

JOB

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Job chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As you remember from our previous studies, Job's life has been turned upside down you might say. We saw that God honored Job by telling Satan that he is a good man, he fears God and does what is right. And Satan replied back to God that the only reason he is doing that is because You bless him so much. If you didn't, he would curse you! So God told Satan he can come against Job but not touch his physical body.

So in one day job lost his livestock, his servants, his children, he lost everything he had except his wife. And again Satan was not pleased because Job did not curse God. Satan felt if his health was affected, he would curse God. And thus, the Lord said that he could do as he pleases with Job but he could not kill Job! And again we see Satan attack Job and his health is falling apart. He has all these sores all over his body, he is a mess. He looks so bad that his wife tells him to **"Curse God and die!"** And I love what Job said as he responded to her statement. **"But he said to her, 'You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?' In all this Job did not sin with his lips."** Job 2:10.

And as Job is sitting down, devastated over what has happened to him, his three friends come by and they can't believe what they see. They can't believe this is their friend Job. And for seven days they just sat with Job and said nothing. I am sure they were shaking their heads in disbelief and trying to figure out what Job did that this has come upon him.

And then Job finally opens up and he is cursing the day that he was born, not God. But he just feels that it would have been better not to be born than be in this condition! And as Job finishes speaking, we will now see his three friends begin to speak and they will take turns. And when you listen to what they are saying, think about how you would feel if you were Job and your friends did this to you. They were insensitive and their counsel is wrong because latter on in the book of Job God is going to rebuke them for what they were saying. We need to be careful that when we minister to those that are hurting that we don't do it with a judgmental attitude, "They are only getting what they deserve" mentality. Why? Because when you think about it, we all deserve punishment from God and when things happen to a person it is not always a judgment from God! Don't forget that and you will see that in our study this evening.

You see, what we see here is a trial from God to test the faith of Job. And, from Satan it is a temptation to get Job to sin and curse God! It is the same situation and the Lord is going to use it for good, to test his faith and help him to grow while Satan wants to destroy his faith and get him to fail! Keep that in mind as you listen to the counsel of his friends. With that said, let's begin reading in Job chapter 4, starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening!

JOB 4**VERSES 1-6**

1. Now, after all these words by Job, who was wishing to be dead, Eliphaz wants to interject some of his own thoughts regarding this situation. Eliphaz was from Teman, which was an Edomite city that was known as a center of wisdom (Jeremiah 49:7). And it seems that Eliphaz just can't hold back, he just has to speak to Job about what Job has said and about what Job is experiencing.

And notice what Eliphaz is saying to Job, "In the old days when you were in prosperity and plenty , when you were in good health, you were a tower of strength to everybody else. You could advise them, you have helped others through difficult times they were going through! But now you, the great counselor, can't even handle the difficult times you are going through. The advice you gave to others you can't even follow it yourself! What's your problem Job?" Job needed compassion not condemnation! And Eliphaz is saying to Job that he has given up, that he is not listening to the advice he has given to others as they went through difficult times and now he is throwing in the towel because things have gotten too tough for him!

2. And yes, Job did not need to hear this at this time but I think this is an important lesson for us to learn. We find it very easy to go and encourage others and then we don't practice what we preach. Live what you believe because you will never lead people to where you are not willing to go. That does not mean that others can't comfort you in difficult times, in fact it is very helpful to have someone there, a friend who can listen to your hurt, your pain, not that they will have the answers, but they will have a shoulder to lean on. Also, may we not be like Eliphaz who is looking down upon Job and condemning him instead of comforting him during this very difficult time!

3. I like the way that Trapp put this situation because it does apply to us. He wrote, "Men are best known by affliction, and this now showeth of what metal thou art made; for now thou doth cast off thy fear of God, and all thy confidence and hope in him." Are we only going to praise God and honor Him when things are going well or are we going to trust in Him no matter what comes upon our lives? That is an important lesson because, like I have said, God is testing us, testing our faith while Satan is tempting us to fail! Draw near to God and He will draw near to you, don't forsake Him because He will never forsake you!

4. Now Eliphaz is going to try and explain what he believes is the source of all of Job's troubles!

VERSES 7-11

1. Talk about a knife in the back. Eliphaz is saying that the only reason Job is going through this is because he is not innocent. Only those that sin will go through times like this. A very humanistic and simplistic approach that is not scriptural. But for the next 34 chapters, his friends are going to tell Job this very thing, “Your sins have brought this upon you Job!”

