

Job Replies To **Eliphaz**

Chapter Six and Seven

Job 6:1-7

“Then Job answered and said: “Oh that my vexation were weighed, and all my calamity laid in the balances! For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words have been rash. For the arrows of the Almighty are in me; my spirit drinks their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me. Does the wild donkey bray when he has grass, or the ox low over his fodder? Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt, or is there any taste in the juice of the mallow? My appetite refuses to touch them; they are as food that is loathsome to me.”

Job Laments His Suffering

- Job begins his response to Eliphaz lamenting that his complaining is nothing compared to the suffering that he is enduring.
- His affliction was hard to bear because, "...the terrors of God are arrayed against me." (vs.4)
- This is the first time in the Book of Job that he names God as the direct cause of his suffering.
- "The God he had known and the God he now experiences seemed irreconcilable."-Rowley

- Job explains to Eliphaz that his words have been “rash” because of the intensity of the suffering that has come upon him.
- Job was so grieved by his predicament that the only way that he could express himself was to complain against the situation.
- “Job refused to accept his trials without something to make them bearable, namely, complaining. Similarly a person refuses tasteless food without salt (vv. 6-7).”-Constable

- “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**

Job 6:8-13

“Oh that I might have my request, and that God would fulfill my hope, that it would please God to crush me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off! This would be my comfort; I would even exult in pain unsparing, for I have not denied the words of the Holy One. What is my strength, that I should wait? And what is my end, that I should be patient? Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh bronze? Have I any help in me, when resource is driven from me?”

Job's Is Desperate

- Job resumes the subject of his complaint from chapter 3, where he lamented the day of his birth and believed that it would have been better for him that he died.
- Job is so desperate that he had been requesting God to end his suffering by taking his life.
- This he says, would be a “comfort”(Vs.10).

Job Proclaims His Innocence

- In response to Eliphaz who claimed Job had sinned, Job says, “...I have not denied the words of the Holy One.” (vs.10)
- Although Job emphatically denied the words of Eliphaz, he proclaims to Eliphaz that he had kept the word of God.
- Job believed that he was innocent because he had kept the “words” of God.

Job Seeks Meaning

- Job was seeking meaning and purpose in what he was suffering.
- Job desired to know the “end” that the Lord intended for him in his suffering.
- “Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how'.”
— Viktor E. Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning

Job 6:14-23

“He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty. My brothers are treacherous as a torrent-bed, as torrential streams that pass away, which are dark with ice, and where the snow hides itself. When they melt, they disappear; when it is hot, they vanish from their place. The caravans turn aside from their course; they go up into the waste and perish.”

“The caravans of Tema look, the travelers of Sheba hope. They are ashamed because they were confident; they come there and are disappointed. For you have now become nothing; you see my calamity and are afraid. Have I said, ‘Make me a gift’? Or, ‘From your wealth offer a bribe for me’? Or, ‘Deliver me from the adversary’s hand’? Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of the ruthless’?”

Job Attacks Eliphaz

- Job had been lamenting about God Who was the cause of his suffering now he takes a direct attack of Eliphaz.
- Job believes Eliphaz is not showing him compassion as a friend should.
- “Job's friends should have encouraged and supported him. Instead they proved as disappointing as a wadi. A wadi is a streambed that is full of water in the rainy season, but when the heat of summer comes it dries up completely. Job replied that his friends were no help in his distress.”- Constable

- Job tells Eliphaz that he has, “...now become nothing...” (vs.21)
- Eliphaz attacked Job’s complaining now Job attacks Eliphaz’s bad attempt to comfort him.
- Job perceived that Eliphaz must have been afraid of him and his calamity.
- We are not told why Eliphaz was afraid. Maybe he felt if he comforted him, God would view him as approving of his sin and would punish him as well.

Job 6:24-30

“Teach me, and I will be silent; make me understand how I have gone astray. How forceful are upright words! But what does reproof from you reprove? Do you think that you can reprove words, when the speech of a despairing man is wind? You would even cast lots over the fatherless, and bargain over your friend. But now, be pleased to look at me, for I will not lie to your face. Please turn; let no injustice be done. Turn now; my vindication is at stake. Is there any injustice on my tongue? Cannot my palate discern the cause of calamity?”

