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Job 16

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Job 16.

Topics.

- I could join words together against you; miserable comforters.
- God has torn me in His wrath and gnashed His teeth at me.
- Men struck me on the cheek and massed themselves against me.
- I was at ease and God broke me apart and set me up as His target.
- My witness is in heaven and He who testifies for me is on High.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the book of Job is considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece it is an honest discussion of why God allows good people to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, reveals God's sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's four friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone. In the depths of agony, he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion against the truth that He alone is wise (Job chpts. 38-41). Yet he vindicated Job's trust in him (chpt. 42), proving that genuine faith cannot be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 2000 and 500 B.C.

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HELPFUL FACTS: before reading Job, it is helpful to understand when Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu are speaking they are not speaking, "thus sayeth the LORD", they are simply giving their opinions on how they personally perceive things to be. Amongst their conversations there is truth and wisdom, but it must be kept in mind not everything they are saying is true or even wise, in fact God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and tells them they have spoken foolishness, but Job has spoken what is right (Job 42:7-9). The book of Job is not about doctrinal truth, but human suffering and the questions regarding God that arise during a person's calamity and pain.

JOB SPEAKS

JOB 16:1-6

I could Join Words Together against You; Miserable Comforters.

- **Job 16:1-6:** Then Job answered (Eliphaz) and said: ²"I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all. ³Shall windy words have an end? Or what provokes you that you answer? ⁴I 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. ⁵I could strengthen you with my mouth, and the solace of my lips would assuage your pain. ⁶"If I speak, my pain is not assuaged, and if I forbear, how much of it leaves me?"

The previous chapter Eliphaz basically attacks Job accusing him of:

- Being foolish and saying that all he had spoken has simply been wind in the air.

- He was forsaking the fear of God and thinks he is the only one with wisdom.
- He was condemning himself with his own mouth.

Eliphaz is a perfect example of a legalist; he had no interest in comforting Job, but instead was only interested in sprouting off his own reasoning's and opinions and to make it even worse his opinions and accusations have no truth in them. He is also a good example of a religious man with a cold and harsh heart puffed up in his own importance and sense of superiority that looks down upon others as the lessor. Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar are meant to be Job's friends, but so far there has not been one word of compassion or mercy come from their speeches, all they seem to want to do is prove Job is wrong in his theology and they are right (who would want friends like them)? Job tells Eliphaz he is simply joining words together to make a good argument. How often does this happen? Eliphaz is totally oblivious to Job's real need, he is so absorbed in theology he does not see that in Job's situation manifesting the fruits of the Spirit, love, kindness, compassion and mercy would be what God would desire and the right way to counsel and comfort Job.

JOB 16:7-9

God has Torn Me in His Wrath and Gnashed His Teeth at Me.

- **Job 16:7-9:** Surely now God has worn me out; he has made desolate all my company.
⁸And he has shriveled me up, which is a witness against me, and my leanness has risen up against me; it testifies to my face. ⁹He has torn me in his wrath and hated me; he has gnashed his teeth at me; my adversary (enemy in KJV) sharpens his eyes against me.

The adversary in the following expression, "My adversary (enemy in KJV) sharpens his eyes against me," refers to God, Job sees God as the source of all his troubles. These verses shine a brilliant light upon the strength and honesty of Job's faith. He says that God is his adversary and his enemy and that in anger, hatred and wrath God with gnashing teeth has dashed him to pieces. Who of us would be game enough to talk to God like this, but the beautiful thing is, God does not hold it against Job, showing that God is not a legalistic doctrinal book carved in stone, but a loving Father who understands our hurts, frustrations and disappointments and responds not to legalistic dogmatic theology but according to His love, kindness and compassion. When we get to the end of the story of Job God says to Eliphaz and his two friends (Bildad and Zophar) (Job 42:9) "My anger burns against you for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has (Job 42:7). Added to this God blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning. (Job 42:12). Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations and died, an old man, and full of days. (Job 42:16-17).

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JOB 16:10-11

Men Struck Me on the Cheek and Massed themselves Against Me.

- **Job 16:10-11:** Men have gaped at me with their mouth; they have struck me insolently on the cheek; they mass themselves together against me. ¹¹God gives me up to the ungodly and casts me into the hands of the wicked.

Here is an interesting insight into Job's faith: as Christians we often feel we can only acknowledge good events in our lives as being from the hand of God, but Job's faith was not like this. He saw every event that came to him as being from the hand of God. He even says it was from God's hand that the wicked strike him and speak evil of him. To Job there was not a moment or event in his life that God was not in control of. Job lived in God, he had this enormous faith that whether a situation was good

or bad God was implementing it and in control of it, which means for him there was never a moment in his life that he was without God. This type of faith is not unique to Job, but common to the faithful of the Old Testament they saw God as the Saviour and King of their life and every circumstance, good or bad as being in the hand of God. Habakkuk a faithful prophet when praying began his prayer by saying, "Even though his body trembles at the power of the LORD and he feels weak and feeble because of the enemies who are coming to invade his land, he will quietly wait for the day of trouble." He then ends his prayer with the following great words of faith.

- Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. (Hab. 3:17-19).

Habakkuk as did all the faithful of the Old Testament made the LORD their fortress and refuge by making him their greatest love, their best thought and the passion of their heart and mind and rested in the knowledge that if everything fails in this life they would be raised to be with the Lord in eternal glory where happiness everlasting dwells and while living in this life rested in the confidence and faith that the Lord was with them by his Spirit, his love and his grace.