2. Now the question that Eliphaz asks is this, and this is from The Amplified Bible, **“Think [earnestly], I beg of you: who, being innocent, ever perished? Or where were those upright and in right standing with God cut off?”** Job 4:7. Have the innocent ever perished? Absolutely and the Bible has many examples of the righteous suffering, but the best, of course, is that of Jesus Himself.

Peter said in I Peter 3:18, **“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.”** Also, in John 9:1-3 we read, **“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.’”** That was the philosophy of the day. That you get what you deserve. But as we have seen, even the innocent do suffer.

3. Now we have to be careful here because some will say that this principle of reaping what you have sown is biblical, and it is! Paul tells us in Galatians 6:7-8, **“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”** Paul is not promoting spiritual karma here that says if you do good you will get good things in your life and if you do bad you will get bad things in your life! It is a principle that can be applied to our life. If there was such a spiritual law we all would be damned! And think about it, if God only helped the good none of us would receive His help because we are all bad. And thus, as Andersen points out, the conclusion for Job would be, “The friends must infer from Job’s suffering that he has sinned; Job must infer from his innocence that God is unjust.” And obviously that is not true.

Now let me also say this. There is a measure of truth in that, punishment will come for the wicked but it is not always immediate. And notice that Eliphaz is coming across as being so spiritual as he says, **“even as I have seen.”** But the reality is he was letting his personal experiences formulate his doctrine which was wrong. You must go back to the Word of God! And he concludes by saying, “God will blast those who are evil just as He is doing to you Job!” That was Eliphaz’s response and his comforting words to a man who was in pain, a man who was hurting. Not very comforting!

VERSES 12-16

1. Why did Eliphaz do this? Why did he sound so spiritual, so mystic you might say? Because Eliphaz wants to justify his words, he wants them to believe him, so he tells them how he got this information! He heard these words; he saw this spirit and was it a friendly spirit? Oops, that is another story, that is Casper the friendly ghost! And he builds them up to this climax and then he will tell what this spirit told him. It is as Smick wrote, "Eliphaz bolstered the authority of his words by an appeal to the supernatural – an eerie and hair-raising experience in which he received a divine oracle." I am sure he thought that now they have to listen to him. But what did he have to say, what did the spirit say to him? Let's read on and see!

VERSES 17-21

1. Really, this is what the spirit spoke to you, these words that are so deep, words that no one has heard before? He is telling Job that God is more righteous than man. Really, it doesn't take a theologian to figure that out or a spirit! Many people try to come off as spiritual, they may even speak in the old King James English, and like Eliphaz, it is much to do about nothing. They give you a lot of fluff but there is no real substance to what they are saying!

All Eliphaz is doing is he is calling to attention that man is sinful. Thus, “Job, you know that we all sin. There is no surprise in that and thus, there should be no shame if you would only be truthful and admit that you have sinned and that is why all this calamity has come upon you!” Now we know that is not true because we have read what Job chapter 1 and Job chapter 2 has to say. That God allowed this and Satan brought it upon Job, not because he was a sinner but Satan was tempting him to sin and God was testing his faith!

2. We also see that Eliphaz speaks of the error of angels and we know this to be true. We know that Lucifer lead a revolt against God and a third of the angels followed Lucifer, who we know as Satan. Thus, Eliphaz is saying, “Look Job, if God doesn’t put His trust in the angels how much less is He going to trust us? Job, don’t claim that you are innocent, for you are not more righteous than God!” Now just because Job was not more righteous than God did not mean all this was coming upon him for some sin, as I have said, but that is what Eliphaz is saying! And what comfort did he bring to Job?

Absolutely none! It is as Maclaren wrote, “The speaker seems serenely unconscious that he was saying anything that could drive a knife into the tortured man. He is so carried along on the waves of his own eloquence, and so absorbed in the stringing together the elements of an artistic whole, that he forgets the very sorrows which he came to comfort.”

Now yes, some of the things that Eliphaz was saying to Job were truthful, but they were not helpful in the situation that he was facing and that is what is truly tragic. Instead of bringing comfort to his friend he is bringing condemnation and a distortion of what is really taking place in Job's life. He is speaking as if he was hearing from God and he was not! May we be careful as we come alongside people, that what we say will be words of comfort and if correction, that it is all done with the idea of restoration. But before we speak correction, may we make sure we are doing what is right, what God wants and not what we want or think is right!

