

Message #9**Job 6:1-7:21**

Many years ago someone came to me and said that we never had any right to say a negative word to or about anyone. I said, “Really, where did you get that idea?” The response was “the Bible.” Jesus said to “turn the other cheek” and Paul said leave “vengeance to God.” I said, “Well, if those were the only two verses that dealt with the subject, perhaps you would have a point, but what do you do with passages that teach just the opposite?” For example, when Paul writes his final letter of II Timothy, he specifically names specific people and says they were not his friends. The truth is, there are times when it is necessary to speak up and speak out and it is not wrong.

Job does that right here. In this portion of Scripture, Job defends his right to speak and his right to be depressed and even his right to want to die because Eliphaz had shot off his big mouth.

A RIGHTEOUS MAN, WHO IS SUFFERING, DOES HAVE A RIGHT TO RESPOND TO FALSE CRITICISMS AND HONESTLY EXPRESS HIMSELF TO GOD.

God never holds Job accountable for what he says about and to his friends. God does hold Job’s friends accountable for what they said to and about him.

There are five verbal responses Job gives to the verbal diatribe of Eliphaz:

VERBAL RESPONSE #1 – Job’s gives a defense of his depression . **6:1-7**

Eliphaz had completed his nonsense talk in which he flat out accused Job of deserving what had happened to him and then told Job he needed to repent. Eliphaz’ discussion came after Job has said he wanted to die in chapter 3.

In this opening response of Job to Eliphaz, Job defends his right to be depressed and he defends his right to want to die. In fact, in **verse 2** Job responds to Eliphaz by saying “I wish you could take all of the things that are grieving me and all of the calamity that has hit me and put them on a scale and weigh them and you would see that my trouble far outweighs my verbal response.” Job says to Eliphaz, if you could weigh what has happened to me you would see I am not out of line in any thing or any way.

In fact, the word “iniquity” (**v. 2**) in Hebrew is better understood by the idea of destructive calamity (Gesenius, p. 219). Job is saying, “I wish you could put my grieving and all my calamity on a scale and you would see that I am unjustly weighed down.” I have not committed horrific sin to bring this on me.

In fact, Job says in **verse 3** that his trouble would prove, on a scale, to be heavier than the sand of the seas and that is why he has said what he has said about wishing for death.

Now in **verses 4-7** Job gives some simple facts about what is going on:

Fact #1 - Job's sufferings are arrows from God. **6:4a**

Job's suffering was not due to anything he had done himself, but was coming as a decision of Almighty God. Job believed in God's sovereignty even when he was being personally ripped to shreds. Job does not see Satan here at all. He believed these were arrows coming right from heaven.

Fact #2 - God's arrows are poison to Job's spirit. **6:4b**

Job's spirit was depressed because God was shooting poisoned arrows at him. He was the target of some very painful things.

Fact #3 - God's terrors are against Job. **6:4c**

It was easy for Eliphaz to talk because he was not Job and he was not suffering. Notice Job completely believes the terrifying things that have happened to him are from the sovereign hand of God.

There was an old Indian saying out west that said: "Don't criticize a man until you have walked in his moccasins." That is good advice for Eliphaz and his big-mouthed friends. Job was under attack and that attack was coming from God.

As Christians we must be careful to try and understand the weight of what is burdening down another believer. We are admonished to "bear one another's burdens," not criticize them for their burdens.

Fact #4 - Job is not typically one to cry out. **6:5-7**

When a wild donkey's needs are met, when the needs of an ox are met, they do not cry out. Job was not a man to typically cry out or complain. Job was no whiner or complainer. Job is crying out because of real need, real pain, real hurt and real suffering.

There are many people who are hypochondriacs, who cry out when nothing is wrong. Job was never like that. He rarely cried out about anything and when he did, we may be certain there was a real reason for it.

In **verse 6**, Job further makes his point and that is the only time one cries out for something is when it is tasteless—for example, if one is eating an egg white, one must ask for salt. Job's suffering was tasteless. **Verse 7** tells us he was too sick to even eat food.

Job's friends could be certain that Job was never a chronic complainer. He had a real reason to cry out. His depression was completely justified and that is what he was saying to Eliphaz.

