

JOB

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Job chapter 17 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As you remember from last time, we are, in a sense, into round two of this three round title fight. You see, Job's three friends had their turn at attacking Job, blaming all that has come upon him with some hidden sin that Job refuses to confess. And Job responds to their accusations, which are false and he tells them that is not the reason all this has happened to him, they are wrong. You see, God is testing his faith while Satan is trying to get job to sin by tempting Job! That is what is going on behind the scenes you might say.

And last time we saw Eliphaz attack Job for the second time and then Job rebuked him and called not only Eliphaz but the rest of his friends that were there, "**Miserable comforters!**" As we move into chapter 17 this evening we see Job continue on, trying to defend himself and come against what his friends were saying. So with that said, let's begin reading in Job chapter 17, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

JOB 17**VERSES 1-2**

1. This is not a pretty picture at all. Job's spirit is broken, his breath is gone, and there is just no life in him anymore. He is ready to die and in this condition are his friends all around him. But they do not show compassion, comfort, they just mock him. And please understand that I am not trying to negate all that Job is going through. But Job, like all of us, we do the same thing. As things get tough we take our eyes off the Lord and focus upon the situation, and we quickly become disheartened and find ourselves in despair. Job was dwelling on what his friends were doing to him, instead of resting in the Lord. And yes his outward situation in life was bad, and thus, he was focused on that instead of the Lord! And again, when you are in situations like this, it is easy then to get down. Job feels that no one cares anymore. Let's read on and you will see that!

VERSE 3

1. Job is looking for any of his friends to side with him, to truly be a friend to him, to shake his hand but instead, as we have seen, they are mocking him. Let's face it; people can be cruel and so can friends. And there may be times that we are all alone, that nobody cares, nobody loves us and you know what, you are wrong! "Joe, how can you say that? You don't know what I am going through. There is no one who really loves me!" You are right, I don't know what you are going through, I don't know what your friends or family have done to you, but here is what I do know. Jesus loves you. How do I know that? Because the Bible tells me so!

In Hebrews 13:5 we are told, **“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”** Paul quotes out of Deuteronomy 31:6 and the Lord is telling us, **“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”** The way that this sentence is structured in the Greek speaks of this being impossible, Christ can never leave us, never depart from us, it just can’t happen! But what if we walk away from Him? As soon as you turn around, repent of your sin, He is standing there with His arms open wide with forgiveness! He will never leave us and no one can snatch us out of His hands or the Fathers Hands!

Let me share a few more verses with you because if this is all you take from this study this evening, that God loves you more than you will ever know, He loves you unconditionally and will never stop, you will be blessed. In Romans 8:35-39 Paul reminds us, **“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** Did you see that, nothing will separate you from the love of God and He will never leave us or forsake us!

In Ephesians 2:4-6 Paul reminds us, **“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”** God loves us so much that when we were dead, spiritually speaking, He brought us back to life.

And lastly, in I John 4:19 John tells us, **“We love Him because He first loved us.”** If you are feeling all alone this evening, feeling that no one cares, no one loves you, you are wrong, God loves you and so do we!

VERSES 4-5

1. Job feels that the blindness of his friends came from God and he is asking God to not let them win in their efforts to destroy him. Now God can harden a person's heart, but He only hardens what is already there. This was their doing and God will rebuke them down the road for what they said to Job, the words they spoke!

2. Now in verse 5 we are told, **“He who speaks flattery to his friends, Even the eyes of his children will fail.”** That seems kind of strange, what is Job saying here? The Hebrew word for **“flattery”** carries with it the idea of preying upon someone and thus, what Job is speaking of here is someone who delivers a friend up as prey to the enemy! In other words, as you come against others and your children are watching, it will affect their lives, they will grow up possibly doing the same thing. And think about it, as you go home from church and you are putting down this person or that person and your children are listening, guess what? In the end they may have a real disgust for church because of what they have seen, they may never want to go to church!

VERSES 6-9

1. Remember that Job was not only wealthy, but others looked to him for help, for comfort. Remember Eliphaz’s words in Job 4:3-4 regarding the actions of Job. He said, **“Surely you have instructed many, And you have strengthened weak hands. Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, And you have strengthened the feeble knees.”**

But now these same people look at him in disgust and they begin to spit upon him. Why did they do this? Because they also came to the wrong conclusion regarding why all this was happening to Job, they too thought it was some sin in his life. They saw Job as a righteous man but now, by the things that have come upon his life, they believe he is not as righteous as he made himself out to be and must have some sin that he is hiding. Thus, they turned their backs on him.

