

**Sunday Sermon 10272024 Job 42:1-6, 10-17; Mark 10:46-52**

**"Father, My Eye Sees You Now"**

As you may know, I lived in New York when I first immigrated to the states, where I experienced four seasons like I did in Korea. But people there told me that California has many deserts.

Each time I thought of California, I thought about that picture of the desert and imagined California like it was the Sahara. I was admitted to Claremont School of Theology in 1989. In July of that year, our 4 family members crossed America by car to move to California.

While driving along the west side of Highway 40, I was able to see the desert driving through Arizona. I thought, well, I guess this is a preview of California. The desert, however, was quite different from what I had imagined for a long time.

We went through the Mojavi desert one day at 3:00 pm in our Buick station wagon and the air conditioner broke down. It was so hot that when we pulled over to eat lunch in a rest area, we ate our rice in ice water.

The actual appearance of the desert I saw was so diverse. There were endless fields, stones, grass, trees, rivers, and big cities, but I didn't see much white sand. What I imagined of the desert was completely changed. I am now living in the middle of the Colorado desert where surrounded by what many consider hellish conditions, but here I am truly enjoying a life full of joy in heaven.

Meeting the realities of something we imagine like this often makes us experience the extremes of good and bad. Today we have the last opportunity to look at the Book of Job through the text. And we read that Job's painful life was full of blessings and joy that was unprecedented.

The text tells us the cause of the breakthrough change. In verse 5, Job confessed, "In the past, Lord, I knew only what others had told me, but now I have seen you with my own eyes." In other words, he confesses that he actually met God, whom he pictured in his imagination in the past.

If the real encounter with God is a condition that can change his life like this, we must actually meet him in our lives. Through today's scriptures, we also want to find the way.

I. First and foremost, we need to remember that human existence and life are not possible without the gift of God's grace. The principle of retributive justice is a big part of how we think. Retributive justice is a system of criminal justice based on the punishment of offenders rather than on rehabilitation. The principle applies to almost all religious teachings in the world.

Of course, in the Old Testament, especially the wisdom of the Proverbs, this principle is used. It is a teaching that if you depend on God and live a good and productive life, your life will prosper and produce rich results. But within the category of the same "wisdom literature" of the Old Testament, Job applies the principles of something else. That is the principle of God's grace.

As Job 1 introduced, Job was righteous and honest, a man who feared God and kept evil away. Then, in accordance with the principle of "retributive justice," he should never encounter disaster or hardship because he did nothing wrong. But the reality for Job was very different, as we've learned in the last few weeks, and understandably, he was searching for the reason why he was enduring such hardship.

He wanted to prove his innocence before God through his righteous life. It is also in the same context that his friends claim that Job has sinned and is suffering because he does not repent. So why was Job able to actually encounter God? Is it because of the many questions and explanations of God that continue from Chapter 38? So, were Job's many questions and complaints resolved through rational understanding?

Let's check out an interesting story here. In Job 40:15-24 and 41:12-34, the two passages each introduce a large animal. The New Revised Standard Version introduces this animal as Behemoth and Leviathan. Do you know about such animals? Some other versions translate into hippopotamus and crocodiles. In the annotation, it is interpreted as "legendary creature." In modern times, there is no suitable animal to describe them.

For these animals, the Association for Creation Truth advocates a new theory. These animals are, in modern times, likely to be the animals we call "dinosaurs." The taxonomic name 'Dinosauria' was formally named in 1841 by the British paleontologist Sir Richard Owen.

Many of our children have grown up loving dinosaurs, right? And who doesn't like the Jurassic Park movies? Even my grandson Jacob knew the names of over 20 dinosaurs when he was five years old.

Job was overwhelmed by God's omnipotence through the world of His creation, which God introduced. When he met God in person, Job's heart changed. Even though his suffering, which is what I imagine would be close to death, he knew that his situation could not even be of interest to the Almighty. However, Job came to know him and to know the grace of the Almighty Creator, who spoke directly with him.

