

meal (Lk. 22:15) it follows that the cup which Jesus used to institute the remembrance of him would have been one of these cups of wine.

But what is the significance of the wine? We know that it signified the blood of Jesus, and as "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11) this means that it signified the life of Jesus poured out in obedience to his Father even to death on the cross. The significance of the wine is, of course, its redness (if made from black or red grapes), but the same significance would rest in red grape

juice. The evidence is that it was wine, not grape juice, but as Scripture is silent on the specifics of the matter we may conclude that it is not important, as Brother Robert Roberts said when asked a similar question (*The Christadelphian*, Feb. 1873, p. 89).

But to answer the question which prompted these thoughts, I know of no special significance with reference to wine as opposed to grape juice, and would be pleased to hear from any reader who can suggest such a significance.

# Job

## Fear and faith

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*Job spoke of having fear and he also spoke about not believing. The fear which Job had was caused by his faith not being as strong as it could have been. This is shown by the way the Gospels draw on the book of Job when speaking about fear and faith.*

**J**OB 3:25 STATES: "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me". This gives us insight into the state of mind of Job before his sufferings began. It shows us that, while his life prospered and things were going well, he nevertheless had a fear that one day things might change for the worse. In this article we will use Scripture to find out why he had this fear. We will also see how we can overcome fears that we may have.

### Love and faith

In 1 John it is written: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (4:18). If fear is present then our love towards God is not perfect. What aspect of love was deficient in Job so that his love was not perfect, consequently leading to fear?

1 Corinthians 13 shows that there are many different aspects to love. In verse 7 Paul writes that love "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things". We can see immediately how this verse applies to Job. Job was known for his patience, or endurance, as James states: "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" (5:11).

So it could be said of Job that his love of God was such that it "endure[d] all things". However,

we would suggest that there is another part of 1 Corinthians 13:7 in which Job was found wanting, for could it be said of Job that he "believe[d] all things"?

We might think it strange to question the belief of Job. Yet Job himself shows that his belief sometimes faltered. He says in Job 9, "If I had called, and He had answered me; yet would I not believe that He had hearkened unto my voice" (v. 16). This, along with 3:25, is a key verse in understanding Job. Of course, if God *had* spoken to him at that point, Job would have believed that it was God speaking.

His question was a rhetorical way of saying he did not believe that God *was* going to speak to him. Job had faith, and it might not seem right to place a lot of weight on this verse. But could we imagine the words, "yet would I not believe", being used, for example, by Abraham? In James, Job is highlighted for his patience, but it is Abraham and Rahab who are used as examples of faith, not Job (2:21-25).

We have seen that "perfect love casteth out fear". We have seen that belief is a part of love, and that Job, by his own admission, did not believe "all things". Therefore the love of Job was not perfect, and from this we can conclude that any

fear he had would not be completely 'cast out'. Yet, of all the different aspects of love mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13, believing all things, and the faith which that implies, has a particularly close connection with fear. As we will now see, the link between Job's fear and his slightly weak faith is fundamental.

### **Faith versus fear**

From a human perspective, the opposite of fear is courage. In addition to courage, Scripture shows that an underlying attribute that opposes fear is faith. For example, we read that, when Christ was with the disciples in the boat during the storm on the Sea of Galilee, "he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Mt. 8:26).

Christ identified their "little faith" as being the cause of them being "fearful". Later, as Peter walked on the water towards Christ, Matthew records that "when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (14:30,31). Peter was "afraid", but the problem lay with his "little faith".

In Hebrews 11 we are told concerning the parents of Moses, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment" (v. 23). The faith which they had was such that "they were not afraid". Later, Moses "By faith . . . forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king" (v. 27). So Moses too overcame fear with faith. It is not without significance that these two things are placed together in Revelation: "But the fearful, and unbelieving . . ." (21:8).

The link between faith and fear is fundamental to the atonement. God decreed that faith would be counted for righteousness (Gen. 15:6). This strikes at the heart of what happened in Eden, for in Eden fear came upon man from the outset following his sin in the Garden: "and I was afraid" (3:10). By asking man to have faith, God is providing a means by which the fear gendered in Eden may be overcome.