A personal note: I have seen a man born with no legs and no arms (Nick Vujicic) who to the natural mind would appear a mistake made by God, but this man lived his life before God worshipped him and kept a right attitude as did David, Job Habakkuk and all the faithful of old. Nick is an amazing testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and went on to become one of the world's greatest motivational speakers. He is an encouragement to hundreds of thousands of people who are suffering their own difficult circumstances. I have heard testimonies of teenage girls who have suffered absolute horror, terror and abuse find the love of God and go on to become the source of comfort to many hurting girls in similar circumstances and help them live a life of mental and emotional freedom and joy. We may not all reach hundreds of people, but if we take the right attitude to difficult circumstance, we can all be an amazing testimony to God and to those who know us. While on this side of eternity no-one is exempt from trouble and difficulty, it is the attitude and who we go through it with that makes the difference. God does not promise freedom from trouble but He does promise comfort, love and strength to cope and grow from it.

JOB 16:12-16

I was at Ease and God Broke Me apart and Set Me up as His Target.

- **Job 16:12-16:** I (Job) was at ease, and he (the LORD) broke me apart; he seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces; he set me up as his target; ¹³his archers surround me. He slashes open my kidneys and does not spare; he pours out my gall on the ground. ¹⁴He breaks me with breach upon breach; he runs upon me like a warrior. ¹⁵I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin and have laid my strength in the dust. ¹⁶My face is red with weeping, and on my eyelids is deep darkness.

Job pictures God as a fierce warrior on a battle field that has seized his enemy by his neck and with his sword slashed him open so that his inward parts pour out on the ground and he is left lying on the dust of the earth to die. This may sound harsh, but consider the following, Job's face is red from crying day and night for days on end, he is in deep grief, suffering, depression and despair.

- Sabeans have taken his oxen and donkeys. (Job 1:13-15).
- Fire has burned up his sheep and consumed his servants. (Job 1:16).

- Chaldeans have taken his camels and struck down his servants. (Job 1:17).
- A great wind has destroyed the house of his sons and daughters and they all died. (Job 1:18-19).
- Loathsome sores have covered his body from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head. (Job 2:7-8).

Before we judge Job too harshly we should first imagine how we would feel if we woke up to the news that our children had been killed; every possession we had was destroyed; all the money in our bank account was gone and our doctor told us we had cancer or some other major illness and then ask ourselves how would we respond? Job's response shines a brilliant light upon his amazing and great faith. After hearing all this horrific news and being struck with sores all over his body he falls to the ground and worshiped. (Job 1:20) and said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return, the LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. (Job 1:21). Even when his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die." He said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak, shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 2:9-10). We are told that in the face of all this overwhelming disaster and his afflictions Job did not sin with his lips or charge God with wrong. (Job 1:22) (Job 2:9-10).

The story of Job shines a brilliant light upon the fickleness of human life. For years Job lived at ease, he was rich, successful, had a good reputation throughout the land and helped the poor, until one particular night he goes to bed with a peaceful mind and wakes up to the most horrific news and his life is utterly changed in every way for the worse. Overnight he has gone from a life of ease to one of suffering, from riches to poverty, from being well respected throughout the land to being mocked and scorned and from perfect health to scabs and boils covering his body, such is the fickleness of human life. This fickleness and uncertainty of human life and its mortality should motivate all the inhabitants of the earth dwelling in bodies of clay to seek God and eternal life since no one knows when death will come to their door to carry them to the darkness of the grave.

JOB 16:17-22

My Witness is in Heaven and He who Testifies for Me is on High.

- **Job 16:17-22:** although there is no violence in my hands, and my prayer is pure. ¹⁸"O earth, cover not my blood, and let my cry find no resting place. ¹⁹Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and he who testifies for me is on high. ²⁰My friends scorn me; my eye pours out tears to God, ²¹that he would argue the case of a man with God, as a son of man does with his neighbor. ²²For when a few years have come I shall go the way from which I shall not return.

Jobs character, integrity and great faith: Job had not done any acts of violence and his prayer is pure before God. God Himself said Job was His servant a blameless and upright man who feared God and turned away from evil and that there was not a man like him on the earth who holds fast his integrity even though Satan had incited Him against Job to destroy him without reason. (Job 1:1) (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3).

Blameless in this context does not mean that Job was without sin, it simply means he was a decent man who did no harm to another human and that he helped the poor and did right before God. There has only ever been one man who walked on earth without sin before God and his name was not Job, but the Lord Jesus Christ. If anyone of us could attain to the glorious state of living a sin free life Christ died for no reason.

Job's friends scorn him: it is amazing that Job still calls Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar his friends (perhaps a courtesy) so far not one of them has spoken any words of compassion or kindness. Even while he is pouring out tears, they are arguing theology with him. Before Job goes to the grave he wished that it was possible for his so called friends to argue his case with God as a man does with his neighbour, presumably so they would find out from God that he was innocent and not the gross and wicked sinner they believed him to be and accused him of.

FOOTNOTE: always keep in mind that Job is not speaking, "thus saith the LORD," but giving his own personal opinion concerning suffering and because it is his own viewpoint it should be remembered that even though much of what he says maybe true it does not always mean that his reasoning and suppositions are always according to the word of the LORD.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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