Job Wants To Know His Sin

- Job invited Eliphaz to identify the sin for which they believed God was punishing him.
- Eliphaz had only insinuated that Job must have sinned in some way for this affliction to be upon him.
- Job says, “Teach me...make me understand how I have gone astray”. (vs.24)

- “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.”-Mason

Job 7:1-5

“Has not man a hard service on earth, and are not his days like the days of a hired hand? Like a slave who longs for the shadow, and like a hired hand who looks for his wages, so I am allotted months of emptiness, and nights of misery are apportioned to me. When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’ But the night is long, and I am full of tossing till the dawn. My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt; my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh.”

Life Is Hard

- Job continues his rebuttal to Eliphaz and points to the constant struggle and difficulties that man must endure in this life.
- Job emphasizes that man has “hard service” on earth.
- The word that is used for “hard service” can be translated as “warfare”.

- The word for “hard service” according to Adam Clarke and others is descriptive of military service.
- Young’s Literal Translation has, **“Is there not a warfare to man on earth?”**
- The Orthodox Jewish Bible says, **“Is there not a tzava (forced hard service in the army) to enosh (man) upon earth?”**
- Job is communicating that the struggle that he is engaged in is a battle that he has been forced into or drafted unwillingly.

Man Is Hired Hand

- Life is hard and man is a hired hand in the struggle.
- Job compares himself to a hired servant and concludes that he was in a worse condition.
- The only comparison between Job's life and with the day of a hired worker is that both are a long hard struggle and both desire for it to end.

- A day in the life of Job is shaped by months of **emptiness** and nights of **misery**.
- Job cannot sleep because his flesh is clothed with worms and dirt and his skin hardens, then breaks out.
- The Scripture says, “Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much...”.-**Ecclesiastes 5:12**
- Unlike the laborer who rests after a long hard day Job cannot find sleep because of the misery of his physical condition.

Life Is A Struggle

- In the third chapter of Genesis, history takes a turn when Adam and Eve rebelled against God and nothing has been the same since.
- Adam and Eve's act of rebellion changed their relationship with God and changed forever all mankind who are now born in sin with the exception of Jesus.
- This sin is what introduced misery, pain, wars, and death into the world and into the lives of every human being.

- Our Earliest ancestors recognized and experienced that life is a struggle.
- Lamech named his son, "...Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from **our work and from the painful toil of our hands.**"-Genesis 5:29
- Moses said in the 90th Psalm, "The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; **yet their span is but toil and trouble;**"-Psalm 90:10
- Jesus said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."-Matthew 11:28

Job 7:6-10

“My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle and come to their end without hope. “Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good. The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more; while your eyes are on me, I shall be gone. As the cloud fades and vanishes, so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up; he returns no more to his house, nor does his place know him anymore.”

Job is Losing Hope

- Job is losing hope because he is starting to entertain the belief that God is done with him.
- Job says, “the eye of him who sees me will behold me no more”.
- Job had run out of hope as a weaver's shuttle runs out of thread.
- Although Job is losing hope, he is not giving up all hope because he continues his conversation with God.

- “Throughout his sufferings, Job did not turn away from God. Often people undergoing severe affliction do forsake Him. However, Job kept God in view and kept talking to God, even though he did not know what to ask, which was a major part of his torment. I believe this accounts for his ability to maintain his sanity and to come through his adversity finally. It is when people abandon God in their suffering that they get into serious trouble spiritually.”-Constable

Job 7:11-16

“Therefore I will not I restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Am I the sea, or a sea monster, that you set a guard over me? When I say, ‘My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,’ then you scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions, so that I would choose strangling and death rather than my bones. I loathe my life; I would not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are a breath.”

Job Complains To God

- Job says he will complain, “in the **bitterness** of my soul.”
- He desires that God would leave him alone and let him die and quit tormenting him in his dreams.
- Bitterness is a settled hostility that poisons the whole inner man. It leads to wrath and anger that is the explosion on the outside of what is going on with our inner feelings.
- Job is at a point in his suffering that he lashes out in complaint of the way God is handling his life.
- He speaks to the only One Who can give him relief, yet Job felt God was tormenting him for no apparent reason.