2. As hard as this was for Job, he understood that the righteous people, when they find themselves in situations like this, must remain righteous. And, in a sense, Job is saying that he really doesn't care what they say because he knows he is innocent and he is not going to change his story just to please them and get them off his back. He is not going to do something unrighteous to stop their words when he did nothing wrong in the first place! Now this attitude of Job is going to enrage Job's friends!

F. B. Meyer gives to us several reasons why the righteous should remain righteous. And keep in mind our righteousness is only from Christ because our own righteousness is like filthy rags. But the point being is this. We are not to be unrighteous just because things are tough, things are not going like we thought they should, people are coming against us. We are to stand strong in the faith and remain righteous in our actions and words. Here are the points the F. B. Meyer made:

- “You shall hold on your way because Jesus holds you in his strong hand. He is your Shepherd; He has vanquished all your foes, and you shall never perish.”
- “You shall hold on your way because the Father has designed through you to glorify His Son; and there must be no gaps in his crown where jewels ought to be.”
- “You shall hold on your way because the Holy Spirit has designed to make you his residence and home; and He is within you the perennial spring of a holy life.”

Thus, may we stand strong no matter who is coming against us, what they are saying to us or doing to us. May we humbly come before the Lord and let Him lift us up as James reminds us, “**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**” James 4:10.

VERSES 10-16

1. As you read this I think that Job is being a little sarcastic here. I think Job is telling them, his friends, to come back and stick the knife in a little deeper. He is saying that they can speak if they have something that is wise to say, something that is worthwhile instead of the foolishness that they have been speaking so far.
2. And in the midst of all this, we must not lose sight that Job is down, he is losing hope. He is seeing his life coming quickly to an end, and the reality is, he wants to die! In fact, Job is saying that his family is death and he waits for them to come and take him away. Not a good place to be. In fact, it is a very sad state to be in. It seems that Job is at the lowest point in his life. There is nothing good he is looking forward to except death. And guess what? Now it is time for Bildad to come and give his words, his condemnation towards Job. It is round two for Bildad in his attacks against Job! Yes, Job is in the valley of the shadow of death right now, but he will eventually get to the mountain top, but it will have to get much darker before he sees the light!

JOB 18VERSES 1-3

1. As you can see, Bildad does not stop with his insults. He sees Job as being long winded, a bag of hot air, and if he was truly innocent, his words would be few. But by using all these words, he is showing that he is guilty. In fact, Bildad wants Job to just shut up and listen to their words, listen to what they have to say.

And Bildad is very upset with Job because of the language that he was using against them, it was very harsh. Like theirs toward Job were filled with love. But they accuse Job of calling them stupid beasts. In other words, Bildad is saying, “Job, stop treating us like stupid beasts and listen to the wise counsel that we are giving to you!” The only problem with that is they were wrong, their counsel was not correct as we will see later on in the book of Job as God rebukes them for their words to Job!

VERSE 4

1. In other words Bildad is saying, “Job, just because you have torn your close, just because you are going through all this, do you really think God is going to stop the world for you?” How cold, how uncaring, how unloving they are to this man who is going through so much. And keep in mind that the reason they are acting like this is because they believe Job is going through all of this because he has sinned and refuses to get right with God, he refuses to confess his sin!

Adam Clarke put it like this in regards to trying to capture Bildad’s thought, “To say the least, afflictions are the common lot of men. Must God work a miracle in providence, in order to exempt thee from the operation of natural causes? Dost thou wish to engross all the attention and care of providence to thyself alone? What pride and insolence!”

VERSES 5-6

1. What is Bildad trying to do here? Very simply, Bildad wanted to teach Job about the life and fate of the wicked. Why would he do something like that? Because he was hoping that the light would go on in Job's head and he would get the idea that because of his sin he was wicked and he better change! Smick put it like this, "Bildad's concern, however, was to establish in Job's mind the absolute certainty that every wicked man gets paid in full, in this life, for his wicked deeds." You see, Bildad's point is that Job is wicked and thus, God can take the life of the wicked anytime He chooses! If you are not sure about that you will be as we read on!

