

In our last podcast, we were covering Job's response to Eliphaz. He chastised Eliphaz, and his friends, or being worthless and providing no relief, no help, no comfort, and no repose from his suffering. He pointed out that they were driven by fear, a deep inner fear that if there was no "cause" for what is happening then perhaps something similar might just happen to them. The truth is that they do not need to fear for the deepest form of fellowship, the fellowship of Christ's suffering, is reserved for those who desperately desire to know God for who He is and not for who we want Him to be. But that is not Eliphaz or his friends. They love their religion; they love their if/then God. Let's pick back up with Job's chastisement of the "Boys" in **EP26 Yahweh According to Job, Job 6:15-30**.

Job 6:15-23

My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi, like the torrents of wadis which vanish, which are turbid because of ice into which the snow melts. When they become waterless, they are silent, when it is hot, they vanish from their place. The paths of their course wind along, they go up into nothing and perish. The caravans of Tema looked, the travelers of Sheba hoped for them. They were disappointed for they had trusted, they came there and were confounded.

Indeed, you have now become such, you see a terror and are afraid. Have I said, "Give me" or, "Offer a bribe for me from your wealth," or, "Deliver me from the hand of the adversary," or, "Redeem me from the hand of the tyrants"?

If it is natural that one should be careful and kind with a friend who is in despair, then all it should have taken is one look at Job and the "boys" should have been pulling out all stops to care for him and to be kind to him. It makes no sense to kick a broken man in the teeth and then tell him to shut up and stop moaning, especially if the broken man is your friend. But that is how the "boys" are treating Job. When Job says they accuse him without any fear of **Shaday** (Almighty), it suggests they are scarily close to the type of behavior that would qualify to have them dragged before the Assembly in accusation and judgment.

It is clear, Job expected something far different. His comparison of them to the unreliable seasonal brook makes it clear that he was so thankful and hopeful when his friends arrived. He was so relieved when they came and sat with him for seven days. He thought they would perhaps render some respite from his constant torment, if even just a pleasant distraction. But no, his hopes were dashed as soon as they opened their mouths. They came with no water to cool his parched tongue, and there would be no relief for him. Their behavior confused and befuddled him.

After setting the stage, Job drops the poetry and says straight up, *"Indeed, you have now become such, (like those dried-out brooks), you see a terror and are afraid."*

Then Job drills into the motivations of their heart, the reason for their reaction to him. They were afraid that he wanted from them, that he expected them to give him something, to take some sort of responsibility for him, in the most practical of ways, in ways that might even cost them something more than a desert journey.

It is sad how they cared more about themselves and their religion than they did their "friend" who was

sitting in despair.

But Job never asked for anything, he begged for nothing. Job was not even secretly expecting anything from them in terms of their wealth, provision, influence, or other resources. He was simply hoping they would be real friends, faithful friends; those who understood and would walk with him through this time of terror.

Why Are You Afraid?

There are so many layers of fear in the depth of the heart that get exposed when someone goes through these situations, not just in their own heart, but in the hearts of those who surround them, those who do not want to be touched by the “evil” they see happening to their friend or loved one.

In my Storm as well as my Lesson, I saw fear in so many people, and it expressed itself in all sorts of imbalanced ways. Like Job, I had people, family even, try and convince me that I was the problem. They came up with so many things of my past and different scenarios of things that I had said and done, whether real or imagined, imputed all kinds of motivations, mostly ugly, and some inferred and others outright asserted that I must be the cause.

They began to challenge my departure from the if/then theology. They mocked my view of faith and the idea that we can walk in the Spirit of God doing what God tell us to do, going where He tells us to go, and saying what He tells us to say. They did not believe God needed to speak to us of such common and practical issues of life. *“After all, God gave us a brain, and He expects us to use it.”* Pretty sure we have all heard that one before. They searched and searched for a “cause” to my suffering because they could not handle the reason. It scared them to death. If there was not a “cause,” it meant that this type of *“unsparing pain”* and suffering might happen to them.

Then there were some people who wanted to feel important, and they got involved and acted like they cared, but then I never saw them or heard from them again. They had their moment, so they could feel good about themselves, and then they just moved on afraid of involving themselves any further.

There were a few who were flat-out opportunists, who used this moment to set me aside and to elevate themselves, to sit in the seats where I had once sat, and to garnish favor and honor from the people who had once honored me. They must have thought that if they did not strike while the iron was hot, if they did not move while the opportunity was open, they might miss their opportunity of relevance.

As with Eliphaz, there were those who seemed to feel that I believed they had lived beneath me, and that I was the one who kept them down and would not let them achieve their rightful place in my life, and they relished in seeing me get my share of forced humility.

