed men are gods and simply must have the answers to make sense out of this darkness
- Even chaos has been given laws by man
- Even meaningless is existentially quantified
- Even anarchists have rules and mores

God came in the whirlwind interrupting man's poetry

"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?"

"Or who enclosed the sea with doors?"

"Have you ever in your life commanded the morning?"

"Have you entered into the springs of the sea?"

"Have the gates of death been revealed to you?"

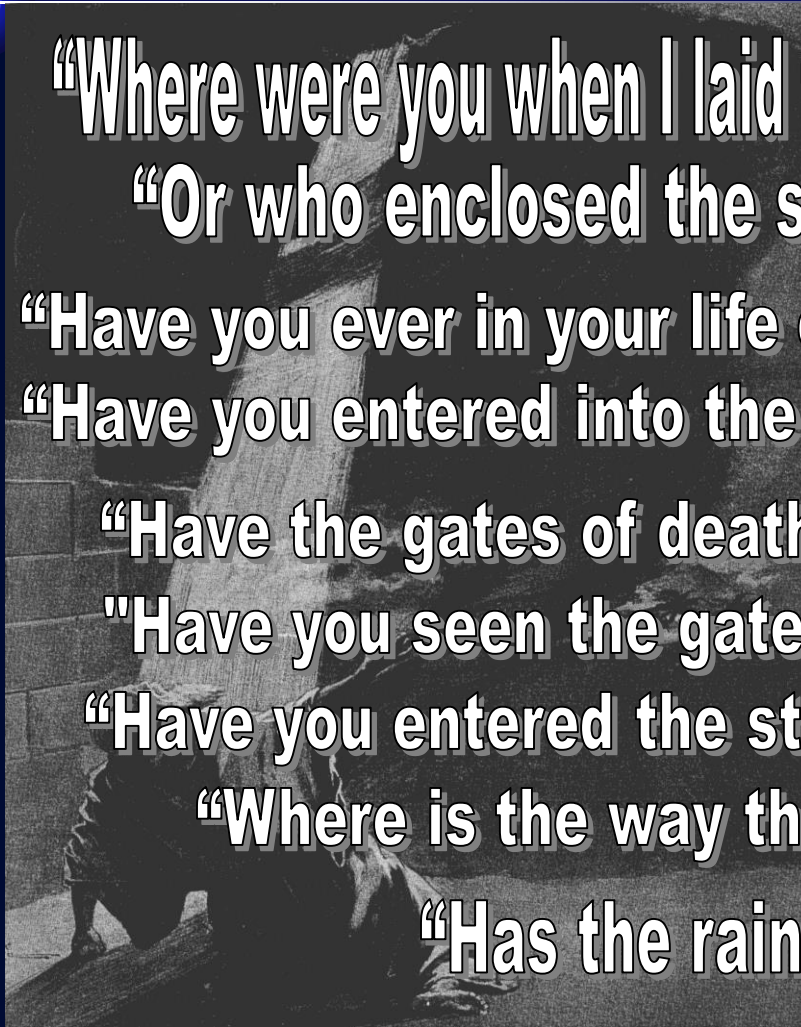
"Have you seen the gates of deep darkness?"

"Have you entered the storehouses of the snow?"

