

THAT WE MIGHT HAVE STRONG ENCOURAGEMENT

Tomáš Kriška funeral service

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Heb 6:18 ἵνα διὰ δύο πραγμάτων ἀμεταθέτων, ἐν οἷς ἀδύνατον ψεύσασθαι [τὸν] θεόν, ἰσχυρὰν παράκλησιν ἔχωμεν οἱ καταφυγόντες κρατῆσαι τῆς προκειμένης ἐλπίδος·	Heb 6:18 ...so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us.
Phil 1:23-24 τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων εἰς τὸ ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, πολλῶ [γὰρ] μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον· ²⁴ τὸ δὲ ἐπιμένειν [ἐν] τῇ σαρκὶ ἀναγκαιότερον δι' ὑμᾶς.	Phil 1:23-24 ...to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.
<p style="text-align: center;">גַּם אֶת־הַטּוֹב נִקְבָּל מֵאֶת הַרָע וְאֶת־הַרָע לֹא נִקְבָּל</p>	Job 2:10 Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?"

0. INTRO

- the younger should bury the older – not the other way round
- Phil 1:23 – let us think of his joy... → the *Gospel* (the Cross, Resurrection, Parousia):
John 11:25 Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, → forgiveness because of the Cross of Christ
- ...and let us think what solace we need → the *comfort* of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and minds
1Thes 4:13 that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. → grief is normal, but let us not forget *hope*!

0.1 CHEAP WORDS?

- Job's friends: were silent for 7 days – do we need more silence in the church? and less proclamations?
- what we need in times like these: (1) encouragement, (2) hope

0.2 PAIN

- the loss – the loved one is no longer here (husband, father, son, brother, co-worker...)
- *the problem of unanswered prayer* – why?
- accusing voices – you should have...(outward and inward voices)

0.3 WORDS AND REALITY

- word tend to create their own independent reality... → “rhetoric” of the social group
- (“logology”) ¹ [reality → *spiritual* words → *biblical* texts → *liturgical* pericopes → *artistic* genres]
- in times of crises and loss we have an opportunity to get back from nice words to hard reality
- **Mt 10:29-30** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?¹ And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.
- **Luke 12:7** Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

1. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

...and the *submission* of faith

- **Job 2:10** Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" (וְאֶת־הַרָע לֹא נִקְבָּל)

¹ Kenneth BURKE

- through *two unchangeable things*,² ...we ...might have strong encouragement to *seize the hope* set before us.

1.1 EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

- (1) **victory** → the danger of triumphalism, (2) **submission** → the danger of quietism (Paul+Silas ↔ Peter in jail; Heb 11: two parts – victory over death, accepting death)
- faith: telling God what he should do?
- “you know” (**Eze 37:3** He said to me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' I said, 'You know, Lord Yahweh.' אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ יְהוָה יְהוָה אֵתָּה יְדָעְתָּ)
- *freedom* in submission to God
- *hope* in accepting the loss as his will – not as *fate*!

1.2 REACH FOR HOPE

- **John 16:23** In that day you *will not ask Me anything*.
- encouragement → to *seize the hope* set before us

Κρατηῖσαι, to hold fast, to take firm hold of, to grasp with tenacity,
Hebrew קָרַחְתָּ.

Who have fled for refuge, [CALVIN:] “By these words he intimates that we do not truly trust in God except when we forsake every other protection and flee for refuge to his sure promise, and feel assured that it is our only safe asylum.

2. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

...and the goodness of his *calling* of his *purpose*.

- [a “pillow text”?:] **Rom 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose (τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσιν)

2.1 WHAT GOOD?

- death? pain? loss?
- ...according to *his purpose*!

2.2 THE PROVIDENCE

- **Eph 1:11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined (προορισθέντες) *according to the purpose* (κατὰ πρόθεσιν) of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will (κατὰ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ),
- the *future* of God (the Kingdom, life in the new heaven and new earth...)

3. THE PAROUSIA OF JESUS

...and the love for the loved one who has passed away.

3.1 MEET THE LOVED ONE IN HEAVEN?

- “he (the deceased) is looking at you from heaven!”
- **Is 63:16** For you are our Father, for Abraham (אֲבִרְהָם) does not know us (אֵלֵינוּ יָדָעְתָּ), and Israel does not acknowledge us (יִשְׂרָאֵל יָדָעְתָּ); you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

3.2 FOCUS YOUR HOPE ON JESUS!

- **1 Thes 4:17** to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always **be with the Lord**.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- Freedom from accusations comes through submission to God’s sovereignty.

² (1) the promise [Heb 6:14] *and* the oath [Heb 5:6] OR (2) the oath of the covenant [Gn 22] and the oath of priesthood [Ps 110]

- Alleviation of pain from the loss is in accepting God's hope for his future.
- The empty space after the loved one has to be filled by Jesus.