

Job Responds

Chapter Sixteen and **Seventeen**

Job 16:1-5

“Then Job answered and said: “I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all. Shall windy words have an end? Or what provokes you that you answer? I also could speak as you do, if you were in my place; I could join words together against you and shake my head at you. I could strengthen you with my mouth, and the solace of my lips would assuage your pain.”

Miserable Comforters

- Job responds to his friends and points out that they are “miserable comforters”.
- Job once again attempts explain to his friends that everyone has “heard” the things you are trying to communicate.
- The only problem is that the “things” that everyone has heard in relationship to suffering does not apply to Job because Job’s situation is unique to him.

- A person can almost sense the deep frustration the Job has at this point in his trial that he is enduring.
- Job's friends instead of helping with his sorrowful affliction are adding to his suffering through their words.
- "These sayings of the ancients are not strange to me; but they do not apply to my case: ye see me in affliction, ye should endeavour to console me. This ye do not; and yet ye pretend to do it! Miserable comforters are ye all."-Clarke, Adam

- Job pointed out what his friends were doing he also could to them if they were in his shoes: “I also could speak as you do, if you were in my place”-(Vs. 4)
- Job could be like them by:
 - Speaking words that destroy.-(Vs. 4)
 - Shaking his head in disappointment and disgust at their misfortune.-(Vs. 4)

- Or Job could be not like his friends and:
 - Strengthen them with his words.-(Vs. 5)
 - Bring comfort to them with words that would relieve their pain.-(Vs. 5)
- “The chief reason for being suspicious of the theology of Job’s friends is that it is so obviously lacking in mercy.”-Mason, Mike
- One of the Godly attributes that is developed in the Believer that comes out of suffering is the ability to be compassionate and merciful to others who are going through suffering themselves.

- Instead of being “miserable comforters” in harsh and judgmental words and attitudes those who have suffered are often more willing to give comfort and strength towards others that suffer.
- “ 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 affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”-2
Corinthians 1:3-4
- “Even spiritual comforts are not given us for our use alone; they, like all the gifts of God, are given that they may be distributed, or become instruments of help to others.”-
Clarke, Adam

The Power Of The Tongue

- It is such a small member of the body yet we should never underestimate the power it plays, either for good or evil, to effect the lives of others.
- James said in his letter that unless the tongue is controlled it has the power of being used to direct or misdirect the lives of others (James 3).
- God has given us the ability to communicate our thoughts through words.
- Words that we speak are powerful to build up a person or to destroy the soul of the person.

- “The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.”-**Proverbs 10:11**
- “Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding.... Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool. In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise. The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the heart of the wicked is worth little. The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of wisdom.”-**Proverbs 10:13,18:21**

Spiritual Restoration

- What Job's friends should have done was try to restore Job in spirit of gentleness and humility not a spirit of condemnation and superiority.
- The ultimate goal is always restoration!
- "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted."-**Galatians 6:1**
- Let the ministers of the Gospel learn from Paul how to deal with those who have sinned. 'Brethren,' he says, 'if any man be overtaken with a fault, do not aggravate his grief, do not scold him, do not condemn him, but lift him up and gently restore his faith.'-Luther, Martin

Job 16:6-14

“If I speak, my pain is not assuaged, and if I forbear, how much of it leaves me? Surely now God has worn me out; he has made desolate all my company. And he has shriveled me up, which is a witness against me, and my leanness has risen up against me; it testifies to my face. He has torn me in his wrath and hated me; he has gnashed his teeth at me; my adversary sharpens his eyes against me.”

“Men have gaped at me with their mouth; they have struck me insolently on the cheek; they mass themselves together against me. God gives me up to the ungodly and casts me into the hands of the wicked. I was at ease, and he broke me apart; he seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces; he set me up as his target; his archers surround me. He slashes open my kidneys and does not spare; he pours out my gall on the ground. He breaks me with breach upon breach; he runs upon me like a warrior.”

Job Laments

- Once again Job is in a dark place where even words fail to be expressed in a way that brings relief from his suffering.
- Job feels like he is stuck between two options: If Job speaks and expresses his feelings he finds no relief from his unsympathetic friends; yet silence does nothing to ease his suffering.
- That is the way it often is when we are going through a trial. We can't quite articulate what we are truly experiencing in words or people misunderstand what we trying to say.

Job's Conflict

- Job knew that his struggle was not with his friends but with God.
- The conflict that Job was struggling with was why had God abandoned him when he knew that he had done nothing sinful to deserve such suffering.
- Of course we know that God had not abandoned him nor does he abandon us when we can't see his hand working out his plan for our lives.

