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Job 6

(2019)

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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 6.

Topics.

- Arrows of the Almighty are in me; my spirit drinks their poison.
- Oh, that God would fulfil my hope to crush me, and cut me off.
- He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes fear of the Almighty.
- My brothers are treacherous as torrential streams that pass away.
- Have I said, offer me a gift, or riches, or deliver me from my enemies.
- Teach me, and make me understand how I have gone astray.
- Cannot my palate discern the cause of calamity?

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.

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 6:1-4

Arrows of the Almighty are in Me; My Spirit Drinks their Poison.

- **Job 6:1-4:** Then Job answered and said: ²"Oh that my vexation were weighed, and all my calamity laid in the balances! ³For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words have been rash (swallowed up). ⁴For the arrows of the Almighty are in me; my spirit drinks their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me.

Rash (swallowed up in the KJV) comes from the Hebrew word (*luwa`*) and means to gulp, figuratively it carries the idea of being rash meaning impulsive, reckless, foolish and thoughtless. Though Job at this time Job is suicidal, he realizes that some of the things he has said, he has spoken

without giving his words any thought. Since all that he had established during his life had come to ruin and his sickness was causing him such overwhelming suffering it is understandable that he would say such things, especially since he is in such deep despair and depression, that in the previous chapters he wishes he had been still born and that the LORD would strike him dead.

NOTICE: Job sees his suffering as coming from God not Satan and God never tell Job that He is not causing his suffering. This is because this angel named Satan (which simply means in the Hebrew language one who acts as an adversary) not only has absolutely no power unless God grants it to him, but is also acting according to the will of God. For further information on Satan see the title:

- Satan in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

JOB 6:5-10

Oh, that God would Fulfil My Hope to Crush Me, and Cut Me Off.

- **Job 6:5-10:** Does the wild donkey bray when he has grass, or the ox low over his fodder?
⁶Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt, or is there any taste in the juice of the mallow? ⁷My (Job's) appetite refuses to touch them; they are as food that is loathsome to me. ⁸Oh that I might have my request, and that God would fulfill my hope, ⁹that it would please God to crush me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off! ¹⁰This would be my comfort; I would even exult in pain unsparing, for I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

Job is saying, no animal complains when they have food that they enjoy eating, but Job in his sickness has lost his taste buds, even good food has no flavour to him, it is all bland and flavourless and to make matters worse he has no appetite.

Job wishes God would take his life: in Job's unbearable suffering he believes that his only comfort and hope is that God would answer his request and take his life, even if death was extremely painful Job wishes he would die. He has no fear of death, (for him it is the ultimate comfort) because he knows he has not denied the LORD. Death to the faithful of the Old Testament was seen as a place of rest and peace where one slept free from labour and toil until the day of the resurrection when the angel of the Lord sounds the last trump and all the faithful laying in the grave will be raised to immortality, eternal life and everlasting happiness.

NOTICE: Jobs words, "Please God crush me and cut me off from life," (v9) nowhere throughout the book of Job does he or his friends ever credit Satan as being the one who is inflicting Job with his afflictions and even when God does come to Job at the end of the book God Himself never scolds Job for believing He was the cause of all his calamity, pain, suffering and affliction.

JOB 6:11-14

Whoever withholds Kindness, Forsakes Fear of the Almighty.

- **Job 6:11-14:** What is my strength, that I should wait? And what is my end, that I should be patient? ¹²Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh bronze? ¹³Have I any help in me, when resource is driven from me? ¹⁴He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.

The expression, "is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh bronze?" refers to Jobs physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strength. He is saying that he is not like a stone or bronze that has no feeling and feels no weakness. Job, in these verses asks two questions:

1. What benefit is there in being patient and waiting until he dies, while suffering such overwhelming sorrow and grief?
2. How can he be expected to suffer such pain and affliction, especially when whatever strength he did have is now completely drained from him?

Job's statement, "He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty" (v14) no-doubt refers to the friends mentioned in the following verses and partly stems from Eliphaz conversation in the previous chapter. Eliphaz basically told Job that the reason all his afflictions had come upon him was because he had committed some form of sin and wrong-doing. Obviously when a true friend sees their friend suffering as Job was their first words would be words of mercy, kindness and compassion and not words of accusation accusing their suffering friend of being a great sinner and wrong-doer. A friend who lacks compassion and does not show kindness to their friends in trouble or need, do not understand that the heart of God is love and His will is that we would show compassion, mercy and grace especially to our brothers and sisters in the faith.

JOB 6:15-21

My Brothers are Treacherous as Torrential Streams.

- **Job 6:15-21:** My brothers are treacherous as a torrent-bed, as torrential streams that pass away, ¹⁶which are dark with ice, and where the snow hides itself. ¹⁷When they melt, they disappear; when it is hot, they vanish from their place. ¹⁸The caravans turn aside from their course; they go up into the waste and perish. ¹⁹The caravans of Tema look, the travelers of Sheba hope. ²⁰They are ashamed because they were confident; they come there and are disappointed. ²¹For you have now become nothing; you see my calamity and are afraid.

Tema: was one of the twelve sons of Ishmael and progenitor of a tribe (Gen. 25:12-16). It was also a place at the north-eastern edge of the Arabian Desert where the above tribe lived (Job 6:18-20) (Isaiah 21:14) (Jer. 25:23).

Sheba: (or the Sabeans), are particularly known by the Queen of Sheba (the Queen of the kingdom of the south) who when she heard of the fame of King Solomon traveled to Jerusalem to ask him questions. The Sabeans are pictured in the Bible as traders in precious stones, incense and slaves. The travellers from Tema and Sheba come to visit Job in the hope and confidence that they can do business with him, but when they see he has come to ruin and is in great suffering rather than go to him and at least say hello and offer some words of comfort and caring they realise there is nothing to be gained and are so disappointed and ashamed of him that they avoid him altogether this is why Job called them treacherous brothers, because when they saw that he had been stripped of all his wealth and riches they shunned him and turn away.