VERSES 7-10

1. Look at this picture that Bildad is painting of the wicked and of course he is also speaking of Job. As the wicked walk they are on very unstable ground. You see, the Hebrew word for "snare" speaks of a pit that is covered by brush. He also speaks of the "noose" and of course that is speaking of a rope that if stepped on it can turn your world and you upside down. In other words, his point is that the wicked are one step way from falling into a pit and their world is turned upside down because of their sin and Bildad was pointing his finger at Job, "You are that man Job!" Nice friend!

VERSES 11-16

1. Bildad is telling Job that God is not just indiscriminately doing these things to him but that Job himself has brought all this devastation upon his own life. He is tearing apart his own soul because of his secret sin. You see, Bildad is picking up on what Job said regarding his fear of God. Remember Job's words in Job 16:12-14, where we read, "**I was at ease, but He has shattered me; He also has taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces; He has set me up for His target, His archers surround me. He pierces my heart and does not pity; He pours out my gall on the ground. He breaks me with wound upon wound; He runs at me like a warrior.**" Bildad is telling Job that he has brought this all upon himself, and that God is not his enemy.

VERSES 17-21

1. Do you see the conclusion that Bildad has come to? He is saying that because of Job's refusal to repent before God, to confess his secret sin, his actions prove he doesn't even know God, this is all an act and now that curtain is crashing down upon him. And how wrong Bildad was because Job did love God and the Lord recognized that fact back in Job chapters 1 and 2! It is as Morgan wrote, "This is a tremendously powerful delineation [explanation] of the way of wickedness. Again we have to say – all true, and therefore to be taken to heart; but not all the truth, and therefore of no meaning in the case of Job."

2. Now why in the world is God allowing all this to happen to Job? All we know is that God is testing his faith, helping Job to grow. It seems cruel, it seems unfair until we get to the end of the story and we see the blessings that God brings as Job gets to the other side of this trial or testing in his life. You see, it was a temptation to sin, but Satan did not win and God got the glory! It is as Mason wrote, "It is not Job's wickedness but his faithfulness that the Lord is disclosing through this ordeal. In fact there may be nothing our God wants more than to bring each one of us to the point where He can do with us exactly what He did with Job: hand us over with perfect confidence into the clutches of Satan, knowing that even then our faith will hold."

Again, we truly don't like going through those times of testing just as Job didn't like it. But as we do we are resting in the Lord, we are growing in Him, we are learning to trust in Him more and that is what God is doing down here. He is molding and shaping us down here to fit in up there!

You may remember the story of the Christian man who lost his job, his wife died, he lost his home, he had nothing, just a horrible situation. As he was walking down the street one day, trying to figure out what was happening to him, what God was doing, he saw a man who was working on a building and he was cutting this little stone. Curious, he asked the man what that was for, what he was doing and the man responded by saying, "I am cutting the stone down here so that it will fit in up there!" as he pointed towards the top of the building. When he heard that he realized that God was working on him down here also, so that he will fit in up there, in heaven. Folks, that is what God is doing with each of us, may we not resist but surrender to the Master and allow Him to finish His work in each of us.

3. Now here's the thing we need to keep in mind. Bildad, as well as Job's other friends were very sincere in what they were doing, the only problem was that they were sincerely wrong! May we learn to stop and bring things before God, asking for His wisdom before we speak out of our own foolish hearts and then cause more harm to others than good. As James 1:19-20 says, "**So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.**" And as Proverbs 16:3 says, "**Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.**" May we not forget that!

4. Now Job will respond to what Bildad has said to him.

JOB 19

VERSES 1-6

1. As you read this you can feel the pain of Job, how broken he was at what his friends were saying to him. I remember when I was a kid and someone would say something to me to make fun of me and I would reply back, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me!"

As cute a saying as that may be, that is not true. You see, words of hate, words of wrath, words that put people down and make fun of them, those words that come from the heart of man can and do hurt people. In fact, they can destroy people! And they are not of God! Bones may heal but hateful words spoken may never heal in the person's heart that they were spoken to!

And as you read these words, this is where Job was at. He is broken, tormented by their words. Words can be very destructive in peoples lives, be careful of what you say, may the words of Jesus come from your lips and not the words of man.

