

# The Crook in the Lot

## --Lesson 2--

### **Chapter 2 — Proposition 1:** *Whatever crook there is in one's lot is of God's making* (pp.4-41)

#### A. *The Crook Itself*

1. Premises (pp.4-6)
2. The crook connotes two things: adversity and continuance (p.6)
  
3. Three-fold view of the crook (pp.7-8)
  - a) Some crooks affect us only momentarily, but they have lasting effects
    - (1) Such was Herod's cruelty in Bethlehem, Mt 2.18.
    - (2) A very quick twisting of the ankle may cause one to limp for a long time. The consequences of a momentary sinful pleasure may send a man limping to the grave.
  - b) Several adverse events which happen one after another with lasting effects
    - (1) Thus it was in the case of Job (1.16-18) and of Asaph (Ps 73.13-17), and of Joseph, Jacob, Peter, and our Lord
  - c) One crook replaces another crook
    - (1) Rachel's crook of barrenness (Gen 30.1) gave way to the crook of death (Gen 35.16)
    - (2) This life is a life in the wilderness where when one crook is made straight, another lights upon us.
  
4. Characteristics of the crook, four things which make the crook crooked (pp.8-11)
  - a) Its disagreeableness
    - (1) It answers to no ruler, i.e., we cannot make sense of it or agree with it (at least initially—more later.)
      - (a) But it is only disagreeable to us. When measured by the rule of God's will and purpose, there is no such thing as a crook in anyone's lot.
      - (b) For even the worst situation in the worst of lots is still in perfect harmony with His eternal decree, without the least deviation, Eph 1.11; Acts 21.11, 14.
      - (c) Which means the greatest crook of one's lot on earth is straight in heaven!
    - (2) But when measured by our mind and natural inclination, there is indeed a crook in every person's lot.
      - (a) The crook crosses our selfish will and we can in no way agree to it!
      - (b) Which means that a crook is only a crook because it crosses our selfish will!
      - (c) Which means that if we would submit our will to the will and purpose of God, walk by faith and not by sight, and stop insisting that things go to according to our sinful minds, then the crook would disappear! (more later.)
  - b) Its unsightliness
    - (1) Crooked things are unpleasant to the natural eye, Heb 12.11.
    - (2) Thus we need to be careful that we do not dwell on our crook by keeping it constantly in view, Ps 39.3 (cf. v.9).
    - (3) Consider how Jacob placed the crook of Rachel's death "out of view" by renaming Benjamin. Otherwise, everytime he mentioned his son's name, the crook would be placed before him afresh.

- (4) The only way we can safely take a long and steady look at the crook in our lot is to view it in light of the Word of God, which declares to us that it is part of the good and necessary discipline promised in the Covenant of Grace.
  - (5) Which means that only faith can unveil the hidden beauty in every crook, 2Cor 12.10.
  - c) Its unfitnes for motion
    - (1) A high spirit and a low lot makes for great difficulty in the Christian walk, Prov 26.7.
    - (2) There is nothing that gives temptation more easy access into our lives than the crook in the lot, for nothing is more apt to occasion out-of-the-way steps. Therefore we are to make straight paths for our feet, lest we be turned out of the way, Heb 12.13.
  - d) Its aptnes to catch hold and entangle (Amos 4.2)
    - (1) A crook so easily ruffles and irritates that Satan takes advantage of the moment and seeks to arouse our buried corruptions (cf. Job 1-2).
    - (2) Before we know it, a single crook can bring up some ugly things from the bottom of our hearts, Jer 17.9; Mk 7.21-23.
    - (3) Consider the blasphemy and atheism brought up in Asaph, Ps 73.13. The crook turned him into someone quite unlike himself, for the crook is a handle whereby the devil makes surprising discoveries of latent corruption even in the best saint, Gal 2.11-12; Lk 22.54-62.
5. Conclusions — Let us now observe into which part of our lot the crook falls (pp.11-17)
- a) The crook may be found in any part of our lot and in different parts of the lot for different people
    - (1) Since the crook, by definition, is the crossing of our selfish wills (p.9), it may be found anywhere sin may be found.
    - (2) But as we all have our different struggles, so the crook may fall in different places for different people: “that will prove a sinking weight unto one under which another would go very lightly”
  - b) The crook may fall in many parts of our lot at the same time, Lam 2.22
    - (1) One notable crook may be at the head of a whole train which follows after it.
  - c) The crook may fall in the part of our lot that the person is least able (willing!) to bear it, Ps 55.12-13
    - (1) ‘If there is any one part of the lot which of all others a person is disposed to nestle/rest/take comfort in, then the thorn will surely be put there, especially if the person is a Christian.’
    - (2) ‘In that thing wherein he least of all desires to be touched, he will be sure to be pressed by a crook. There the trial will be, for it is there that the grand competition with Christ is found, Ezk 24.25.’
    - (3) ‘Since the crook in the lot is the special trial appointed for each one by God, it is altogether reasonable and becoming the wisdom of God, that it falls on that which of all things most rivals Him.’
  - d) But more particularly, the crook may be found in these four parts of our lot:
    - (1) A crook may be in the body—a handicap, disease, sickness, chronic pain, &c. E.g., Leah (Gen 29.17), Rachel (Gen 30.1), Paul (2Cor 10.10), Timothy (1Tim 5.23). Some are weak in intellect but strong in body while others are weak in body while strong in intellect.
    - (2) A crook of dishonor—no recognition by others for the gifts and talents God has given you
      - (a) This is sometimes the consequence of our own foolish conduct. But where the Lord intends a crook of this kind, neither true merit nor innocence will be able to ward it off in our ill-natured world, Ps 31.11-13

- (3) A crook may be in our vocation—this crook is often in the lot of those who are very industrious in their work, Ps 107.37-39. Despite all their efforts, they cannot straighten the crook, because no means whatsoever can be successful without divine appointment, Lam 3.37.
- (a) ‘Providence crosses their enterprises, disconcerts their measures, frustrates their hopes and expectations, renders their endeavors unsuccessful, and so puts and keeps them still in straightened circumstances, so that the swift lose the race, the strong lose the battle, and the wise miss the bread, while, in the meantime, some one or other providential incident, supplying the defect of human wisdom, conduct, and ability, the slow gain the race and carry the prize, the weak win the battle and enrich themselves with the spoil, and bread falls into the lap of the fool’ (Ecc 9.11).
- (4) A crook may be in our relations—by nature our relationships (especially our family) are the spring of our comforts; but these often bring forth the greatest bitterness, Job 16.7; Mt 15.22; 1Chr 7.23. Thus the more of these springs of comfort a man has, the more potential sources of sorrow he has.
- (a) This crook is sometimes made by the person proving uncomfortable through the disagreeableness of their temper and disposition, Job 19.17; 1Sam 2.25; 20.30-33; 25.25.
- (b) So that men often find their greatest cross where they expected their greatest comfort because sin has made every relationship susceptible to the crook (in the family, neighborhood, church, state, &c.)