These were others whom I had closely mentored, those to whom I had given my heart, my soul, and my resources. I had helped them up when they fell, I nurtured when they were sick, I carried them when they could not walk, I employed when they were unemployable, and I trained them in better ways to do their job, when they were frustrated with their inability to advance in their careers. I opened my doors when every other door in their lives was shut.

Our relationships seemed tight and secure, and I honestly thought I could always depend upon them, that they would be there for me if I ever needed them. They were what I would describe as my “best friends.” But suddenly, they too were watching me closely for my failures, so they could confirm all manner of rumors about the “cause” of the destruction that was happening to my life.

They had always loved to hang out with me, go places together, share meals together, engage in deep intimate fellowship, explore all the many places that God had led us, and we had all sorts of fun together. But suddenly they were convinced that I must be evil and that I was getting my comeuppance. They became convinced that instead of receiving kindness from me, that I had mistreated, controlled, and manipulated them. This became their truth.

There were others who acted like my friends, but were just users, and for years had no problem taking advantage of all I was willing to give. I never asked for anything from them and never begged for their resources, nor did I ask them to deliver me from the hand of the adversary or redeem from the hand of the tyrants. Like Job's friends, they had more than enough resources to reach out and provide some relief and care for me in my situation, and it would have been little more than a drop in their bucket of resources. But it was clear they were too afraid.

These were those whom the Scriptures describe as hiding behind their great walls of their wealth, as if their wealth, and not **Shaday** (Almighty), was their strong fortress of protection.¹ I knew they did not want anyone "taking advantage" of them, so I would never have dreamed of asking them for help. In their worldview, people are to get what they earn, and they are to work hard for it no matter what they need to do. Charity is only given when you get the proper tax deduction or some public accolades.

It is a twisted worldview that sounds noble with its work ethic, but it is a perspective imbedded in deep selfishness and fear. They believe that no matter what God may be doing, a person must get up on their own, tighten their belt, fight on and earn what they hope to obtain.

The Fear Within

When someone goes through intense judgment, people seem compelled to find a "cause" because they need to protect their own belief that if they are good and not bad (or at least not as bad as the person undergoing judgment) then such destruction will not happen to them. That is the fundamental tenant of the if/then God. The truth is that from God's perspective, everyone has plenty of "causes" to justify judgment (remember, **Only God is Good**), so it is easy to fall into the trap of pointing the finger and whispering the rumor.²

During my Storm and Lesson, people voiced that if this was how God treated me, they wanted nothing to do with that kind of God, they wanted no part of Him. So, they avoided me altogether and returned to their if/then God.

Some people I knew started making sure they were being good and doing right so there would be no "cause" for anything like this to happen to them. They retreated from their understanding of the **Substitution Principle** via the **Design Point**, and they went back to managing their lives through sin management and through arduous attempts at being "good" instead of living by grace through faith.

Fear does strange things to a person; it changes them into someone you never really knew. Fear is a powerful, albeit largely irrational, mental, and emotional psychosis from which all humanity suffers. All it takes is the right blend of circumstances and its effects can be crippling, if not cruel and inhuman. Fear is the antithesis of faith and is always fighting for control over our soul. Fear is deeply personal to each individual and it tries to remain hidden. Like the demon who appeared to Eliphaz, though fear has no form

¹ **Proverbs 18:11**

² **Matthew 19:17; Luke 18:19**

it has substance, and can be clearly seen and heard.

Worthless Religion

Job 6:15-23

My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi, like the torrents of wadis which vanish, which are turbid because of ice into which the snow melts. When they become waterless, they are silent, when it is hot, they vanish from their place. The paths of their course wind along, they go up into nothing and perish. The caravans of Tema looked, the travelers of Sheba hoped for them. They were disappointed for they had trusted, they came there and were confounded.

Indeed, you have now become such, you see a terror and are afraid.

Job was telling his friends that their religious preaching was worthless, for it provided no hope, no resource, and no relief. And more than their preaching, they themselves were worthless and provided no hope, no resource, and no relief. They were just scared little boys who do not know what to do when someone's world is turn upside down and inside out.

Job 6:24-27

Teach me, and I will be silent; and show me how I have erred. How painful are honest words!

But what does your argument prove? Do you intend to reprove words, when the words of one in despair belong to the wind? You would even be caused to be casting [lots] for the orphans and bartering over your friend.

Job is tethered to reality. He admits that honest words are painful to hear, and though such words would add to his own pain, he is willing to hear it, that is if Eliphaz had something worthy to say, something instructional. Even if those honest words demonstrated how Job had wandered astray, he would listen.

Proverbs 27:6, 9

Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

Oil and perfume make the heart glad, so a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.