Frankly, sometimes sorrow and depression are justified and that is what Job is saying to his friends. This glad-happy, back-slapping, emotional nonsense which says Christians should always be upbeat and don't ever have a right to hurt and cry and be depressed, is heresy coming from people as distorted as Eliphaz.

VERBAL RESPONSE #2 – Job's gives a defense of his desire to die. **6:8-13**

Job was a hurting man. He was not just low emotionally, but he also was low physically. He did want to die and he defended his right in wanting to die and there are three thoughts he communicated about his view of death:

Thought #1 - God was the only one who could grant his request to die. **6:8-9**

Job did not believe in suicide, but he did believe in going to God and praying and asking God to take his life. Job wanted God to crush him, to loose him and set him free from his pain. His desire was to get out of this life.

I don't have any problem when a faithful believer asks God to take him home, but I have a major problem with one asking some Kevorkian-type to help one commit suicide. Job made his request to God and let God determine what to do with it.

The fact is, had Job committed suicide he would have missed the greatest blessings God eventually gave him, which surpassed any previous blessings in life. Suicide is stupid because you have no idea what God intends to do with you or for you.

Thought #2 - Job's only comfort and joy in life was he had not denied God or His Word. **6:10**

Job had always stood for God and His Word. This was Job's only comforting thought and it was this thought that would enable Job to make this request.

We may absolutely guarantee you this that any person who has denied God or downplayed His Word will not ask God to end his life. This kind of person will try to live as long as possible and then will die in total fear.

Thomas Paine, a famous American author and atheist who did much to promote atheism, came to his final hours of life in 1809. He was a very disillusioned and unhappy man. During his final moments of life on earth he said this: "I would give worlds, if I had them, that Age of Reason had not been published. O Lord, help me! Christ, help me! O God, what have I done to suffer so much? But there is no God! But if there should be, what will become of me hereafter? Stay with me, for God's sake! Send even a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone. If ever the devil had an agent, I have been that one" (Herbert Lockyer, *Last Words of Saints and Sinners*, p. 132).

When Paine thought of death he was afraid because he had mocked God and His Word. When Job thought of death, he wanted it because he had defended God and his Word.

Thought #3 - Job no longer had the strength to live. **6:11-13**

Job was at his breaking point. His strength was gone. He could not endure anymore. His flesh was being eaten away and there was nothing Job could do to help himself. He just wanted the merry-go-round of pain to stop. He wanted it all to end.

Years ago a country singer by the name of Eddie Arnold sang a song called “Make the world go away, get it off my shoulders.” That is what Job wanted—he wanted out of this world.

VERBAL RESPONSE #3 – Job shares his disappointment with his friends. **6:14-30**

Job was really disappointed and hurt by his friends and he looked them in the eyes and told them just that. This is a very powerful and lengthy rebuke and it develops three main topics.

Topic #1 - Friends should be kind to a faithful man because they could cause him to stumble in his own spiritual life. **6:14**

Some people have no idea as to the devastation they can cause to one’s spiritual life by the stupidity of what they say. There are times when words can make things worse. Believers can destroy the spiritual life and fervency of another believer, even faithful mature believers. People can say such negative things they can make you want to chuck it all. That is what Job’s friends were on the verge of doing. They should have been kind and compassionate and encouraging to Job, but by what they said, they could get someone to turn away from Almighty God.

Topic #2 - Friends should not act deceitfully, pretending to bring refreshment but really bringing drought. **6:15-21**

Notice **verse 15**—Job’s friends are called “brothers.” These were true believers. Job’s brothers had acted deceitfully. When he first saw them coming, they appeared as a “wadi”—a flowing stream which would bring Job refreshment. Ice and snow melt and turn into water which flows down the mountains in streams of fresh water (**6:16**). When Job first saw his friends coming, he saw them as those who were coming to refresh him just like a wadi; but when his friends actually got to him they were waterless, speechless and did nothing to help Job in any way (**6:17-18**). Like the caravans of Tema or the travelers of Sheba who regularly look to these streams for water, Job looked to his friends to refresh him, but as **verse 20** says, they were a complete disappointment.

Sometimes people who are supposedly your closest friends can be your biggest disappointments, especially when you are hurting. The real problem with these guys is that they were pretending to know the will of God when they had no idea what God’s will actually was.