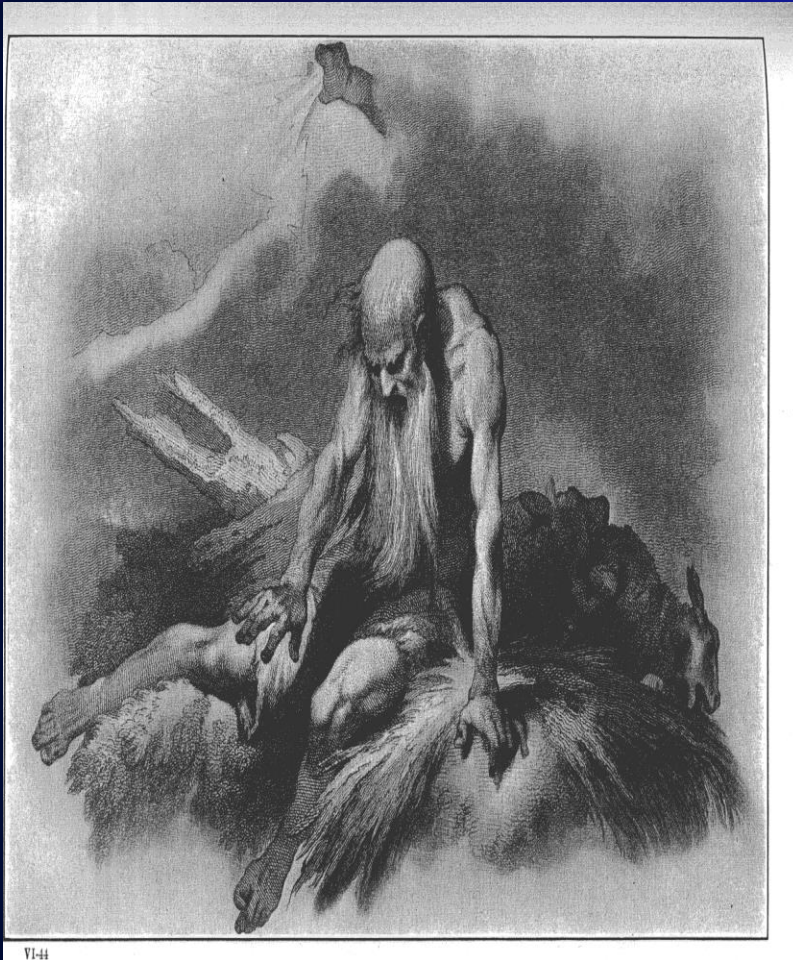
"Where is the way that the light is divided?"

"Has the rain a father?"

*He asked Job 79
questions he couldn't
answer*



Job reasonings were silenced



- Man cannot know the complete truth about anything until God shows up!
- Meanwhile God discounted the words spoken rashly and defiantly by Job - because God knows the words of a man out of anguish are cries of pain

But God stripped away the darkness from his mind

Psa. 131.1-2 ¶ *O LORD, my heart is not proud,
nor my eyes haughty;
Nor do I involve myself in great matters,
Or in things too difficult for me.
Surely I have composed and quieted my soul;
Like a weaned child rests against his
mother,
My soul is like a weaned child within me.*

#1: Perfecting the heart through the darkness



The perfect heart must trust in the Lord



- Job through the darkness had moments of clarity
- Job 23.10 “*But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold*”
- Job 13.15 *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*

But the test of the heart came with every tragedy

- Again the book itself gives us a clue to God's dealings
- God goes by the name "El Shaddai" throughout the book (31 out of 48 in Bible)
- "God of the mountain" or "God of the Breast" implying sufficiency



So with every tragedy the silent test arose: “Am I enough?”



- When bankruptcy comes, am I enough?
- If you lose loved ones, am I enough?
- If those closest to you turn against you, am I enough?
- If your health is gone, am I enough?
- If your reputation is ruined, am I enough?
- “Is Jesus enough?”

Even if we went through the
same darkness as Job, it
would not be as dark because
we have one thing he didn't

