

Church Family Newsletter 5th May 2020

A thought for today from one of our Readers, Roy Goodship...

I am sure we all have our heroes. These may be fictional or real, dead or alive. There are heroes from the cinema – women would be charmed by Cary Grant and men would adore Audrey Hepburn. There are heroes from the world of sport - football fans rave about their team's best goal scorer. There are heroes from history - according to a national poll carried out a few years ago Winston Churchill is the most popular Englishman ever.

As Christians I am sure we find heroes in the Bible. One of my heroes from the Old Testament is Job. As we know Job is famous for the fact that he suffered so much and he uttered some profound truths. As you know early on in the book of Job shortly after we are introduced to him, we read of the extreme calamity he suffered. He lost his possessions his family and his health. I love something he said in the early part of the story. He declared 'the thing that I dread has come upon me! Job 3.25. This is so true to life and relevant for us.

We can all imagine some of the difficulties which we may have to face. Some of them we think we can manage, others we may just be able to cope with but there is always something which we perceive would be just impossible. Consciously or subconsciously we have set a boundary across which we are adamant we should not be allowed to go.

This is exactly what happened to Job. His boundary was crossed. But what else does Job say at the beginning of the story?

Earlier in the first chapter after the calamity has struck, he says 'the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord'. You see his commitment to God was not conditional.

Do we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ but without knowing it still have conditions which we expect to be met such as – don't let me cross that boundary or please make sure that life for me will be fairly comfortable! Are you a fair-weather Christian? You see Job did not believe in God on condition that he would have financial security or a clean bill of health or a safe family life.

This was exactly the point made by Job's friends, his so-called comforters. They insisted that because his life was tragic, he must be out of favour with God. They thought that if you are in a right relationship with God the reward would be wealth and health and wellbeing. After the early part of the story Job does a lot of pouring out his complaint to God (this is allowed you know – Job debated with God quite vigorously). Then we arrive at chapter 19 when Job says these famous words – 'I know that my Redeemer lives'. This is not an intellectual proposition, a subjective experience or an opinion, a wish or a presumption. It is the ultimate reality and it is objectively true. And Job knows it!

At the end of the story Job says 'I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee'. In other words, he is saying that beforehand he thought he knew God but now he has seen him face to face. At the beginning of the story Satan was sure that Job would curse God if everything he had was taken away from him Job 1.11. Not a chance! Job is my hero.