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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 14, 2024 - JOB: NO RELIEF

AUGUST 14TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 14, 2024 - JOB: NO RELIEF

In high school, I played on the football team. During the off season, the coach would have us lift weights. He had one strict rule when bench pressing. “You must have a partner to make sure you can get the heavy weight off your chest if needed.”

Job was looking for one of his friends to help him with the heavy weight that God had laid upon him (v. 7). Instead, they exalted themselves above him and used his humiliation against

I know that my redeemer lives.

JOB 19:25

him (v. 5). Job had concluded that God had purposely caused the loss and pain in his life. Although, he was not sure why God has done this, he was confident that God was angry with him (v. 11). As a result, he had been disrespected by his servants (v. 15) and little children (v. 18). He had become offensive to his wife (v. 17).

It is easy to understand Job’s emotional hurt. All he wanted was genuine emotional support from his friends (v. 21). It is here that Job pivoted in his argument. First, he desired that his words, which his friends despised, be recorded forever (vv. 23–24). I wished he could hear me say, “Job, they were recorded! They are in God’s Word for all eternity!”

Second, he stated that he knows that his Redeemer lives and that one day he will see Him with his own eyes (vv. 25–27). Job had insight regarding the Redeemer, His coming, and Job’s own resurrection. To this I say, “Amen, Job!” Our Redeemer, Jesus Christ lives! He is coming back for us! He has secured our resurrection! We will see Him with our own eyes!

Job has given his friends (and us) a theology lesson. In chapter 9, Job desired an arbitrator. By chapter 16, Job knows he has an advocate. Here he declares, confidently, that he has a Redeemer. If only his friends would listen!

Go Deeper

How is Jesus our Arbitrator, Advocate, and Redeemer? Why do each of those roles make a difference to us?

Pray with Us: Lord God, You are indeed our Advocate and Redeemer! Job knew it, and we know it! We are safe in You. “What a fellowship, what a joy divine,/Leaning on the everlasting arms.” (Showalter & Hoffman, 1887)

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Daily Devotional - Monday, August 12, 2024 - JOB: I'VE BEEN HUMILIATED

AUGUST 12TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, August 12, 2024 - JOB: I'VE BEEN HUMILIATED

Job responds to his so-called friend Eliphaz by making a statement of which most of us would agree: "You are miserable comforters, all of you!" (16:2). Again, the goal of his friends was to have Job confess to something that was not true. But, holding firm to his integrity, Job would not do it.

Job was bewildered regarding the reason for his misfortune. But he seems even more bewildered by the response of his friends and acquaintances. He states, "People open their mouths to jeer at me; they strike my cheek in scorn and unite together against me" (16:10).

Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high.

JOB 16:19

Whether striking the cheek is meant literally or figuratively, these responses were painful to Job.

The beautiful thing about Job, which is often missed in the back-and-forth dialogue, is his hope in God in the midst of his loss. Three wonderful verses are placed in the center of his response. He exclaims, "Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as one pleads for his friend" (16:19–21).

Earlier in the book, we read that Job was looking for an arbitrator. Now, he declares that he has an advocate in heaven that is pleading on his behalf. Job is certain that even if men and women falsely accuse him, he has an advocate in heaven. We know that Advocate to be Jesus Christ (1 John 2:1).

In the crucible of his conflict, one of two things is happening. Either Job is progressively sharing more of the truth he knows, or Job is realizing more about God in the midst of his turmoil. Either way, it is a reminder to us that often we walk closer to God during times of pain and are more open to His truth when we hurt.

Go Deeper

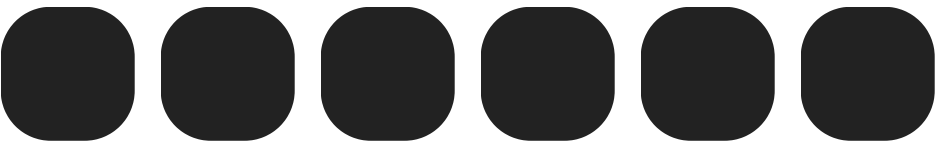
Have you ever been falsely accused? In your own experience, have hard times driven you closer to Jesus or away from Him?

Pray with Us: Loving God, we find great comfort in Your words: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). You are our refuge and strength, and You can redeem even the times of pain and suffering.

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Daily Devotional - Friday, August 9, 2024 - Repent of Your Sin

AUGUST 09TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, August 9, 2024 - Repent of Your Sin

In the television competition program *The Voice*, a contestant will sing, but the judges have their backs to him or her. The judges listen to the singer and are not swayed by how the singer appears. The contestant is chosen solely upon what the judges hear. Therefore, they must listen very intently to each note.

The third respondent to listen and pass judgment on Job's situation was Zophar. He was the most callous of the three friends. He referred to Job's responses as "idle talk" (v. 3). He wanted God to speak against Job (v. 5). He was so opposed to Job's innocence

that he proclaimed that "God has forgotten some of your sin" (v. 6). This statement indicates that Zophar believed that Job was not receiving the full punishment he deserved. Since God knows everything (vv. 7–9), Job needed to come clean.

Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?

JOB 11:7

Zophar set himself up as the judge and jury. He spoke authoritatively on God's behalf. He directed Job to "put away the sin that is in your hand" (v. 13) and as a result, "life will be brighter than noonday and darkness will become morning" (v. 17).