3. "Don't you understand, Job?" Eliphaz says. "If you're being crushed or broken it's because you deserve to be." These are harsh words from Job's friend, Eliphaz. And he's not finished yet, as we will see.

JOB 5

VERSE 1

1. Do you see what Eliphaz is doing here? He is begging Job to listen to reason and agree with what he is saying. In fact, if he consulted any other godly person, they would tell him the same thing, at least that is what Eliphaz thought! And, he is basically telling Job, "Who are you going to turn to now Job, for your sin has separated you from God? Who is going to listen to you? You are all alone!" That was true because his friends were not bringing him any comfort!

VERSES 2-7

1. Now keep in mind that Eliphaz is drawing his doctrine from human experience, how he has seen the wicked cursed by God, in fact he has even seen the results of those that he has cursed. That is true but we always don't see that. In fact, there are many times that the wicked seem to be blessed. But that is what Eliphaz is relying on; human experience and that can get you in trouble. And I think you can see why Job called these guys miserable comforters. Eliphaz is blaming Job for the death of his children. God has crushed them because of you! Can you imagine that? How sad and this is from his friend!

2. Again, I think we can learn an important lesson from Eliphaz. When people are going through difficult times, it is not time to preach our sermons to them. In fact, the best thing to do is sit there and listen to them, comfort them and just show them you care. Giving pious platitudes is of no help to them and will only bring them lower as Eliphaz was doing to Job. Blaming them is also not going to help in the situation they are in. Reach out to people with the same love of Christ that you want others to reach out to you with!

3. Not only do we see Eliphaz blame the death of his children upon Job, but also the loss of all his possessions. In other words, "The wicked lose everything and Job you are an example of that!" But again, that is wrong because God told us that Job was a good man. But Eliphaz will not let this go and he tells his friend, he tells Job that all this calamity does not come out of nothing, but it is a direct result of your sin!

4. Now here's the thing. When we look at the world and try to draw our conclusions about God from that picture, we get a distorted view of God. The reason for that is simple. The world we are living in now is not the world that God created. When God created the heavens and the earth it was all very good, but then sin entered the world and things became clouded. And man is not doing the things he was created to do. Thus, the reason we see evil is because of sin. The answer to the question of "Why do bad things happen to good people?" is because there are no good people. And thus, the reality is that bad things happen to bad people and we all are bad!

Paul, in Romans 3:10-18 tells us, "**As it is written: 'There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one. Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit; The poison of asps is under their lips; Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways; And the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.'**"

According to God's standard, how many of us are righteous before Him? ***NONE!***

In fact there has only been one righteous man and that is Jesus! Apart from God no one understands God or the condition they are truly in. Unless God draws you, you would not seek after God on your own. Man goes and does his own thing, not living to please God apart from Christ. All their efforts apart from Christ are worthless before Him. Thus, the heart of man is evil, not good. Now please, don't get me wrong, some are better than others when you compare man to man, but that is not the standard, God is the standard and we all fall far short of that standard leaving only God to be good!

Now yes, God did say that Job was a righteous man, that he loved the Lord. But he was not perfect. The only reason we know that he was not being judged for his actions is because God told us that He was doing this to test Job. I know I have said that a lot and I will say that many times before we get to the end of this book, but we need to understand that. Not everything that happens in our lives is the result of our actions! God will allow things in our lives for His plan, His purposes, to mold and shape our lives to be more like Him, to test our faith!

VERSES 8-16

1. Here Eliphaz is coming off as super spiritual again. He is saying that if he was going through the things that Job is going through, he would repent before God. He is telling Job that his problem is that he is not bringing this before God; he was not committing his cause to God in this affliction that he was facing! How easy it is to preach to others that are suffering and how spiritual we can sound. But that is not helpful to that person.

Eliphaz again rationalizes that it is Job's craftiness, his cunning that has brought all this upon him. He is telling Job to get right with God - turn back to Him! If Eliphaz was totally correct, that the unjust would suffer, so too would he suffer. But because of his super spiritual beliefs, he doesn't see it that way.

VERSES 17-26

1. This is a true statement. God does chasten those He loves. We are told of this in Hebrews 12:5-8 which says, "**And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.'**" The problem here is that Eliphaz is assuming that Job is guilty of some sin and that is why God is chastening him. But we have already been told in Job chapters 1 and 2 that this is not the case, Job was a very good man.

