

God Knows the Way

A meditation on Job 23:10.

"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Job 23:10, KJV

There is no state in life that we want more to avoid than that experienced by Job. In a short time, he lost it all--his wealth, family, friends and health. Job went from possessing *everything* to having *nothing*. No more pathetic scene exists in Scripture, save that of the passion and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, than that of Job having lost it all, having been smitten with painful boils from head to toe, sitting on the ash heap at the dump outside the city, scraping his rotting flesh with a potsherd (that's a sharp fragment of broken pottery), his wife visiting and asking him, "**Dost thou still retain thine integrity?**" and finally advising him to just "**curse God, and die**" (Job 2:8).

Few people in life have experienced the trials of Job. Though everybody around him accused that he deserved God's judgment because he had sinned, Job never did curse God for what befell him. Amidst all the negativity surrounding him, Job believed that God knew *the way* of his life. Amidst the painful circumstances life throws at us, do we also believe this?

My Aunt Leona Hertel, who has been with the Lord for going on four years now, wrote these words which I discovered tucked away in the Bible I inherited from her. I quote:

Job does not say I KNOW THE WAY THAT HE TAKES, but **HE KNOWETH THE WAY THAT I TAKE**. We would like to know what God is doing. We would like to pull aside the veil and see the end from the beginning. We would like to know the way that He is taking, but if we did, and if we could see, we would not need faith to believe and to accept God's way. So in the midst of all his deep afflictions, Job found comfort, not in the fact that he knew the reason and the answer for all of God's dealings with him, but in the truth that God knew what HE was doing. Then his faith leaped over every barrier, and as he looked into the distant future, he cried, **WHEN HE HATH TRIED ME, I SHALL COME FORTH AS GOLD**.

Peter counsels believers struggling with the pain of just being alive:

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:6-7

Designed by God in His good providence, the trials of life serve as a refiner's fire to burn off the

impurities of our lives and make us fit citizens for His eternal kingdom. Where there is no pain there can be no gain. My Aunt then quoted her good friend Warren Wiersbe who wrote, *Tried for a Season, Pure for Eternity*. His words:

When God permits His children to go through the furnace, He keeps His eye on the clock, and His hand on the thermostat. His loving heart knows how long and how much.

When we pass through the trials life hurls at us and arrive in the divine presence of Heaven, we shall look back upon our lives and see that all the while GOD KNEW THE WAY. Then we shall clasp a hand to our mouth and say, "Oh!"

So, are we prepared to thank God for the refiner's fire? In his misery, destitution and forsakenness, Job did. Sarcastically, his wife questioned: "**Dost thou still retain thine integrity?**" while in the next breath she counseled him, "**curse God, and die.**" As regards the thanksgiving that can accompany living by faith, Job's response is classic. He asked: "**What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?**" Amidst the adversities of life, whatever they might be, even though we can't trace God's hand, we certainly can trust His heart. Why? . . . BECAUSE HE KNOWS THE WAY THAT WE TAKE.