Now his suffering was not also of concern to Job himself. He has come to realize how unnecessary and irreverent he was before God in his thoughts, words, and claims. In front of God, he quietly hears God's words and experiences his absolute peace and comfort.

Of course, God never stopped his rational judgment. But the problem of human suffering and sin, which was Job's greatest concern and issue before the greatness of God, has been resolved on its own.

We must continue to strive to live righteous lives without sin. But by realizing it, we cannot prove our righteousness before God. Of course, God will recognize our efforts. But we must acknowledge that even all our labor will never make us worthy before God. It is only by God's grace that we can experience eternal life and hope.

II. Here, let us look at the lesson of Mark's Gospel in the New Testament. The blind beggar Bartimaeus was sitting on the roadside and was told that Jesus was passing by. At the moment, he asked Jesus for healing and help and began to cry out loud. Many people around him scolded him for being too noisy and causing a noise. This scene reminds us of Job's friends condemning and criticizing him.

We need to know that there is nothing but ourselves in the world that can truly pay attention to our lives and souls. But we must also remember that the Creator God has never forgotten each of us.

Jesus healed the eyes of Bartimaeus and made him see again. The handicapped Bartimaeus had to call on Jesus' name, approach Jesus, and actively seek healing. We look at his efforts and might think that it was his labor that healed him. But what was it that drove those efforts? It was his faith. Of course, Jesus watched the whole process. As a result, Jesus called and healed him through His mercy and grace.

What was most important to Bartimaeus when he could see again? It wasn't that he could see the world; it was that he came to believe in Jesus the Savior. Do you have that faith today? When we rely on the Almighty's grace, His infinite possibilities work through our faith. It is our duty to remember this fact, to be silent before Him in faith and trust, and to hear His word.

Bartimaeus had the misfortune of losing his sight while he was alive. However, because of his pain, he became a believer in the healer Jesus. The faith allowed him to see again and be saved through Jesus. Remember that the blessing of Bartimaeus is something many people who have both healthy eyes have not experienced.

Does God want us all to endure pain like Job today? Of course, our faith requires patience. But Job's patience is not a central theme in this book, but the emphasis on the omnipotence of God and His grace.

We also have doubts that Job suffered unnecessarily suffering because of the God who boasted of Job's righteousness to Satan. But at the end of the Book of Job, we are cleared from all doubts. We can rest assured that the suffering is not the intent of Satan but the faithful providence of God. He has never failed in anything.

For us who want to live righteously in faith, the same pain as in Job's case can come anytime and anywhere. But any difficulty and suffering can be made into an opportunity to see God with our own eyes. This is possible through His grace in our faith toward God. That is why my daily walk with God in faith becomes the reality of my life.

Although we may not want to remember it again, let's take a moment to reminisce about the times we were going through with COVID-19. COVID-19 has taken away our lively worship, but it has made us rethink what true worship is.

The mask cut off many people's associations, but the mask made us learn to respect that person at any time, even when we can't tell the other person's face. While COVID-19 has divided many, it has also been an opportunity to emphasize cooperation and unity, on the other hand.

The Lord has given more blessings in the last days of Job than before. Believe that no tribulation and suffering in our lives can take away the overflowing peace and rest that the Lord gives us.

As we continue to fellowship with God with humble hearts—whether in gratitude or in struggle—and, even when confined in the dark prison of reality, rely on the omnipotence of Jesus and earnestly seek His power, our Almighty God, who lives and works among us, will always be there to meet us. Amen.

***Reflections and Applications for Today's Sermon:***

- 1) Finally, in Job 42, Job confesses that he sees God with his eyes through repentance. Have you ever experienced repentance in the midst of suffering? How do you evaluate the power of repentance?
- 2) If Jesus were to ask you today, as He asked Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" what would you ask for? What would be the basis for your request?
- 3) As you meditate on the faith of Job in the Book of Job and Bartimaeus in the Gospel of Mark, what are the topics and content of prayer that you have realized for this U.S. presidential election?