Again, there is some truth to Zophar's statements. If a person is engaged in sinful behavior, he should repent and seek the Lord. In turn, the Lord will forgive and cleanse (1 John 1:9). But Zophar's directives did not fit the circumstances. Job's talk was not idle but factual. If only Zophar had listened intently to every word Job spoke, instead of being swayed by appearances.

Unfortunately, it is easy to pass judgment on an individual based upon appearance. A wise person is slow to speak and quick to listen (James 1:19). Zophar made up his mind about Job based upon what he observed, not based on what Job was sharing. Let us be people who listen, understand, and offer grace when needed.

Go Deeper

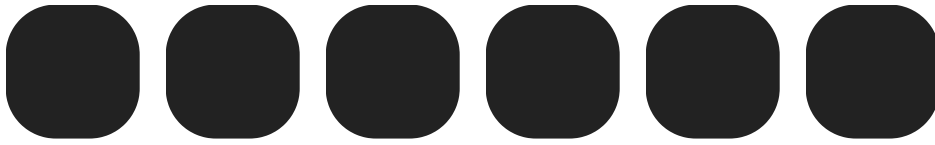
When was the last time you provided a listening ear to someone in need? How can you be a better listener?

Pray with Us: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matt. 7:1). Lord Jesus, make us people who listen, understand, and offer grace. Soften our hearts that we may hear Your voice, turn to You with all our worries, and comfort others.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 7, 2024 -

AUGUST 07TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 7, 2024 -

Although we may never meet in person, I would like to pass on a bit of wisdom I have acquired as a pastor. Speak kindly concerning somebody's children and grandchildren even when you need to deliver unpleasant news regarding their behavior.

In Job 8, Bildad, Job's other friend, decided to speak. As the reader, you may be hoping that he has listened to Job and will come alongside him with helpful truth. Unfortunately, our hopes are quickly dashed. He responds by calling Job a windbag (v. 2).

Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right?

JOB 8:3

Then he asks two questions to place himself on the moral high ground: "Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right?" (v. 3). On this, Bildad is correct. But then he attacked Job's children: "When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin" (v. 4).

Wow! It is obvious that Bildad is not wise when it comes to giving counsel. Proverbs tells us, “Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a ruling rightly given” (Prov. 25:11). In Bildad’s own twisted way, he did want what was best for Job. He said, “Surely God does not reject one who is blameless or strengthen the hands of evildoers. He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy” (vv. 20–21). Bildad wanted joy for his friend, but his theological instruction was warped.

When we walk through times of trouble, not everyone will be sensitive to our plight. Some, when trying to help, will add a dose of salt to our open wound and it will sting. However, we can rest in God’s promise to Israel, “Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!” (Isa. 49:15).

Go Deeper

How have well-meaning people been hurtful in their efforts to minister to you in difficult times? Why is our knowledge of God and His Word so important during those times?

Pray with Us: Reading about Job’s “friends” who added insult to his injury, we can’t help but praise You, merciful God, for the wise friends You give us on our life’s journey. Thank You for Your faithful servants who speak Your truth to us.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, August 5, 2024 - Eliphaz: Sin Caused Your Suffering

AUGUST 05TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, August 5, 2024 - Eliphaz: Sin Caused Your Suffering

Years ago, when I was in seminary, I misplaced one of my Bibles. One of my classmates picked it up. Approximately a week later, he returned it to me along with a statement: “You obviously have not been having quiet time with the Lord.” It must not have occurred to him that I had more than one Bible. I thought, “With friends like you, who needs enemies?”

Job must have had similar thoughts as his friends began to respond to his plight. While they were silent (2:13), they were probably a comfort to Job (2:11). But when they began to speak, their words were sharp as razors. The first to respond was Eliphaz. He appears to have been the leader of the three friends (42:7).

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

JOB 5:17

Eliphaz complimented Job for giving wise instruction to others, strengthening the weak and supporting the unstable (vv. 3–4). At least, this was the public face of Job. However, because of Eliphaz’s extreme view of retribution, he was convinced that Job was leading a double life. Eliphaz believed that a person “only” reaps what he sows. Therefore, Job must have secretly sowed evil.

The good news from Eliphaz’s perspective was that Job could be blessed by God. His tragedy was God’s reproof (5:17). If Job turned to God (5:8) and away from evil (5:12–13), advised Eliphaz, then Job could once again experience God’s blessing (5:17).

Galatians 6:7 is clear: “Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.” However, tragedy is not always the result of our own sinful behavior. Jesus Christ, who had no sin was tragically crucified for our sins. We may suffer for sin, but it is not always our own personal sin. As believers, we should never despise God’s discipline, but tragedy isn’t necessarily God’s discipline.

Go Deeper

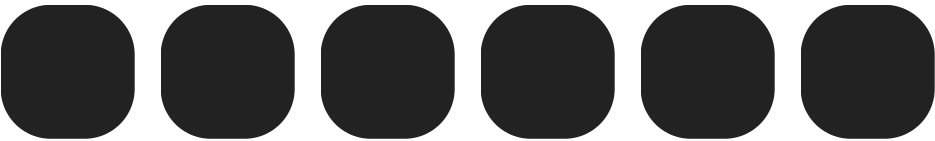
What did Job’s friends fail to understand? Have you ever been falsely accused of something? How did you respond?

Pray with Us: Jesus, Savior, You brought the Kingdom of Light into the shadows of our lives. And You walked through the shadows of our world as well. Kindle great hope in our hearts as we wait for You to come in power and glory to make all things new.

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