

Job 3-5 – Thursday, February 15th, 2018

Job 3 -- 1 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. 2 And Job spoke, and said: 3 “May the day perish on which I was born, And the night in which it was said, ‘A male child is conceived.’

- Chapter three begins where the battle begins in Job’s mind and soul, such that, he is now entering into the arena of expression.
- By that I mean, here-to-fore, the battle has been external and as such he has been processing the adversity that’s befallen him.
- Now, he opens his mouth and gives voice to his utter despair, as he expresses himself and what he thinks about his suffering.

Oswald Chambers in *Baffled to Fight Better* says it this way, “Facing facts as they are produces despair, not frenzy, but real downright despair, and God never blames a man for despair. The man who thinks must be pessimistic; thinking can never produce optimism. The wisest man that ever lived said that “he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.” The basis of things is not reasonable, but wild and tragic, and to face things as they are brings a man to the ordeal of despair.”

4 May that day be darkness; May God above not seek it, Nor the light shine upon it. 5 May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; May a cloud settle on it; May the blackness of the day terrify it. 6 As for that night, may darkness seize it; May it not rejoice among the days of the year, May it not come into the number of the months. 7 Oh, may that night be barren! May no joyful shout come into it! 8 May those curse it who curse the day, Those who are ready to arouse Leviathan. 9 May the stars of its morning be dark; May it look for light, but have none, And not see the dawning of the day; 10 Because it did not shut up the doors of my mother’s womb, Nor hide sorrow from my eyes. 11 “Why did I not die at birth? Why did I not perish when I came from the womb? 12 Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts, that I should nurse? 13 For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep; Then I would have been at rest 14 With kings and counselors of the earth, Who built ruins for themselves, 15 Or with princes who had gold, Who filled their houses with silver; 16 Or why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, Like infants who never saw light? 17 There the wicked cease from troubling, And there the weary are at rest. 18 There the prisoners rest together; They do not hear the voice of the oppressor. 19 The small and great are there, And the servant is free from his master. 20 “Why is light given to him who is in misery, And life to the bitter of soul, 21 Who long for death, but it does not come, And search for it more than hidden treasures; 22 Who rejoice exceedingly, And are glad when they can find the grave? 23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, And whom God has hedged in? 24 For my sighing comes before I eat, And my groanings pour out like water. 25 For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, And what I dreaded has happened to me. 26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes.”

- Couple of thoughts here before we bring the Bible study to an end, the first of which has to do with what Job is expressing here.
- While he will never curse his God, he will and does curse the day he was born, wishing that something would have thwarted it.
- Secondly, Job has no idea what God is doing in and through this, though as the author of the book will yet future understand it.

Oswald Chambers of this wrote, “Satan’s aim is to make a man believe that God is cruel and that things are all wrong; but when a man strikes deepest in agony and turns deliberately to the God manifested in Jesus Christ, he will find Him to be the answer to all his problems.”

- I should probably warn you starting in chapter three through to chapter thirty-one is riddled with his friends falsely accusing him.
- Specifically that he has secret sin in his life, which is the reason God has deemed fit to severely discipline Job because of it.
- In response to their constant barrage of false accusations and attacks, Job tries unsuccessfully to defend himself and His God.

Job 4 -- 1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: 2 “If one attempts a word with you, will you become weary? But who can withhold himself from speaking? 3 Surely you have instructed many, And you have strengthened weak hands. 4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, And you have strengthened the feeble knees; 5 But now it comes upon you, and you are weary; It touches you, and you are troubled.

- Chapter four begins with Eliphaz attempting to be tactful in asking Job rhetorically if he can speak into Job’s life concerning this.
- In verse two, it’s almost as if he’s telling Job that he just can’t keep quiet any longer such that he has to say something to Job.
- It doesn’t really matter if Job is going to let him talk because he will anyway and in so doing he says, practice what you preach.

6 Is not your reverence your confidence? And the integrity of your ways your hope? 7 “Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright ever cut off? 8 Even as I have seen, Those who plow iniquity And sow trouble reap the same. 9 By the blast of God they perish, And by the breath of His anger they are consumed. 10 The roaring of the lion, The voice of the fierce lion, And the teeth of the young lions are broken. 11 The old lion perishes for lack of prey, And the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

- What Eliphaz says here is very interesting for several reasons one of which is he insinuates Job must have a guilty conscience.
- In affect, he’s saying that he would display more confidence in his innocence and integrity before God, but he’s not doing that.
- The false accusation is that Job knows he’s not innocent, which is why Job is suffering, and as such should just confess his sin.

Oswald Chambers says it this way, “This is not true. Job is suffering because God and Satan have made a battleground of his soul, without giving him any warning or any explanation. It is an easy thing to argue from precedent because it makes everything simple, but it is a risky thing to do. Give God “elbow room”; let Him come into His universe as He pleases.

12 "Now a word was secretly brought to me, And my ear received a whisper of it. 13 In disquieting thoughts from the visions of the night, When deep sleep falls on men, 14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, Which made all my bones shake. 15 Then a spirit passed before my face; The hair on my body stood up. 16 It stood still, But I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; There was silence; Then I heard a voice saying: 17 'Can a mortal be more righteous than God? Can a man be more pure than his Maker? 18 If He puts no trust in His servants, If He charges His angels with error, 19 How much more those who dwell in houses of clay, Whose foundation is in the dust, Who are crushed before a moth? 20 They are broken in pieces from morning till evening; They perish forever, with no one regarding. 21 Does not their own excellence go away? They die, even without wisdom.'