They could have been an encouragement to Job, reminding him of his faithfulness and God's delivering power, but instead they made things worse.

Topic #3 - Friends at times need to be rebuked and need to hear the truth. **6:22-30**

We may understand this rebuke by breaking down into two themes:

(Theme #1) - What Job did not ask from his friends. **6:22-23**

There are four specific things Job said he never asked his friends:

- 1) - Job did not ask his friends to give him anything. **6:22a**—He did not ask them for a thing
- 2) - Job did not ask his friends to pay some bribe for him. **6:22b**—He did not ask for a dime.
- 3) - Job did not ask his friends to deliver him. **6:23a**—He did not ask for their deliverance.
- 4) - Job did not ask his friends to redeem him. **6:23b**

Truth is Job didn't even ask these friends to come visit him; they just showed up and instead of helping him, they hurt him. Job never expected his friends to give him anything. He did not want their money, but he did need their friendship.

(Theme #2) - What Job did say to his friends. **6:24-30**

Job does ask his friends to give him true instruction. He asks them to show him where he had erred in his life (**6:24**). Now Job makes a series of comments which are stinging rebukes:

- 1) - Honest words are painful, but your words prove nothing. **6:25**
- 2) - Your words cannot even reprove one whose words supposedly belong to the wind. **6:26**
- 3) - Your words sell out your own friend. **6:27**
- 4) - I have never lied and can look you in the face and say so. **6:28**
- 5) - Stop your unjust talk, for I am still a righteous man. **6:29**
- 6) - I have not done or said anything unjust and I can determine whether or not my calamities are just judgments. **6:30**

Job looked his friends straight in the eyes and said, "you are all wrong and you are all a disappointment to me."

You would think that your friends would want to know the facts before they speak. These guys made all of these assumptions about Job and they were all wrong.

Job said you don't know what you are talking about. Sometimes those you thought were your best friends and allies can become your biggest disappointment. When Satan is involved, he will move people close to us to say stupid, insensitive things that will cut you to the bone.

VERBAL RESPONSE #4 – Job's description of his life. **7:1-10**

Job gives a description of what his life was really like to his friends:

Description #1 - His life was like forced labor. **7:1a**–He was forced to suffer

Description #2 - His life was like a hired man. **7:1b**–Job had been given the task to suffer.

Description #3 - His life was like a slave . **7:2a**–Job was enslaved with no way out.

Description #4 - His life was like an employee waiting for wages . **7:2b**–waiting for life to end.

Description #5 - His life had been empty for months. **7:3a**

Description #6 - His nights were troubled and sleepless . **7:3b-4**

Description #7 - His body was diseased . **7:5**

Description #8 - His life was flying away in time without any hope . **7:6-7a**

Description #9 - His eyes would never see good again. **7:7b**

Description #10 - His presence on this earth would soon be gone . **7:8-10**

This was Job's life and he was certainly justified in wanting God to end his life.

Here is where his friends could have been so helpful. They could have reminded him of the delivering power of God.

VERBAL RESPONSE #5 – Job's discourse to God. **7:11-21**

Job had such integrity that he told God exactly what he was thinking, right in front of these friends. Job says I have a right to talk to God and I will not restrain from pouring out my heart. There are eight things he says to God in front of his "friends."

- 1) Are you guarding me so I cannot perish? **7:12**
- 2) You are frightening me with dreams at night that make me want to die. **7:13-15**
- 3) I am not going to live forever anyway, why not let me die now? **7:16**
- 4) Why should God even want me to live, I am nothing but a man. **7:17**
- 5) God's examination of me and my trials are every morning and every moment. **7:18**
- 6) God continually viewed Job and Job could not even swallow outside of God's presence. **7:19**

7) Where have I sinned so that I deserve this? **7:20**

8) If I have sinned, why don't you forgive me? **7:21**

There are times in even the best of lives when we are confused about what God is doing. There are times when you will say "I don't know." It is good to know that God is a sovereign God and in those moments, we can totally and completely rely on Him.

There will be times when the only person you can really talk with will be God. Pour it all out to Him; cast all your cares and anxieties on Him, for He does care for you!