

JOB 16

LONGING FOR THE MEDIATOR!

In the last chapter, Eliphaz had represented Job's discourses as unprofitable words which did not serve the purpose; and here in this chapter, Job gave Eliphaz's words the same character. Angry answers stir up people's tempers; but they never convince their judgments, nor set truth in a clear light. Job had already heard much reasoning of the same kind that Eliphaz had just finished promulgating, but what can reasoning do to assuage the sorrows of a heavy heart? The three friends had not treated him very kindly under his afflictions. Whatever our brethren's sorrows are, we ought – by sympathy – to make them our own. Job had already told Eliphaz and his companions that they were “physicians of no value” (chapter 13:4); and here in verse 2, he added that they were “miserable comforters.”

But is not the same kind of observation even more applicable when it is considered as referring to a soul who is seeking salvation, or to an awakened sinner who is truly anxious to be informed on how to find peace with God? When under convictions of sin, terrors of conscience, or the arrests of death – only the blessed Holy Spirit can comfort effectually. All others, without Him, do it miserably and to no purpose. And are not those miserable comforters indeed who would send such poor, distressed creatures to find rest in their own repentance, tears, and best endeavors, instead of directing them to the Father's pardoning love and mercy in the blood and righteousness of His dear Son Jesus, and to the sweet comforts and influences of the Holy Spirit? Can anything be more plain than the fact that a guilty sinner needs a holy Savior? Coming short of this, the enquiring soul comes short of all! May the precious Lamb of God be our consolation; for without Him, we would be miserable indeed forever!

There is a very sweet expression of Job in the first few verses of this chapter, in which he said that he would not have treated his friends as they had been to him, if a reverse of circumstances had been their portion. Let us not overlook this blessed token of grace! And how beautiful and lovely is the same feature in Jesus, as the Apostle has described it: “Who when he was reviled, reviled not again!” (1 Pet. 2:23)

Verses 6-17 reveal a very doleful representation of Job's grievances. What good reason we have to bless the Lord that we are not in such an awful case to make similar complaints! Even Godly persons, when they are in great troubles, have a very difficult time endeavoring to not entertain hard thoughts of the Lord. Perhaps in no other part of Job's lamentations did his torrent of grief rise higher

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ Job upbraids his friends concerning their unkindness toward him – verses 1-5
- ❖ He represents his case as being very deplorable, upon all accounts – verses 6-17
- ❖ He continues to maintain his integrity, and he appeals to the Lord's righteous judgment from the unrighteous censures of his friends – verses 18-22

than it did in this particular discourse. His heart seems to have been full, and he gave it vent. How tested and tempted he was, both by the enemy of souls and by the unkind and unjust reproaches of his friends; and to sum up all, his God seemed to be merely looking on, and returning no answer to his earnest cries! He did not know the blessed outcome which would later be at the end of all this; and therefore, he spoke in the manner here recorded, when he was under the full pressure of the accumulated burdens.

Eliphaz had represented Job as one who was unhumbled under his afflictions. "No," declared Job; "I know better things; the dust is now the fittest place for me." (See verse 15 in particular.) In this frame of mind, he reminded us of Christ – the Man of sorrows Who pronounced those persons blessed who mourn, for they shall be comforted!



Job's condition was indeed very deplorable; but he had the testimony of his conscience to assure him that he had never allowed himself to indulge in any gross sin. Eliphaz had charged him with hypocrisy in religion. But Job specified prayer as the great act of religion; and he professed that in this, he was pure – although not from *all* infirmity. He had a God to go to, Who took full notice of all his sorrows. Those who pour out their tears before the Lord – although they cannot plead for themselves – have a Friend to plead for them before the throne of grace! And upon Him, we must ground all our hopes of acceptance with God!

Job spoke in the last verse of eventually going the way of death, from which no person shall ever return to this mortal earth – although all people who have ever lived will certainly rise again on the Great Last Day! All of us will one day take this same journey. Therefore, should not the Savior be precious to our souls? And should we not make ourselves ready to obey and to suffer for His sake? But the greatest beauty of Job's discourse was the earnest longing that is contained in the close of his address, in which he so passionately looked forward to the Mediator! "Oh that one might plead for a man with God!" he cried (verse 21). And that prayer was answered in the appointment of Jesus as our Great High Priest and Intercessor! He is not only our Advocate with the Father, but He is also an Advocate in the very way which Job desired. He pleads on behalf of His poor people, and He is not ashamed to call us brethren! (Heb. 2:11) If, like Job, we are looking up to heaven in humility and prayer; then, also like Job, we may rest assured that our Great High Priest is standing in the heavenly Court, maintaining our cause against every adversary!

Lord, we pray that no depressed believer would be cast down under trials. Give grace to all Your children to cast all their cares upon the Savior – saying with Paul, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us!" Amen.