- “So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, “Is this Naomi?” She said to them, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?”-**Ruth 1:19-21**

Naomi Had Bitterness

- Naomi's name means "pleasant".
- Mara means "bitter".
- "So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the **Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me**. I went away full, and **the LORD has brought me back empty**. Why call me Naomi, when **the LORD has testified against me** and **the Almighty has brought calamity upon me**?" -Ruth 1:19-21

- “See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled”- **Hebrews 12:15**
- Someone has said, “Bitterness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.”- Unknown
- A heart without grace is poison. When we miss grace a weed of bitterness potentially begins to grow expressing itself in anger and un-forgiveness.

- God's grace does not fail but we can fail in receiving and allowing His grace to work in our lives and the lives of others.
- Crabgrass takes over the yard if attention is not given to it; it sprouts and affects everything around its original root. It chokes out the good grass. **The weed of bitterness will choke out the grace of God within the heart affecting every area of our lives.**

- Our ability to appreciate God's grace depends on the knowledge of our own ugly sinfulness. When we recognize the ugliness of our sin we can appreciate the wonderful amazing grace of God. When we experience God's grace we take sides with God against our sin.
- "If the biggest sinner you know isn't you, then you don't know yourself very well."-Larroux

- Paul identified himself as the chief of sinners:
- This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”-1 Timothy 1:15
- Paul doesn't say that he was a sinner and now has become free of sin. Paul clarifies for all time that he views himself as chief of sinners.

- “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”-**Romans 8:5-6**
- According to Paul, That whatever occupies our mind controls our life—to focus on unforgiveness and bitterness results in death, if our mind is focused on what God’s Word says, there is life and peace.
- Job did not have the benefit of all the wisdom given to us in the written Word of God.

Job 7:17-21

“ What is man, that you make so much of him, and that you set your heart on him, visit him every morning and test him every moment? How long will you not look away from me, nor leave me alone till I swallow my spit? If I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher of mankind? Why have you made me your mark? Why have I become a burden to you? Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? For now I shall lie in the earth; you will seek me, but I shall not be.”

What Is Man

- David is overwhelmed by the wonder of creation, asks, “what is man that you are mindful of him...”?-**Psalm 8:4**
- Job is overwhelmed by the conflict he has with God’s subjecting him to a test and asks, “What is man, that you make so much of him, and that you set your heart on him, visit him every morning and test him every moment?”-**Job 7:17**
- David worshipped God for His protection, provision, and position in working with man in creation.

- Job complained to God for His lack of protection, provision, and position that God was subjecting him.
- Job says to God, “Why have you made me your mark? Why have I become a burden to you?”-**Job 7:20**
- Job’s affliction is causing him to feel himself to be a burden to what feels like an unloving and uncaring God.

What Sin

- Job is trying to figure out what sin he did to deserve the suffering he was enduring.
- Job wants to know from God what sin he did to God Himself.
- Job also desires to know if he sinned before God why doesn't God forgive and restore him.

- "We should nevertheless be mistaken if we thought there were sin here in the expressions by which Job describes God's hostility against himself. ... But the sin is that he dwells upon these doubting questions, and thus attributes apparent mercilessness and injustice to God."
- Job believes himself to be innocent of sin but the sin that traps Job and many of us is lowering the Character of God to our miniscule view and then put ourselves in the place of judging God.

God Is Not Intimidated

- Some believers fear praying as blunt and honest as Job had done to God.
- God is not intimidated by prayers of anguish and I believe Job's prayer of complaint is a model for believers today.
- The key is that when Job prayed he was honestly seeking an answer from God not scoffing nor mocking God.

- “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”-**Mathew 7:7-11**
- God understood Job's annoyed feelings and did not destroy him for his bitter words.

- “All Job has known about God he still believes. But God’s inexplicable ways have his mind perplexed to the breaking-point. Job is in the right; but he does not know that God is watching with silent compassion and admiration until the test is fully done and it is time to state His approval publicly.” -Andersen

Job And Eliphaz

- In conclusion of this first dialogue with Eliphaz, Job reacted to his friends attempt to comfort with hostility.
- Eliphaz assumed a position of having superior knowledge based on his personal experience.
- In order to keep his theology intact, Eliphaz needed Job to be a huge sinner in order for God's retribution to be upon him.
- Job did not appreciate Eliphaz making him look like a greater sinner in order for his theology to work.