2. Let me also say this in regard to God's chastening upon our lives. In Hebrews chapter 12 Paul is speaking of this "**chastening**" or discipline. It is the Greek word PAIDEIA, (pahee-di'-ah) and it speaks of the training of a child so that they may grow and mature. Now, please understand that God's chastening is not punitive or retaliatory but it is corrective to His children, to believers. God's chastening comes upon our life to get us back on track and not to destroy us or drive us away from Him. It is there to help us to grow!

Yes, outside of Christ there is judgment, it is punitive, but not in Christ! Paul said in Romans 8:1, "**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**" Thus, Paul, in quoting out of Proverbs 3:11-12 is showing us that God's chastening is not a sign of rejection but of love towards us, and folks, none of us are above this kind training!

I like the way Arthur Pink comments on this. He said, "Remind yourself of how much dross there is yet among the gold and view the corruption of your own heart and marvel that God has not smitten you more severely. Form the habit of heeding His taps, and you will be less likely to receive His raps." I like that, and it is true. May we be sensitive to what He is showing us as we are going through situations, learn those lessons so we can move on!

3. And Eliphaz says that God will deliver you from death and famine, from the power of the sword, the scourges of the tongue, the fear of destruction, from the destruction of famine, from fear of the wild beasts and in death you will be at peace. Seven is the number of completeness here, as he gives the total spectrum of the trouble of man. This is not wrong, but it is not helpful to Job, that is not what he needed to hear at this time!

VERSE 27

1. As Eliphaz concludes his speech or sermon to Job, he wants to persuade Job to believe what he has told him. Thus, he tells him, “**... this we have searched out; it is true.**” He wants Job to believe him and apply it to his life! And yes he did speak truth, but it was not what Job needed at this time. It is as Mason wrote, “Aspirin is a good and effective medicine. But it is useless against cancer. Similarly, so much of the advice that Eliphaz and the other friends dole out is, in its own right, correct and good and true. But because it is wrongly applied it becomes useless. More than useless, it is a lie.” What a lesson for us to learn!

2. Here is a very important point - we see Eliphaz mix truth with error, and that is always very destructive. Satan did that in the Garden of Eden and he is still doing that today. And you can understand when the world does it, but when the church does it, look out. We see it in the health, wealth and prosperity doctrines - where you have truth and then they tell you that you are a god! They tell you that God does not want you to be poor, or sick or whatever! You see it in the legalistic churches where they tell you the truth and then mix it with error - how long your hair should be, smoking is a sin, women should wear dresses and no make-up, and-so-on. Make sure that what is being said is according to the Word of God and not out of your own personal conviction or the philosophies of the world, because they won't benefit you or anyone else.

As Peter said in II Peter 3:17-18, **“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”**

3. And think about this, was the trial related to his health? It was suppose to be but I think the bigger trial was the accusations and the condemnation that he was receiving from his friends. Yes, this health issue was big, but it was made even bigger by what his friends said, the condemnation that they brought to him!

Mason tells us, “It is one of the supreme ironies of this book that only after the arrival of these three bosom friends of his does Job really lose a grip on himself and fall off the edge into despair. Their pedantic [finicky, obscure, dull] theology, their reforming zeal, and their subtle slights are more than the poor man can take, and undoubtedly this backhanded betrayal by his friends is Job’s final and most severe trial.” Let’s move on and see how Job responds to what Eliphaz has to say!

JOB 6

VERSES 1-7

1. We have seen Job’s angry outburst that broke those seven days of silence in Job chapter 3. Then Eliphaz spoke of Job needing to repent of his sin in Job chapters 4 and 5. Now Job is going to respond back and he lays it all out. Job responds by saying that his grief, if weighed against all the sand of the sea, would be far greater. A little exaggeration, but he has been through a lot, and thus, his words, as harsh as they were, came from a broken man who was not getting any comfort from his friends.

You see, Job has allowed the situations of life, and maybe even some of the words of his friends, to cloud his picture of God. For he now thinks that God is his enemy. That God is shooting arrows at him as Poole tells us, “Arrows; so fitly calls his afflictions, because, like arrows, they came upon him swiftly and suddenly, one after another, and that from on high, and they wounded him deeply and deadly.”

But we need to understand that these arrows did not come from God but from Satan! You see, the fiery darts of the enemy, of Satan, can be very destructive if we are not protected. But how can we protect ourselves from these fiery darts? How can we stand strong against the wiles of the Devil? Paul tells us in Ephesians 6:16 that we are to do the following. He says that, **“above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”** Job’s faith was wavering because his shield of faith was not protecting him. Job had never experienced anything like this in his life, and now God was showing him, exposing him to his weakness so that his faith may grow from these things.