Job Is Worn Out

- Job says that “God has worn” him out though the trial he was experiencing.
- Job felt that God was pouring out His wrath upon him for some unknown sin that he had committed.
- In Job 10:2, Job wished that God would reveal why He was contending against him.
- Job’s friends had felt that Job was attacking God. Job felt that God was attacking him.

- “He sees himself as the object of God’s wrath. He pictures God as a savage beast, hunting him down, and tearing him apart limb from limb. Our suffering can give us a distorted view of God, can’t it?”-Lawson, Steven
- Job sees God attacking him like a predator goes after the weak and tired.
- Job describes the condition of his health as “shriveled” and “my leanness has risen up against me; it testifies to my face.”

- Job sees himself as the lone isolated straggler in the herd and God has zeroed in on him.-(Vs.9)
 - God hates Job and has torn him in his wrath.-(Vs.9)
 - God has gnashed His teeth like a wild animal.-(Vs.9)
 - God grabs Job by the neck tearing him into pieces.-(Vs. 12)
 - God is a hunter and Job is the target of God's arrows.-(Vs.12,13)
 - God guts Job like a slain animal.-(Vs.13)

- “It is infinitely painful to Job that God is now inexplicably acting like an enemy... Only a literal translation can do justice to the savagery of Job’s description of God’s vicious attack. He is like a ferocious beast (16:9f.), a traitor (16:11), a wrestler (16:12a, b), an archer (12c, 13a), a swordsman (13b, 14).”-Andersen, Francis
- Elsewhere in Job he refers to God as his Redeemer (19:25), his hope (13:15), and his salvation (13:16).
- It is human to vacillate in our emotions when undergoing a trial. Job teaches us that It’s O.K. to be human!

A Type Of Christ

- Some people see Job as a type for Jesus in chapter a 16.
- Types are pictures or object lessons by which God has taught His redemptive plan. They are a shadow of things to come.(Col. 2:17) Dake Bible
- Job is seen to be a type for the suffering that Jesus would endure during His own trial.

- “Our Saviour was so served according to the letter; they gaped upon him, mowed at him, buffeted him on the face, gathered themselves together against him, as here. Hence some of the ancients call Job a figure and type of Christ, who was thus dealt with both literally and also figuratively.”-Trapp, John

Job 16:15-17

“I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin and have laid my strength in the dust. My face is red with weeping, and on my eyelids is a deep darkness, although there is no violence in my hands, and my prayer is pure.”

Pure Prayer

- Job says that his prayer is singularly focused upon God and God alone.
- Job is in deep mourning over the loss of his Friend.
- Job cannot understand what he has done that his Friend would turn on him and attack him.

- “There is one thing that he will not let go – the testimony of his conscience, that he has lived as the friend of God, not as his enemy. He is certain that he does not belong to the class whose sins and punishment his friends have set before him for a warning. To this certainty he clings as to a plank in the devouring waves. Deep is his anguish, but he is conscience-free.”-Bradley

Job 16:18-22

“O earth, cover not my blood, and let my cry find no resting place. Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and he who testifies for me is on high. My friends scorn me; my eye pours out tears to God, that he would argue the case of a man with God, as a son of man does with his neighbor. For when a few years have come I shall go the way from which I shall not return.”

Blood

- Job makes a claim that if he were to die before being vindicated that his blood would cry out from the earth.
- This is what God said to Cain about his brother Abel: “And the LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. ”-**Genesis 4:10**
- Just as Abel was killed for being righteous and his blood cried out for vindication so also will Job’s blood cry out after he is dead.

God is Job's Witness

- A few verses before showed Job's mental and spiritual state as despairing towards God Who is attacking him in His wrath.
- Now God is Job's advocate Who testifies on behalf of Job.
- God is going to argue on Job's behalf like a man "does with his neighbor".
- In anticipation of the Messiah, Job essentially said: "Christ, who is God and man, will plead my cause with his Father; he can prevail, because he is God equal to the Father; he will undertake it, because he will be man like to me." - Trapp, John

- Job had faith in God as his Redeemer, his salvation and his hope which may have brought him a little comfort during his trial.
- We as Believers today have so much more available to us in light of the finished work of Jesus and His ascension to the right hand of God where He intercedes continually on our behalf (**1 John 2:1-2; Hebrews 7:25**)

Jesus Is Our Propitiation

- There are only two options:
 1. A person can stand before the holy God of the universe and present his works before Him on his own.
 2. A person can stand before the holy God of the universe and let Jesus advocate on his behalf.
- “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”-**2 Corinthians 5:21**
- The key word is “propitiation” for our sins. Before Jesus, the offering was made to cover sin, but after Jesus’ death and resurrection our sins now have been not only covered but made void.
- “This is the effect of the shed blood of Christ: it has satisfied all Divine claims against us, and has redeemed us from sin unto God, separating us unto God forever with an absolute, infinite tie.”-Newell

Five Parts To Our Salvation

1. Christ's propitiatory work toward God through His blood: bearing the guilt and condemnation of our sins.
2. Christ's identification with us as connected with Adam, "becoming sin for us," and "our old man" being crucified with Christ.
3. The Holy Spirit's whole work in us, as "the Spirit of grace," involving conviction, regeneration, and sanctification.
4. Christ's present work in Heaven; Interceding for us should we sin, as our Advocate with the Father.
5. Christ's second coming to redeem our bodies, and receive us to Himself in glory: The Rapture.