2. I think Spurgeon puts it in perspective for us as he said, “They struck at him with their hard words, as if they were breaking stones on the roadside. We ought to be very careful what we say to those who are suffering affliction and trial, for a word, though it seems to be a very little thing, will often cut far more deeply and wound far more terribly than a razor would.” May we keep that in mind as we try to comfort people, as we speak to people! Paul put it like this in Colossians 4:6 as he wrote, “**Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.**” May our words be filled with the grace of God towards others as God has extended His grace to us!

3. As Job continues on he now blames God for all that has come upon his life and He says that God is wrong for what He is doing to him. I think Job got that wrong because he was speaking out of emotion instead of the truth. Job sees himself as innocent before God no matter what these guys are saying, no matter how much they make themselves righteous before him. Thus, Job’s conclusion is that God is wrong, and not him. He can’t understand why all this has come upon him.

First of all God is never wrong, He knows everything and He is holy and He is righteous in all that He does. Job lost the perspective and many times we do the same. When things are a mess, when life is tough, when things don't work out like we think they should, we blame God and that is wrong. What we need to do is fall back on what we know about God and what He has said to us regarding the things we go through in this life. I don't always like it, but I do know what God has said in Romans 8:28, "**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**" You see, I don't always see how this is going to work out for good. I don't always feel how this is going to work out for good. But I can know that it will work out for good because God has told me and thus, I must trust in Him! That is a much better place to be than to accuse God of doing wrong!

VERSES 7-12

1. Job is speaking of all that has been taken away from him and he has nothing left. In a sense, he is saying that he has been laid out naked before all his friends and family to see! And Job just keeps traveling down this path and when he says that his crown has been removed, I don't think it is speaking of him being a king but I believe it is speaking poetically of the great wealth that was taken away from him. So not only has his friends forsaken him but so has God!

Now let's think about this for a minute. Job's perspective of God is that God is now his enemy. He has done all this to Job. But is God looking to destroy Job? Absolutely not! God wants to build Job up and yet Job has let life's circumstances, and don't get me wrong, they were very difficult, but he let them give him a wrong perspective of the situation and of God.

You see, Satan did this, even though God first had to allow it, for Satan can not do anything without God's permission. And remember that when the enemy does something, it is not to build up, but to tear down, destroy. Listen to how Jesus contrasts the enemy with Himself in John 10:10. Jesus said, "**The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**" Thus, why trust the thief that wants to destroy your life, steal it away, kill you when you can rest in Jesus who wants to give you life and not just existing but abundant life that is only found in Him!

VERSES 13-20

1. As you can see as you read this, Job is about as low as you could get. His friends, his relatives have forgotten him, forsaken him. And for those few remaining servants that he had, they even refused to listen to him anymore. No one is at his side any longer. How sad that when things got tough, those that were close to Job, left him. Proverbs 17:17 says, "**A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.**" In other words, true friends are at your side not only when things are going well, but even when things are in the pit you might say! Thus, don't run when others need you, reach out to them, as difficult as that may be at times.

2. And you know it is bad when his own wife, who wasn't too supportive in the first place when this all started, is keeping her distance from Job because of his offensive breath. Halitosis and no Scope mouthwash to be found! And then we are told that not only did his wife keep her distance, but so did his children. Now that seems to contradict what we read in Job chapter 1 where we are told that all of his children were killed. Some feel that these were younger children who were still alive, before the age of accountability, which may be, but I don't really see it that way. They are not mentioned at the close of the book with the other children Job had when this test or trial was over.

I think the Amplified Bible helps clear this passage up. It says, "**I am repulsive to my wife and loathsome to the children of my own mother.**" Job 19:17. It could be that Job was speaking of his own brothers and sisters who were ignoring him. I tend to lean more towards that being the correct way of looking at this verse.

3. Is there anyone else that can turn their back on Job? You bet, we are told that even the young children hate him, avoid him, those that he loved and they loved him at one time. They are repulsed by him. His friends, probably Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar have turned against him. And thus, we see Job not only in a horrible physical state but also a horrible spiritual state! And Job says that he has escaped death by the skin of his teeth! All these things that have come upon him have almost destroyed him!