2. In verse 5 Job talks about the wild donkeys and the ox. In other words, the animals, when they are feed, when their needs are met, don’t cry out. Thus, the reason that Job is crying out is because he is hurting, he is in need of comfort, and he is not getting any from his friends. Make no mistake about it; God will use us to minister to those that are hurting just as He has ministered to us when we were going through a difficult time.

Paul, in II Corinthians 1:3-7 tells us, **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.”**

How can Paul, here in II Corinthians chapter 1 speak of God being **“the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort”**? Because Paul experienced the mercy and comfort of God in his own life and thus was able to speak from personal experience to people going through similar situations. You see, like it or not, you are not going to be able to give to others what you have not received yourself from the Lord. We all have experiences in our lives that God has comforted us and seen us through.

For me, just a few, I know what it is like to lose a dear friend, to lose a father, to have rebellious sons, thus, I can bring comfort to others who are going through similar situations. I can encourage them to keep praying for that wayward child because I have seen what God can do to restore that child, to bring them back and it is awesome.

Folks, we have all been through things that others might be going through right now and you can be the one to encourage them, help them through it because you know what it is like! It is as Peter said in I Peter 4:10, **“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”** The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“As each of you has received a gift (a particular spiritual talent, a gracious divine endowment), employ it for one another as [befits] good trustees of God's many-sided grace [faithful stewards of the extremely Diverse powers and gifts granted to Christians by unmerited favor].”** May we do that; give to others for God has freely given to us!

Let me also say this, the things you go through are not just for others, but God is teaching you lessons, trying to show you something and learn the lesson so you can move on. As you go through these things may you do so seeing the hand of God in them instead of becoming overwhelmed by the situation! God is not going to tempt you beyond what you are able to stand and the key of course is not to trust in yourself, but in God.

Let me show you what I mean. “Mr. Knox, a little before his death, rose out of his bed; and being asked wherefore, being so sick, he would offer to rise? He answered, that he had sweet meditations of the resurrection of Jesus Christ that night, and now he would go into the pulpit, and impart to others the comforts he felt in his soul.” (Trapp). That is amazing and yet, that is what our God does!

It was A. W. Tozer who rightly said, “Before God can use a person greatly, he must allow that person to be hurt deeply.” We don’t like that; we just want to be used, but in order to help you have to learn to receive the comfort of God into your own life. Paul knew tribulation, he was hurt deeply and he was used mightily. In II Corinthians 11:23-28 Paul tells us that he was whipped, thrown in prison, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, all kinds of perils – water, robbers, countrymen, gentiles, in the city, in the wilderness, in the sea, among false brethren, weariness, toil, sleeplessness, hunger, thirst, cold and nakedness and as Paul went through all these things Jesus was with him and He comforted Paul.

We are going to have tribulation in our life, suffering, but also note that God will comfort us in the midst of these sufferings. Please don’t forget that or lose sight of that. Keep Jesus before you at all times and don’t let the situations block out your view of Him! That is what Job is doing and his friends are not helping him to see God through this difficulty!

3. Also, in verse 7 Job describes how worthless the words of Eliphaz were to him, they were flavorless to him. They did not help Job in any way! In other words, Job was saying, “Your counsel was worthless; it did nothing to comfort me, so why even speak?”

Spurgeon put it like this, “The speech, also, to which Job had listened from Eliphaz the Temanite did not put much sweetness into his mouth; for it was devoid of sympathy and consolation. If you read it at home you will see that it was worthy to be the first of a singular selection of galling utterances. . . . He had spoken as harshly and severely as if he were a judge addressing a criminal who was suffering no more than he deserved.”

Again, this is a lesson to us as we speak to people, as we try to comfort others!

VERSES 8-10

1. Job is so miserable, so disheartened at this point, that he asks God to just finish him off, to end his life. He is not talking about suicide here but he does want to die and he wants God to take care this for him! We may have echoed these words before in times of despair, “I have nothing to live for anymore, nothing to hope for, just take me home Lord!” And I think the Lord is teaching us through Job that even though we may not understand the things that are happening to us, our life is precious and God is not going to take it! It is as Morgan wrote, “When the answer does not come, when instead of the release of cutting off, we have the continuity of pain, and a great silence, then let us remember this story: and remain confident that there is some explanation, and that when it comes, we shall thank God that He did not give us our request.” Absolutely we will because God will see us through, He will bring us comfort no matter what we are going through!