• Newell

Job 17:1-2

“My spirit is broken; my days are extinct;
the graveyard is ready for me.

Surely there are mockers about me,
and my eye dwells on their provocation.”

Job's Spirit Is Broken

- In chapter 16, Job describe himself as being “worn out” by the trial that he was enduring.
- He continues to describe his mental and spiritual state as being “broken” in spirit.
- Job senses at this point that death is knocking on the door. He says that his “days are extinct”.
- Job's friends couldn't convince Job of their theology that “sin always causes suffering and righteous people do not suffer” instead they became dogmatic and added to Job's misery by “mocking” him.

Job 17:3-5

“Lay down a pledge for me with you; who is there who will put up security for me? Since you have closed their hearts to understanding, therefore you will not let them triumph. He who informs against his friends to get a share of their property the eyes of his children will fail.”

Job Seeks God

- The Message Bible is useful in this case to get the gist of Job's meaning in verse 3, "O God, pledge your support for me. Give it to me in writing, with your signature".-Petersen, Eugene
- Job cried out to God to make things right in their relationship that Job believed he had lost with God. His friends won't come to his defense so Job asks God too.
- This would be a new idea to Job's friends that believed it was Job's responsibility to repent and make things right between himself and God.
- In Job's theology God is the initiator of restoration between man and God; in Job's friend's theology man is to be the initiator of restoration.

God Searches For Man

- Adam and Eve's broken fellowship with God set the standard for all mankind who sin against God.
- The guilt and shame that people feel when out of relationship with God drives them to hide from Him even though He sees everything.
- “And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. And Adam said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”-**Genesis 3:8,10**

- Adam heard God but did not respond.
- “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us...” (Ephesians 2:4) calls out to man with a deep concern for man and his position before Him.
- But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” -**Genesis 3:9**
- “Why, when I came, was there no man? Why, when I called, was there none to answer?” -**Isaiah 50:2**
- “The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one.” -**Psalms 14:2-3**

- “for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”-**Luke 19:10**
- It is easier to hide and not confront God with where we are because it can be very painful to acknowledge our sin but there is no other way for healing to take place.
- There were consequences for man’s Fall but God did not condemn man instead He initiated the conversation and provided for man through the offering of skins to cover them which positioned man into a right relationship.
- The Lord made the first bloody sacrifice Himself to restore the relationship with man.
- This demonstrates that God is a merciful, gracious, and compassionate God. Who loves man and provides righteousness for him even when man is at his worst.

Closed Hearts

- Job believes that God has closed his friends “hearts to understanding”.
- We have all heard the phrase “closed mind” but a “closed heart” is an interesting idea.
- Paul prayed in Ephesians, “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know...”-Ephesians 1:17,18
- The word ‘*heart*’ in Scripture signifies the very core and centre of life, where the intelligence has its post of observation, where the stores of experience are laid up, and the thoughts have their fountain.” (Alford)

- “But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”-Romans 10:9-10
- A person who believes in his heart doesn't simply know certain facts about the Bible but he believes to the very core of his being in the promises of God and trusts his life with those promises.
- Job's understanding at this point is that God has blinded his friends in their heart which affected their understanding. The mouth will confess what the heart understands and the mouth of Job's friends are confessing their blindness.

A Proverb

- “Verse 5 is a proverb. Job was reminding his counselors of the dire consequences of slander.”-Smick, Elmer
- Slander is an accusation wickedly uttered with the sole purpose or effect of ruining the reputation of another.
- It usually involves saying false statements about an individual however Biblically, it can also involve saying truthful things that ruin the reputation of someone.

Job 17:6-9

“He has made me a byword of the peoples,
and I am one before whom men spit. My eye has
grown dim from vexation and all my members are
like a shadow. The upright are appalled at this, and
the innocent stirs himself up against the godless. Yet
the righteous holds to his way, and he who has
clean hands grows stronger and stronger.”

Loss Of Dignity

- Job speaks of his humiliation and loss of dignity.
- People whisper about his condition and look upon him with disgust.
- Job once again places God at the center of his trial holding Him responsible for the loss of dignity he is now experiencing.