VERSES 21-22

1. Here we see that Job can't understand why those he has loved have turned against him. Why they were persecuting him just as God was doing. He appealed to God and God had forsaken him, at least that is what he thought and now his friends have also done this! Thus, Job is crying out to them to give him a break. You see, by now a large group of people could have gathered around Job and been listening into the conversations between Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. And now this man, who was heavy-set, is just skin and bones and he can't understand why they are looking for more harm to come upon his life. He can't understand why they are not satisfied with what they see, a man who is nothing more than skin and bones.

2. As you read this, as I have said, it just seems that Job can't get any lower than he is. And for Job, like us, when we can't go any further, there is only one thing we can do, one place we can look, and that is upward towards God. And think about this for a minute. A man who is in the deepest despair is getting ready to give one of the greatest declarations of faith in the entire Bible. And we will see this in a few verses. That is amazing to me.

VERSES 23-29

1. Job starts out saying that he wishes all that he has spoken were written down in a book. "Don't worry Job, they are!"

2. Keep in mind that this is a very early book and yet we see Job speaking of resurrection, that even after he has died and his body has gone back to the dust of the earth, he will be raised up and in his body, resurrection body, and he will see God face-to-face. Now that may seem almost unbelievable that Job would make a statement regarding the resurrection of life that long ago. Obviously God had revealed this to Job and the people of his day or he could not speak like that or it was a revelation from God given to him at that point. Whatever the case, Job believed in resurrection life!

3. When Job speaks of his “**Redeemer**” he uses the Hebrew word GOEL. Now of this GOEL Morgan tells us, “The ‘Goel’ stood for another to defend his cause, to avenge wrongs done to him, and so to acquit him of all charges laid against him.” And Lawson wrote, “A redeemer was a vindicator of one unjustly wronged. He was a defender of the oppressed. A champion of the suffering. An advocate of one unjustly accused. If you were ever wronged, a redeemer would come and stand beside you as your champion and advocate.”

This of course is speaking of Jesus, the kinsmen redeemer who came to save man from his sin. Job is speaking of this redeemer, our GOEL! And please remember that Job believed in resurrection and not in reincarnation. It is important to know that we are not recycled, not reincarnated till we reach some spiritual level of godhood. Notice what Acts 1:10-11 says, “**And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.’**”

You see, it does not say that the same spirit of Jesus will come back. Many believe that the spirit of Jesus has indwelt many of the learned men. Back in 1986 full page ads across America were announcing that Christ is now here, and his name is Maitreya, for in him dwells the same spirit that indwelt Christ. Wrong! We are told in Acts that it is the “**same Jesus**” not the spirit that indwelt Jesus, that will return. That tells me that just as Christ was bodily resurrected from the dead, so too will we be resurrected bodily from the dead.

Paul makes this very point in I Corinthians 15:20-22, “**But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.**” You see, just as Christ was raised from the dead in bodily form, so too will we be raised from the dead in bodily form, we will get resurrection bodies! That is what Job is speaking of!

4. Job also knows that no matter how much evil his friends speak regarding him, he knows he is innocent. And as much as it hurts now, he knows that he will be vindicated of all their lies. And he tells them to watch out because God will take vengeance; His wrath will come upon them for what they have done to him. And we will see that, we will see God rebuke them for their error, their sin!

5. What I want you to see here, that even in the midst of this tribulation that Job was facing in his life, look at the growth that is taking place. In chapter 9, Job said, “I wish I had a mediator.” Then in chapter 16 he said, “I wish I had an advocate.” And now here in chapter 19 he says, “I know I have a Redeemer.”

Make no mistake about it; we do not go through difficult times for nothing. Here we see the powerful revelation that Job has in the midst of this difficult tribulation that he was facing. And that is the way it works for us as well! It is not my first choice, it is not really the way I would do it, but, Father knows best! You see, whenever God’s people go through tribulation and difficulty, testing and trial, they inevitably receive fresh understanding and revelation concerning the nature, the character, and the reality of our Lord.

6. Now back in round two of this fight, Zophar is going to give his two cents worth of advice. And remember the words of Job as he concluded this chapter. Job tells his friends, **“Be afraid of the sword for yourselves; For wrath brings the punishment of the sword, That you may know there is a judgment.”** Job 19:29. Job is telling his friends to watch out because their empty words will be judged and punished by God for them. He turns the table on them and it is out of this that Zophar is going to respond.

JOB 20**VERSES 1-3**

1. Even in the poetic style it is written in, you get the idea that Zophar is very upset with the words that Job used against him and his friends. And Zophar is not going to take this lying down. He is not going to just be silent and let Job walk all over him. Now why is Zophar so upset? Because Job has come against his character, he has insulted him.

