

Job's Comforters



JOB 4-5

- what not to say ¹
 - *I know how you feel*
 - *Cheer up! This too will pass*
 - *Remember, God is good*
 - *At least you...*
 - *Have you tried...?*

WRONG ASSUMPTION #1

If you go God's way, all will be fine (4:1-11)

- ▶ true comfort (vv. 1-5) ²
- ▶ false assumptions (vv. 6-11) ³
 - o the innocent don't suffer
 - o the wicked do suffer

WRONG ASSUMPTION #2

No one can be right before God (4:12-5:1)

- ▶ spooky encounter (vv. 12-16)
- ▶ sinister message (vv. 17-5:1)

- o the question (v. 17)
- o mere mortals (vv. 18-21)
- o no mediator (v. 1) ⁴

WRONG ASSUMPTION #3

All suffering of believers is God's discipline for sin (5:17-27)

- ▶ the discipline of the Almighty (v. 17) ⁵
- ▶ the deliverance of the Almighty (v. 18-27)

1) how to cope with miserable comforters ⁶

2) how to avoid being a miserable comforter

- o no Satan
- o no future
- o no cross
- o no love

¹ Job 16:2; 19:2; 42:7

² Hebrews 12:12

³ Galatians 6:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7; Psalm 73; Eliphaz came from the region of Edom, particularly Teman (Job 4:1), known for its cultural wisdom (Jeremiah 49:7).

⁴ In the book of Job, a cry goes out for a mediator (e.g. 9:33; 16:19-21; 19:23-27); ultimately he is Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

⁵ Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:5-6; Psalm 32:1-5

⁶ Weary of their rhetoric Job will say, "I have heard many things like these; you are miserable comforters, all of you!" (Job 16:2).

Job 4-5

4¹ Then Eliphaz the Temanite replied:

2 "If someone ventures a word with you, will you be impatient? But who can keep from speaking?

3 Think how you have instructed many, how you have strengthened feeble hands.

4 Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees.

5 But now trouble comes to you, and you are discouraged; it strikes you, and you are dismayed.

6 Should not your piety be your confidence and your blameless ways your hope?

7 "Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed?

8 As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it.

9 At the breath of God they perish; at the blast of his anger they are no more.

10 The lions may roar and growl, yet the teeth of the great lions are broken.

11 The lion perishes for lack of prey, and the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

12 "A word was secretly brought to me, my ears caught a whisper of it.

13 Amid disquieting dreams in the night, when deep sleep falls on people,

14 fear and trembling seized me and made all my bones shake.

15 A spirit glided past my face, and the hair on my body stood on end.

16 It stopped, but I could not tell what it was. A form stood before my eyes, and I heard a hushed voice:

17 'Can a mortal be more righteous than God? Can even a strong man be more pure than his Maker?

18 If God places no trust in his servants, if he charges his angels with error,

19 how much more those who live in houses of clay, whose foundations are in the dust, who are crushed more readily than a moth!

20 Between dawn and dusk they are broken to pieces; unnoticed, they perish forever.

21 Are not the cords of their tent pulled up, so that they die without wisdom?'

5¹ "Call if you will, but who will answer you? To which of the holy ones will you turn?

2 Resentment kills a fool, and envy slays the simple.

3 I myself have seen a fool taking root, but suddenly his house was cursed.

4 His children are far from safety, crushed in court without a defender.

5 The hungry consume his harvest, taking it even from among thorns, and the thirsty pant after his wealth.

6 For hardship does not spring from the soil, nor does trouble sprout from the ground.

7 Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward.

8 "But if I were you, I would appeal to God; I would lay my cause before him.

9 He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted.

10 He provides rain for the earth; he sends water on the countryside.

11 The lowly he sets on high, and those who mourn are lifted to safety.

12 He thwarts the plans of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success.

13 He catches the wise in their craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are swept away.

14 Darkness comes upon them in the daytime; at noon they grope as in the night.

15 He saves the needy from the sword in their mouth; he saves them from the clutches of the powerful.

16 So the poor have hope, and injustice shuts its mouth.

17 "Blessed is the one whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.

18 For he wounds, but he also binds up; he injures, but his hands also heal.

19 From six calamities he will rescue you; in seven no harm will touch you.

20 In famine he will deliver you from death, and in battle from the stroke of the sword.

21 You will be protected from the lash of the tongue, and need not fear when destruction comes.

22 You will laugh at destruction and famine, and need not fear the wild animals.

23 For you will have a covenant with the stones of the field, and the wild animals will be at peace with you.

24 You will know that your tent is secure; you will take stock of your property and find nothing missing.

25 You will know that your children will be many, and your descendants like the grass of the earth.

26 You will come to the grave in full vigor, like sheaves gathered in season.

27 "We have examined this, and it is true. So hear it and apply it to yourself."