

THE BOOK OF JOB
“SYMpathetic Comforters”
Text: 2:11-13

Key Word: Comfort

Key Thought: Sympathetic Comforters often Begin with Good Intentions

Thus far I have spoken about the six major trials and temptations that Satan threw at Job to get him to curse God and die. Job held his ground in an incredible manner that even our Biblical texts seldom portray. Even at his best, Job was still a great distance from the example of our LORD and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I'm sure you've heard the expression **“The road to hell is paved with good intentions.”**

“The exact origin of this proverb is unknown and several variations exist. It appeared in full in a London newspaper in 1828 where it was referred to as a Portuguese proverb. It was also published in Henry G. Bohn's A Hand-book of Proverbs in 1855. An 1811 English version of one of Rambach's books includes, **“The road to hell is paved with good resolutions”**

<https://en.wikipedia.org>

What Did Job's Friend's Do to “Help Him?”

I. THEY SYMPATHIZED AND COMFORTED (Job 2:11)

II. THEY SPRINKLED DUST IN THE AIR (Job 2:12)

III. THEY SAT ON THE GROUND (Job 2:13)

I. THEY SYMPATHIZED AND COMFORTED (Job 2:11)

We all have friends and then we have close friends that we can confide in and trust that they will speak truth into our lives. They were of kindred spirit and worshipped the same Living God who changed their lives. This was probably not the first time they sat together and built a common relationship built upon the limited revelation that God had given to His creation at that juncture of time.

“If you look in the dictionary it will tell you that the definition of friendship is a state of being friends; friendly relation, or attachment, to a person, or between persons; affection arising from mutual esteem and good will; friendliness; amity; good will. That all sounds nice, but it doesn't cover the fact that a true friendship is a relationship that can survive the test of time and remain.”
unconditional.”

<http://friends.com/definition-of-friendship>

I. THEY SYMPATHIZED AND COMFORTED (Job 2:11) (Contd.)

Job was willing as his sorrow grew through this juncture of his life to describe the kind of friends he wanted.

*“Anyone who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.
15. But my brothers are as undependable as intermittent streams, as the streams that overflow”*

Job 6:14,15

We need friends who are balanced invited into our lives. Extremes are never appropriate to spend much time and effort in. Most people I’ve met don’t live their lives in the extremes because they know it becomes a futile use of our time.

These were close friends to Job in his past but they never had to walk him through such overwhelming challenges. They approached him with a heart to help him overcome a load he could carry by himself.

“Bear one another burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:2

The first of Job’s three friends was called Eliphaz the Temanite. His name means **“my God is strength.”** It is actually an old name used by the Edomites. They were known for their wisdom but gradually even God questioned it and Jeremiah prophesied their upcoming doom because they turned from wise counsel and their wisdom rotted away.

“Concerning Edom: This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Is there no longer wisdom in Teman? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom decayed?”

Jeremiah 29:7

Lets learn Whom we need to lean upon during times of trouble. Job didn’t call his friends for help, they decided among themselves to help out. What was meant for good became just the opposite.

“There’s no hurt my Jesus can’t heal.”

[Casting Crowns](#)

II. THEY SPRINKLED DUST IN THE AIR (Job 2:12)

This verse displays the common mistake made by those who walk with their heads above others. They are pious workers of iniquity. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. They know how to impress others but they forget they will be judged by their own words and actions. They seem strong at the beginning. They knew enough about God that they were able to chastize one who lived a blameless and upright life.

They began in tears but soon changed the attitude in their solemn hearts.

“When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads.”

Job 2:12

I wonder how many people don't notice who we really are and what is truly taking place in our lives because of what they see **“from a distance.”** I'm sure they meant their loud weeping to bring comfort. Tears are often a healing balm. “Tears are a language God understands” according to the words of a song we used to listen to on a 33 record album by Gordon Jenson.

This Biblical story is much like a dilemma referred to in psychology as **“The Nail in the Head.”** Here is a short humorous video to describe what they mean.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4EDhdAHRog>

The problem is that these three and eventually four counsellors have THE NAIL IN THEIR HEAD.

Job was secluded to the open air just like a person with leprosy. They **“saw him from a distance”** and would have normally recognized him BUT he didn't look the same as they remembered him. The Father of the Prodigal Son left us with no doubt how he felt when he saw his son in a distance (Luke 15:20). Did his compassion change when they embraced? No! Even if he smelled like pig manure, his father didn't stop the feast.

Job's comforters **“tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads.”** Job had also tore his robe and shaved his head after hearing about the death of his children (Job 1:20). It was a sign of deep sorrow and humility. But their humility had NOT been tested yet. God knows us even when others don't understand.

“I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul.”

Psalms 31:7

III. THEY SAT ON THE GROUND (Job 2:13)

“Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.”

Job 2:13

It may appear that they were going well beyond what was expected for seven days and nights by keeping silent. It was not always done but it did become more of a custom to distinguish between those who wanted to express their inner grief. It was also a sign of humility

Joseph was given permission to return to his homeland and mourn the death of his father Jacob for seven days. This was after the Egyptians took 40 days to embalm him and then an additional 70 days to mourn his death. Ezekiel spent seven days in mourning with some of the Israelites he was sent to by God to prophesy the upcoming judgement they would be facing (Ezekiel 3:15).

In the case of Job they got a firsthand account of the pain he was experiencing **“they saw how great his suffering was.”** The Hebrew word describing these **“painful sores”** or **“sore boils”** (Job 2:7) were in reference to a malignant ulcer which was the worst kind of leprosy. He would never have a restful night and would have constant dreams that would terrify him. His skin would crack and fester. His feet and legs would swell to an enormous size which also gives it the name **“Elephantiasis.”** His mouth would be distorted and his breath would have foul and even his head would become distorted which is called **“Leonitasis.”** Eventually his fingers, toes and hands would have fallen off.

What a scene to behold. Just imagine how his guardian angel must have responded knowing he was man that was upright and blameless. The merciless cruelty of Satan allowed him still to speak so he could use his words against him. No one in their right mind would sell their soul to the devil if they knew the extent of his evil ways.

The only “medical aid” came from broken pottery (potsherd) that was abundant in and around every city because they were made so thin. I find it interesting that Luke, the New Testament physician, wrote the words of Jesus speaking about a beggar named Lazarus that even the dogs came to lick his sores (Luke 16:21).

You may wonder what more could Job’s friends do? Actually they would have been much kinder by just remaining silent. Unfortunately, they open their mouths and emptied their hearts from a twisted belief that God NOT the Satan was paying him for being deception. Oh how truth can be blinded. And so the chapter ends with great suffering.

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Date: Feb 12/23

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: In Jesus Name (God of Possible) -

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Job 2:13; Ezekiel 3:15; Job 2:7; Luke 16:21