Isn't that interesting? He has no problem with blasting Job but when someone says something about his character, look out! You see, as many today, Zophar was sensitive to self and very insensitive towards others. Because of that, he has to speak, he has to do to Job what Job did to him. Job needs to be put in place. Now that is not a person who is under the authority of God but under his own authority, he wants to get back and vengeance is the Lord's not ours!

VERSES 4-11

1. Zophar is comparing what happens to the wicked to what is happening in Job's life, and is saying that the wicked may prosper but only for a short time. Everything they have will be taken away from them. His children will be poor and have to beg for food. And even though they are young, full of life, the grave will take them suddenly. Understand this, when compared to eternity, all life is short, all life is but for a moment, for the just and the unjust!

But that is not what Zophar is speaking of here. He is saying that the wicked die young and the righteous die in old age. The wicked have nothing and the righteous have everything in this life. That is not true. Zophar said that “It is the evil man who dies young.” And yet look at the many Christians who have died at a young age. There is Robert Murray McCheyne, the great Scottish preacher who died at twenty-nine. There is David Brainerd, missionary to the American Indians, who died at twenty-eight. And what about Jim Eliot, missionary to the Auca Indians who died at twenty-four? You see, the point that Zophar was making was totally wrong.

2. One more point and that is Zophar seems to deny resurrection life. He believed, it seems, that once this life is over, it is over, end of story! And again, he is wrong on this point also!

VERSES 12-19

1. Now keep in mind that Zophar is speaking of the wicked, but when he does speak of the wicked in general he is speaking of Job specifically! And he is pouring out this hurtful counsel upon Job saying that the wicked may enjoy things for a short time, like you Job, but God will bring His judgment against them and upon you Job, and all will see it. What is sweet today for the wicked will become sour very quickly! Bon appétit Job!

VERSES 20-29

1. Verse 20, in the Hebrew it can be translated like this. “None of his desires will save him.” How true that is. Only the Lord can save and yet we tend to gravitate to everything else to bring us peace, to bring us joy, and it doesn’t work because apart from the Lord we will never find true peace, true joy in our lives. It is as Isaiah 59:8 says, “**The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace.**” How true that is. I don’t know if you remember this bumper sticker from several years back but it goes like this, “*KNOW GOD, KNOW PEACE! NO GOD, NO PEACE!*” Exactly!

2. Does this mean that the wicked will get away with what they have done? Absolutely not! The wicked are not going to get away with anything! God will deal with them and is dealing with them. The Holy Spirit is wooing them to Jesus and they must make that choice. If they come to Jesus then they are not seen as wicked any longer. If they don’t, then they are still wicked, dead in their trespasses and sins! It is as Morgan wrote, “In a passage thrilling with passion, he described the instability of evil gains. There is triumph, but it is short. There is a mounting up, but it is succeeded by swift vanishing. There is a sense of youth, but it becomes dust. There is a sweetness, but it becomes remorse; a swallowing down which ends in vomiting; a getting without rejoicing.” But again, even though this principle is true, it did not apply to what was happening to Job!

3. How harsh the friends of Job are. Zophar blasts Job, telling him that if he wants to continue to hide his sin, these are the things that will happen to him, besides all that has taken place already. And by the way, “Have a nice day Job!”

What is missing from Zophar and Job’s other friends as they were speaking to Job? **GRACE!** We don’t see any grace being given to Job. Listen to what Andersen had to say regarding this. He wrote, “It is worth pointing out, as a sign of the narrowness of Zophar’s beliefs, that his speech contains no hint that the wicked might repent, make amends, and regain the favour of God. Zophar has no compassion and his god has no mercy.” Let me close with these words from the Scriptures. We have read them already this evening, but in light of what Zophar and the rest of Job’s friends have said, and before we get to Job’s response next time, I think we need to end with this.

Paul reminds us in Colossians 4:6 how we are to speak. He wrote, “**Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.**” The Amplified Bible puts it like this, “**Let your speech at all times be gracious (pleasant and winsome), seasoned [as it were] with salt, [so that you may never be at a loss] to know how you ought to answer anyone [who puts a question to you].**” May our speech be always filled with the grace of God and seasoned with salt!