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Devotion for February 4th, 2022

Job 1:1-22

"There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil." (Job 1:1)

Now certainly one would think from this starting point that he was about to read a happy story about the guy who had it all: a great job, beautiful wife, house with a white picket fence, two kids, a cat and a dog, the whole works.

Actually, he did or at least he had his day's version of the American Dream - seven sons, three daughters, 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and so on and so forth. Truly Job did have it all, including Almighty God's favor and yet that "all" did not guarantee a life without challenges, difficulties, and troubles.

You see, unbeknownst to him, Satan stepped in, claiming before God that Job's godly life was the product of his temporal successes rather than true devotion towards his maker. Of course you know the story there, how God granted Satan limited powers to challenge Job's faith. Soon he had lost almost everything, more than that, soon he wished that he had never been born, the losses were so great.

Has that ever happened to you when life's challenges have hemmed you in? Perhaps you haven't gone so far as to say, "I wish that I were never born!" but still, you've thought, "I need to change jobs, locations, take an early retirement, run away from this mess somehow."

Regardless of the exact circumstance, there are times when we don't want to face our lives in the moment or on the next day, beyond a doubt. And invariably, just when you are feeling like that, God shows up. For Job, He spoke out of a whirlwind. Now it is very interesting that what our English translates as "Lord" is the Hebrew word, "Yahweh." It's interesting because this was the name that God gave to His people of old as a way of giving them access to His merciful presence.

And so, while Yahweh arrives and speaks sternly to Job at first, saying, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" His goal is not judgment but rather forgiveness, mercy, and restoration. For you that is always God's goal even if it seems as if He might be ignoring you and your plight in your trying moments. While you were still a sinner His Son went to the cross to die for your sin and while you are fretting, He is at work to draw you back to Himself, His comfort, His hope, in His Son Jesus.

Indeed, He is always ready to meet you in the person of His Son each Lord's Day at Grace, in Word and in Meal. For you see it is here that He comes to you, here that He meets you, here that He calms your fears and satisfies your needs in this life and for the life in the world to come. Praise be the Holy Name of Jesus forever. Amen.

*God's blessings,
Rev. Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor
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