JOB 6:22-23

Offer Me a Gift, or Riches, or Deliver Me from My Enemies.

- **Job 6:22-23:** Have I said, 'Make me a gift'? Or, 'From your (his friends travelling from Tema and Sheba) wealth offer a bribe for me'? ²³Or, 'Deliver me from the adversary's hand'? Or, 'Redeem me from the hand of the ruthless'?

Job wonders why his friends turn away from him since he has not asked any of them for gifts, money or even to protect him from his enemies. It is certain some never visited Job because he was of no financial benefit to them anymore, but there may also have been others who felt so overwhelmed with Jobs sorrow that they not only felt utterly powerless to

help him, but also had no idea what they could say to comfort him so they thought it better or perhaps felt that it was easier to avoid him. Since it is common for many to feel this way, we can learn an important principle from Job's experience. It is natural to feel helpless when a friend is suffering great loss, often the human tendency is to shy away simply because a person feels so helpless and does not know what to do or say, but just being there with the person is the comfort. Job wasn't looking for clever answers or even gifts he just wanted to know his friends cared in these circumstances a silent hug speaks far louder than any word that can be spoken, just being with the person is the comfort.

JOB 6:24-27

Teach Me, and make Me Understand how I have Gone Astray.

- **Job 6:24-27:** "Teach me, and I will be silent; make me understand how I have gone astray.
²⁵How forceful are upright words! But what does reproof from you (Eliphaz) reprove?
²⁶Do you think that you can reprove words, when the speech of a despairing man is wind?
²⁷You would even cast lots over the fatherless, and bargain over your friend.

Job tells Eliphaz that it is easy to spout off clichés and words that sound righteous and are forceful and aggressive and asks him to explain what he has actually said wrong or done wrong then he will be silent. He then asks Eliphaz why would he take the words of a sick man who wishes he was dead so seriously and turn them into legalistic theological debate? Job's statement, "Eliphaz would cast lots over the fatherless, and bargain over his friend." Shines a spotlight upon how much Job felt that Eliphaz was lacking in empathy and compassion. Eliphaz is so lacking of care and kind-heartedness that he is making Job feel worse not better.

JOB 6:28-30

Cannot My Palate Discern the Cause of Calamity?

- **Job 6:28-30:** "But now, be pleased to look at me, for I will not lie to your (Eliphaz) face.
²⁹Please turn; let no injustice be done. Turn now; my vindication is at stake. ³⁰Is there any injustice on my tongue? Cannot my palate discern the cause of calamity?"

Job says he is able to discern when he is speaking against God, and challenges Eliphaz to show him what he has said wrong. The expression, "cannot my palate discern the cause of calamity," means that Job is able to tell the difference between being disciplined by God because of sin and wrong-doing and when he is suffering for no apparent reason. If we are consciously and deliberately sinning against God and bringing dishonour to his Holy name and happen to be suffering many troubles or find we lack joy, contentment and peace in our heart it would be safe to suppose that we are under God's discipline. In contrast to this God said Job was a righteous and blameless man and Job himself knew he had never done any wrong. These two facts shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that not all suffering, troubles and hardships are a result of some hidden personal sin or some outward act of wrongdoing.

SUMMARY

Job is in the worst state he has ever experienced and his supposed friend Eliphaz accuses him of saying and speaking incorrectly and puts Job in a position of having to prove he has not spoken or done wrong before God. It is important to keep in mind that we only know Job is blameless before God because the writer of the book tells us, but Eliphaz does not know that God considers Job a righteous and blameless man. Based upon the conversations of Eliphaz and his following statements:

- Who was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off? ⁸As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same. ⁹By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed. (Job 4:7-9).
- God sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety. ¹²He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success. (Job 5:11-12).

Eliphaz rightly believed that the ruin of all sinners is directly linked to their sin they kill themselves by some form of sinful craving, vice or lust, but it seems from this foundation he goes onto to reason that the good are blessed and only the wicked suffer. His underlying mindset appears to be that Job has done some foolish and sinful thing, by which he has brought all his suffering and grief upon himself; even though there was no evidence that Job had committed any type of wickedness. At the judgment seat of Christ Eliphaz belief that the good are blessed and only the wicked suffer will certainly be true, but it is not true of the corrupted and fallen world we live in today. Asaph, a faithful man of God in Psalm seventy-three wrote:

- I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. ⁵They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind. (Psalm 73:3-5).
- Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches. (Psalm 73:12).

Asaph after pondering the fact that some who deny God do live in ease and prosper in this life eventually sees that their end is the darkness of the grave and with this insight finishes the Psalm with the following triumphant words:

- Whom have I in heaven but you? There is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. ²⁶My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ²⁷For behold, those who are far from you (those who deny God) shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. (Psalm 73:253-27).

Even though Job suffered great affliction his attitude was:

- Though he slays me, yet will I trust in him (Job 13:15).
- I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God (Job 19:25-26).

HABAKKUK'S GREAT FAITH

Habakkuk in his prayer said, "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" and ended 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).

We make the Lord our fortress and refuge, in the same way that Asaph, Job and Habakkuk did, which is by making him our greatest love, our best thought and the passion of our heart and mind and rest in the knowledge if everything fails in this life we will be raised to be with the Lord in eternal glory where happiness everlasting dwells and in this life rest in the confidence and faith that the Lord is with us 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 Asaph, Job and Habakkuk. He 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 and eternal life and everlasting happiness at the end.

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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