"... the words of one in despair belong to the wind." Job makes an awesome point. The truth is that Eliphaz is wrapped up in himself. Much of what he has said is a projection of his own issues and his own fears. Job is like, "really, you are going to fight with the words of man who is venting over the fact that he has lost so much, so suddenly, and even now is sitting before you oozing with puss and pain. Are you so insecure and afraid that you are going to pick a fight with my words?"

"But what does your argument prove? Do you intend to reprove words, when the words of one in

despair belong to the wind?"

When a person is hurting, in tormenting pain, they may say a lot of things that they might not otherwise say. But to hold that against them, to use their venting as a weapon against them to try to prove that they are the "cause" is immature and ridiculous. In times like this, we should be with our friend, our loved one, without an agenda other than to be their friend or loved one. We need to understand that God is working to undo so much within them, and it is beyond scary; it is terrifying. Therefore, it is ok for them to vent and express how they feel. In fact, we should expect it.

After all, when a person knows you love them, because you consider them more important than yourself and prioritize their needs over your right to give them a piece of your mind, they will likely, over time, give you access to correct or teach them.³ As Job said, *"Teach me, and I will be silent and show me how I have erred."*

In my Storm, I vented on many occasions saying that God is mean, and the reaction of people was just similar to Eliphaz. Though I knew **Yahweh** had a beautiful purpose, and though I was continuing to move forward and deeper into my relationship with this "mean" God, and though I had never ever considered departing from my only source of life, just my uttering those words set people off. Because of their own fear and religion, they could not meet me in that place where what I was experiencing, at the hand of God, was mean, cruel even.

Having your life stripped bare and stripped away in sudden and horrendous ways was not nice, nor was it gentle, it was flat-out mean. I was able to imagine many other ways, far gentler, for Him to accomplish His purposes. Admittedly, I was delusional about what it would take to make me leave the if/then God and my love for my own goodness, but way down deep in my soul I did believe that His ways are not our ways.⁴ But hey, I was venting about my real-life circumstances; they were far worse than I can express in words. Thankfully, God understood and He met me in my place of despairing.

This next line is a bit over the top. Job says, *"You would even be caused to be casting [lots] for the orphans and bartering over your friend."* This is just a downright insult. What Job is communicating is that his friends are not actually there to care for him, they are there for themselves, and that they are mercenary at heart. So much so, that instead of fighting the enslaver to free their friend or to set loose the bonds of the fatherless, they would trade to get the best deal that served their own interest. Without a doubt the "Boys" surely felt the sting of this comment.

Job 6:28-29

Now you please you look at me, and if I am lying to your face. You desist now, let there be no injustice {or iniquity}; you desist, my righteousness is yet in it.

Another translation phrases it, *"Look at me! Would I lie to your face? Stop assuming my guilt, for I have done no wrong."* Job states the obvious, something to the effect of, "If you just get outside of yourself for a moment, you might realize that I would do anything to make this agony go away. I am broken in every

³ **Philippians 2:3-4**

⁴ **Isaiah 55:8-9**

way imaginable. Just look at me! Do you really think my pride would have so much power that I would not immediately repent of my wrongs and be done with this suffering, if that is how things worked? You guys are idiots; this is the worst thing anyone could endure. Why would I lie to your face? It makes no sense. I can barely move, the dogs are licking the puss that oozes from my open wounds, and you think I just want to be right. Shame on you. Stop assuming my guilt, for I have done no wrong deserving of this evil.”

When Job says, “*my righteousness is yet in it*,” “righteousness” is a noun and not a verb. Job is not talking about doing things right, but a spiritual reality. His venting and his complaint do not diminish his righteousness; it is not a sin to express your grief, your pain, and even your complaint to God; for honest communication is a necessary aspect of a relationship with a conquering king.

Job 6:30

Is there injustice on my tongue? Cannot my palate be discerning ill-desire?

“*Is there injustice on my tongue*,” is another way of saying, “Am I lying?” Job is communicating that despite what he is going through, he can still tell when something is unjust, wicked, or based on ill-desire. He knows that what Eliphaz has said does not come from a pure heart, that is from a heart that considers Job. Rather, the words of Eliphaz come from a compromised heart that is projecting on to Job. It’s as if in putting down Job, Eliphaz and his friends might in some sick and twisted way feel better about themselves. This is wickedness, this is injustice.

Next Job stops chastising his friends. Perhaps he feels he said enough, and they should now be able to reason through their behavior and choose to change the way they deal with him. So, he does that thing where he is talking to his friends, but in his spirit, he is making his plea before God and all those in the heavenly courtroom, in the Great Assembly of God. He yearns for the heavenly to hear his cries.

Let’s stop here and in our next podcast we will pick up in Job 7.

I am glad you tuned in and have been ready to listen.