The Righteous Person

- Job says the righteous person is appalled by the notion that God is causing Job's humiliation.
- The word that Job uses for "appalled" literally means to "stunned in horror" like a deer in headlights. Job's friends are in his view as among those who are stunned by this righteous man's affliction.
- "Our own humiliation is inevitable. The frailty of humanity and the fallen nature of this world combine together to make the humiliation of man certain, yet it may come in many forms. Our humiliation may come to us through our own sin, through our own weaknesses, through circumstances beyond our control, or by what others put upon us."-Guzik, David

- Job and his friends disagreed to the reason that he was suffering but both agreed that God had his hand in the situation.
- No matter the direness of any situation we can have hope that God is always good and has his loving hand in control of our lives.
- “My afflictions and calamities have become a subject of general conversation, so that my poverty and affliction are proverbial. *As poor as Job, As afflicted as Job*, are proverbs that have even reached our times and are still in use.” –Clarke, Adame

- Job deep in his heart believes himself to be innocent and “holds to his way” and knows that God will restore him.
- “In several of these verses Job is supposed to speak prophetically of his future restoration, and of the good which religious society should derive from the history of his original affluence, consequent poverty and affliction, and final restoration to health, peace, and prosperity.”- Clarke, Adame
- “You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”-**James 5:11**

Holding To the Way

- “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.”-**Meyer, F.B.**

Job 17:10-16

“But you, come on again, all of you, and I shall not find a wise man among you. My days are past; my plans are broken off, the desires of my heart. They make night into day: ‘The light,’ they say, ‘is near to the darkness.’ If I hope for Sheol as my house, if I make my bed in darkness,”

“if I say to the pit, ‘You are my father,’ and to the worm, ‘My mother,’ or ‘My sister,’ where then is my hope? Who will see my hope? Will it go down to the bars of Sheol? Shall we descend together into the dust?”

Job Needs Hope

- Job is sensing hopelessness in his situation.
- He says the his, “...plans are broken off, the desires of my heart.”-(Vs.11)
- Job is feeling that his “days are past” and the purposeful plans that he had for his life have come up empty.

- Job is echoing what I believe many individuals in this world experience as days are going by.
- There Lord has built into the universe since the Fall a level of discontentment that should drive people to seek Him but can also drive people away from Him.
- “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope”-**Romans 8:20**

Delight In The Lord

- “Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”-Psalm 37:4
- Obviously when Psalm 34:4, says that God will give us our “desires” it doesn’t mean that God aligns His desire for our life with our desires.
- God is the source of our creation therefore we become fulfilled when we align our desires with His desire for our life.
- Plans based on our own desires outside of God’s plan will lead to discontentment.

- Here is comments about the phrase “Delight yourself in the Lord”:
- “Expect all thy happiness *from* him, and seek it *in* him.”-Clarke, Adame
- “It includes a deliberate redirection of one’s emotions... [such as] Paul and Silas in prison, singing as well as praying.”-Kidner, Derek
- “We cannot delight thus without effort. We must withdraw our eager desires from the things of earth, fastening and fixing them on Him.” –Meyer, F.B.

- “In a certain sense imitate the wicked; they delight in their portion — take care to delight in yours, and so far from envying you will pity them.”-Spurgeon, Charles
- “The reason many apparent Christians do not delight in God is that they do not know him very well, and the reason they do not know him very well is that they do not spend time with him.”-Boice, James Montgomery
- “Do not think first of the desires of thy heart, but think first of delighting thyself in thy God. If thou hast accepted him as thy Lord, he is thine; so delight in him, and then he will give thee the desires of thy heart.”-Spurgeon, Charles
- Have a stubborn fixed delight in God even if you have no feelings or energy to do so and the Lord will make His desires our desires.

Job And Hope

- Job asks the question of God: “where then is my hope?” .-(Vs. 15).
- Biblical hope is a confidence and an expectation that what God has promised and said will come to pass. It is different than the worlds idea of hope in people, in things, or in wealth but is hope in the creator and sustainer of the universe.
- “ Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, therefore I will hope in him.”-**Lamentations 3:19-24**

- Jeremiah says that when he focuses on the affliction his soul is cast down within him, but when he “calls to mind” the mercies of God he has hope.
- “I love the way the psalmists wrestle and fight and struggle to maintain their hope in God. This is a normal Christian experience while we are still just saved sinners. And we better own up to it, or else we may grow sluggish and negligent in our fight for hope. And that is very dangerous”.-Piper, John
- Job is fighting with every ounce of energy he has to maintain hope in the Lord which according to Piper is a “normal experience” in a Fallen world.