The Bible

Jesus was reduced to one just one thing

John 16.32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

#1: Perfecting the spirit

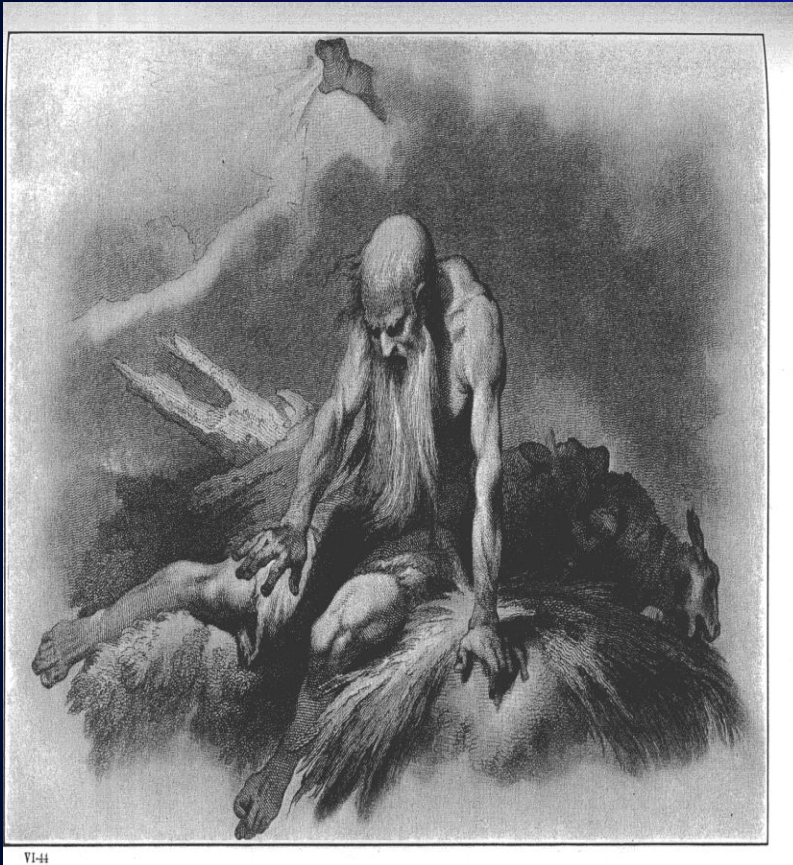


Job 42 Job saw God and repented of everything

- *Job 42.1 ¶ Then Job answered the LORD and said...*
- *Job 42.4 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.'*
- *Job 42.5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You;*
- *Job 42.6 Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."*

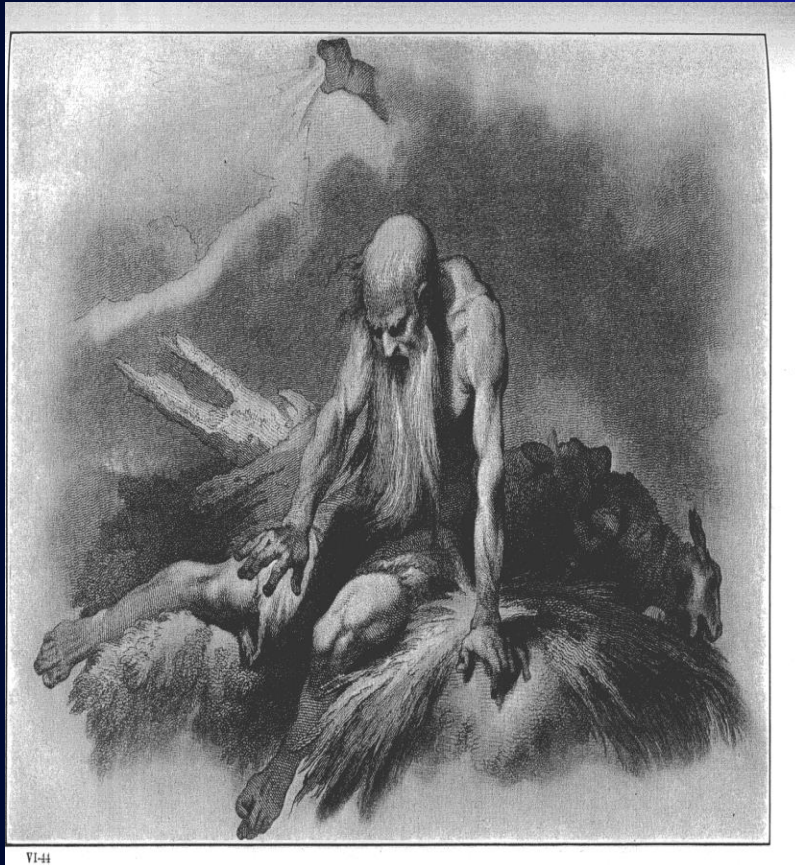


God's revealing in mercy broke Job's spirit



- God loves those who have a broken and contrite spirit
- *Psa. 51.17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;*
- *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise*

God's revealing in mercy broke Job's spirit



- God loves those who humbly come to Him
- *Is. 66.2 “For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being,” declares the LORD. “But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.*

**Man's questioning, haughty
pride is crucified in the
darkness and the humble
servant emerges into light**

Remember, the sojourn into darkness always comes into the Light



- Job was restored
- He now was an intercessor
- He now had his mind in submission to God
- He received all blessings with his eyes on the God of mercy as the only one “who is enough”

May God perfects us
all through the
sojourn of the cross