### **Job 9**

The words in Job 9, leading up to the statement made by Job regarding not believing, are drawn

upon by the Lord Jesus Christ when speaking about faith. In verse 5 it is said of God that He "removeth the mountains". This is alluded to by Christ in Matthew 17: "verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (v. 20).

We have already quoted from Matthew 14, where Peter tried to emulate Christ "walking on the sea" (v. 25). This compares with the following verse in Job 9: "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea" (v. 8). These links show that we are right to emphasise the role of faith in Job 9.

### **"While he yet spake"**

As Job began to hear the reports of the terrible events that were coming upon him, what should he have been advised to do? The use in the Gospels of a recurrent phrase in Job 1 helps to provide the answer. In Job 1 we read:

"And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee" (vv. 14-16).

Notice how the second report begins while the first person was "yet speaking". Job did not have time to take in the first news before the second report arrived. The phrase "While he was yet speaking" occurs again in verses 17 and 18. The threefold use of this phrase is obviously significant. The phrase is later used in the Gospels with regard to the raising of Jairus' daughter.

Matthew records that Christ was teaching about putting new wine into old bottles when, "While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live" (9:18). As Christ set out towards the ruler's house, he met the woman with an issue of blood. Mark records:

"And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. While he yet spake, there

came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?" (5:34,35).

The phrases "While he spake" and "While he yet spake", occurring as they do at two different stages in the events which led up to the raising of the ruler's daughter, remind us of the way in which Job received the reports in Job 1.

So what was the advice which the Lord Jesus Christ gave to the ruler (Jairus)? Mark writes: "As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe" (v. 36). Once again we see that being afraid is the opposite of believing. And the answer to our question posed above can now be given. If Christ had been with Job he would have said to him, "Be not afraid, only believe".

### **Thomas**

When Thomas heard about the risen Lord he said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (Jno. 20:25). The words "I will not believe" echo the words of Job, "yet would I not believe" (9:16).

John writes that, when Christ appeared to Thomas, "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (20:29). These words compare with those spoken by Job after God had spoken to him out of the whirlwind: "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee" (42:5).

### **Job and Martha**

Did Peter have faith? We would rightly say yes, but we must acknowledge that Christ at one point said to him, "O thou of little faith" (Mt. 14:31). We would suggest that the same could be said of Job; he had "little faith", but this is relative to the measure of Christ, not, for example, in comparison with ourselves. To understand the faith of Job, and where it was lacking, it is helpful to compare him with Martha and the raising of Lazarus.

Job believed in the resurrection: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (19:25,26). Martha, too, believed in the resurrection: "Martha saith unto him [Jesus],

I know that he [Lazarus] shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (Jno. 11:24). Yet later we read, "Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days" (v. 39).

So Martha, who believed in the resurrection, did not believe, or had not even considered, that Christ was going to raise Lazarus at that time. The Lord Jesus in reply focuses on the need for Martha to believe: "Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (v. 40).

Martha believed in the overall principles of the gospel. However, she had to learn that God was watching over her in her day-to-day life. In the same way, Job believed in the grand purpose of God, a faith which enabled him to see the resurrection "afar off" (Heb. 11:13), but he needed to believe that God was concerned for his day-to-day wellbeing. If he had believed this he would not have been afraid of what might come upon him.

If we are still unsure about using the phrase "little faith" of Job, it is worth noting that Job is not mentioned in Hebrews 11, the chapter of faith in action. The evidence we have given above with regard to Job's "little faith" explains why he is not mentioned in that chapter.

### **Ourselves**

The command, "Be not afraid, only believe", is a command which we too should obey. But *what* exactly should we "believe"? What should Job have believed? Romans 8 provides an answer: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (v. 28).

If Job had truly believed this he would not have been afraid. When worrying thoughts crossed his mind about his family, home and business, he could have conquered the fear by reassuring himself that, whatever happened, things would "work together for good". Of course, "together" is an important word here. Sometimes an event happens which needs to "work" with another event that may not happen until many years in the future.

So next time we have that fear within us about how things might go wrong in our lives, fears which even that great man Job had, let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "Be not afraid, only believe".