VERSES 11-13

1. If our hope is in this world, if we are living for ourselves, then you are right, there is not much to hope for, nothing to live for. And please don't get the idea that Job was some kind of motivational speaker or self-help guru when he said in verse 13, "**Is my help not within me?**" I think the New International Version or the NIV translation is a little better and helps us to understand what Job is saying. It reads, "**Do I have any power to help myself, now that success has been driven from me?**" In other words, if the only hope for Job is in himself, then there is no help for him, no hope for him! But as David said in Psalm 39:7, "**And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.**" Our hope is the Lord and it must be in the Lord, and He will never fail us!

2. Job is now going to criticize, condemn the words of Eliphaz and he will also defend himself in the next several verses. Let's read on and see how this is played out.

VERSES 14-23

1. Listen to what Job is saying here. "Just because you think I'm not perfect, does that give you the right to condemn me? Instead of condemning me, show me comfort through these difficult times that I am going through. And even if it was true and I had forsaken the fear of the Almighty, you should still have shown me kindness!" That was Job's response to this foolish counsel.

2. Job tells them that, “You think you are helping me but you are not helping at all! In fact you guys are like streams in the winter, when nobody needs you, then you are there to help. But when the summer comes, when things heat up, when things get tough, your help dries up like the rivers do, and you offer no real help.” Meyer makes an interesting point in regards to the friends of Job and our Lord. He wrote, “How great a contrast to the love and friendship of Jesus! Not like a brook that dries in the time of drought, but like a well of water springing up within the heart for ever.”

Then why don't I always feel refreshed? Because I am not always looking and receiving from the Lord! Many times I am looking at the situation and complaining and griping and-so-on instead of looking to the Lord to be the strength of my life. Instead of thanking the Lord that He is always there and no matter what I am going through, He will work it out somehow, someday for good!

3. And think about this for a minute. Did Job ask for help from his friends to deliver him from the enemy or redeem him back or to take a bribe from their wealth? No, Job never asked for that kind of help from these three guys. He just wanted some words of comfort and what they freely gave was not helpful at all. They were giving Job their self-righteous opinions.

4. Job will now challenge his friends to point out his error for him. Look at what he says to them.

VERSES 24-30

1. Notice what Job is telling them and not just Eliphaz. If they would speak something that was worth listening to, Job would have been more than willing to listen, but they were not speaking the truth. He was looking for them to show him his error, but they could not show him his error. Remember, God said Job was a good man. Mason puts it like this, “Throughout the dialogue they make veiled accusations, deliver general moral pronouncements, hum and haw, and equivocate. But all their insinuations are without substance, and by way of actually identifying and getting at the root of Job’s problem . . . the best they can do is suggest that his ‘attitude’ is all wrong.”

2. And Job lets them have it. He tells them that their words, the words of these guys are nothing more than hot air; there is no real substance to them. And the problem for these friends is that they were trying to understand the things that were happening to Job by human wisdom, and they were wrong. In fact they were coming against Job’s integrity.

3. And please understand that these guys knew Job. They had heard his words before. They knew what kind of man he was. They saw his integrity. They saw his love for the Lord. And now, all of a sudden they think he is lying to them. Isn’t that interesting. They knew their friend and yet, when things got tough, when things were heating up for Job, instead of remembering the man Job was, they came to a faulty conclusion about Job. They felt that his sin brought this upon him. Listen to what J. Vernon McGee said regarding these verses. He wrote,

He says, “What you have said is good, but it doesn’t touch my case at all. You’re not diagnosing my condition.”

I heard of a person who went to a doctor, and his case was diagnosed as arthritis. It turned out to be a cancer, but by the time the patient got into the hands of a cancer specialist, it was too late to do anything for him. That is the problem of Job. He says, “You have come and you have attempted to diagnose my case, but your diagnosis is wrong. You have said it is hidden sin, and it isn’t that at all. Now if you diagnose it accurately and you have something helpful to say to me, say it and I’ll listen to you.”

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible Vol. II, p. 600

4. As I close this evening keep in mind that Job is not done speaking. As we move on next time into chapter 7 we will see Job continue to speak of his innocence. The problem with his friends counsel is that it seemed so logical, and yet they were wrong in what they were saying. In fact, God is going to rebuke them in Job 42:7-8 where we are told, **“... the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, ‘My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.’”** Be careful not to judge a situation too quickly, because what may seem logical to you may be totally wrong. Be compassionate to others just as God has been compassionate to you!