- I have to say that I am so thankful God included this in the record of the book of Job, because it speaks to an important matter.
- Namely that of well-intentioned brothers and sisters in Christ speaking on behalf of God as if they were given a Word from God.
- If you really think about it, Eliphaz has to take this posture with Job because if he doesn't then his theology is totally dismantled.

Of this Eliphaz's theology, Chambers writes, "He can tell Job everything about God, but when we come to the facts of the case we find that the man who is criticizing Job is not fit to sit down beside him. ...If the study of the Book of Job is making us reverent with what we don't understand, we are gaining insight. There is suffering before which you cannot say a word; you cannot preach "the gospel of temperament"; all you can do is to remain dumb and leave room for God to come in as He likes. The point for us is—Do I believe in God apart from my reasoning about Him? Theology is a great thing, so is a man's creed; but God is greater than either, and the next greatest thing is my relationship to Him."

G. Campbell Morgan said it this way, "Eliphaz had no knowledge of those secret councils in heaven, and was making the mistake of attempting to press all things into the compass of his philosophy."

Job 5 -- 1 "Call out now; Is there anyone who will answer you? And to which of the holy ones will you turn? 2 For wrath kills a foolish man, And envy slays a simple one. 3 I have seen the foolish taking root, But suddenly I cursed his dwelling place. 4 His sons are far from safety, They are crushed in the gate, And there is no deliverer. 5 Because the hungry eat up his harvest, Taking it even from the thorns, And a snare snatches their substance. 6 For affliction does not come from the dust, Nor does trouble spring from the ground; 7 Yet man is born to trouble, As the sparks fly upward.

- What Eliphaz does here is he goes from telling Job what he thinks God has told him to telling Job what he should do about this.
- Specifically he's telling Job to ask anyone about whether or not what he's saying is true, as they'll tell him the same exact thing.
- It's what he goes on to say in verse four that's particularly cruel, because he tells Job his sons were killed because of his folly.

8 "But as for me, I would seek God, And to God I would commit my cause— 9 Who does great things, and unsearchable, Marvelous things without number. 10 He gives rain on the earth, And sends waters on the fields. 11 He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety. 12 He frustrates the devices of the crafty, So that their hands cannot carry out their plans. 13 He catches the wise in their own craftiness, And the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them. 14 They meet with darkness in the daytime, And grope at noontime as in the night. 15 But He saves the needy from the sword, From the mouth of the mighty, And from their hand. 16 So the poor have hope, And injustice shuts her mouth.

- If you didn't think it could get any worse think again because now Eliphaz is telling Job that if he were him, this is what he'd do.
- In Eliphaz saying, "if I were you I would be seeking God and committing this to Him" he's actually accusing Job of doing neither.
- I would venture to say that we all have an Eliphaz in our lives, or worse yet, we have been an Eliphaz in someone else's life.

- There's something else here that I want to point out before we get to the end of the chapter and it has to do with verse thirteen.
- Notice Eliphaz insinuates Job is being chastised because he is being wise in his own eyes as well as both crafty and cunning.
- The reason I point this out is that Eliphaz is absolutely right, however, he's misapplying what's right in the wrong way and time.

I like how one commentator said it, "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."

1 Corinthians 3:19–20 -- 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; 20 and again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."

17 "Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. 18 For He bruises, but He binds up; He wounds, but His hands make whole. 19 He shall deliver you in six troubles, Yes, in seven no evil shall touch you. 20 In famine He shall redeem you from death, And in war from the power of the sword. 21 You shall be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, And you shall not be afraid of destruction when it comes. 22 You shall laugh at destruction and famine, And you shall not be afraid of the beasts of the earth. 23 For you shall have a covenant with the stones of the field, And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you. 24 You shall know that your tent is in peace; You shall visit your dwelling and find nothing amiss. 25 You shall also know that your descendants shall be many, And your offspring like the grass of the earth. 26 You shall come to the grave at a full age, As a sheaf of grain ripens in its season. 27 Behold, this we have searched out; It is true. Hear it, and know for yourself."

- Couple of thoughts here at the end of the chapter, the first of which is Eliphaz is so convinced that he's right and Job is wrong.
- You'll forgive me for noticing an irony here in what he tells Job in verse twenty-one as it relates to the scourge of the tongue.
- Isn't it ironic that it's the very tongue of Eliphaz that is scourging and even tormenting Job who is already tormented enough?

Adam Clarke said it best, "Perhaps no evil is more dreadful than the scourge of the tongue: evil-speaking, detraction, backbiting, [defamation], slander, tale-bearing, whispering, and scandalizing, are some of the terms which we use when endeavoring to express the [sinister] influence and effects of that member, which is a world of fire, kindled from the nethermost hell."

James 3:1-13 - 1 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. 3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. 5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. 7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. 11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

- This ties into the second thought in closing and it has to do with God having the final word concerning this tongue of Eliphaz's.

Job 42:7-9 - 7 And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that 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. 8 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." 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD commanded them; for the LORD had accepted Job.