

October 16, 2016

- Job 2:11-3:13

“Job Laments”

Introduction:

William Cowper was an English poet and writer of many great Christian hymns. One of the most popular poets of his time, he changed the direction of 18th century nature poetry by writing of everyday life and scenes of the English countryside. William Wordsworth admired his poems and called him "the best modern poet". Yet, William Cowper, although a Christian, had sunken on occasions to the depths of despair. One foggy night he called for a horse-drawn carriage and asked to be taken to the London Bridge on the Thames River. He was so overcome by depression that he intended to commit suicide.

After two hours of driving through the fog, Cowper's coachman reluctantly confessed that he was lost. Disgusted by the delay, Cowper left the carriage and, decided to find the London Bridge on foot. After walking a -short distance, he discovered that he was at his own front doorstep. The carriage had been going in circles. The great English poet recognizing the restraining hand of God was convicted by the Spirit that the way out of his troubles was to look to God, not to jump into the river.

Folks, none of us are immune from the depths of depression, not even great preachers and men of God. Everyone from Martin Luther to Charles Haddon Spurgeon and those in between like Adoniram Judson and John Bunyan all suffered bouts of great depression. The Bible is very clear on this subject that even great champions for the Lord suffered from the darkness of depression at one time or another in their lives. David, Elijah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and the Apostle Paul suffered from times of depression? However, Job is the only one that walks us through this emotional suffering that attacks his flesh, his minds and spirit. Jobs lament will help us to understand that when we too are engulf in days of gloom that “what” we feel and what we experience is the course of this condition.

Depression can be defined as a condition marked by low spirits, gloomy feelings, dejection, sadness, feelings of worthlessness, and accompanying with guilt. In these next chapters we are going to view one of the most profound cases of depression ever recorded. To get an understanding of Jobs’ condition we go now to Job’s Comforters.

I. Job’s Comforters. 2:11-13

1. Job’s three friends are identified for us as Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. This is about all we know beside what counsel and character these men might have been from an examination of the other chapters.

2. When Job’s three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar heard about all the troubles that had come upon him they made plans to visit with him according to verse eleven. So, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him. When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to

weep aloud, and tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. 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.” It must have been such an unbelievable sight to see that they were overwhelmed and wept.

3. They were so struck by Job’s condition that at first the only thing they could do was be with him in silent. Nothing they could say would change his horrific situation. It is seven days and nights before a word is spoken. They didn’t just stay in the same spots and without food or drink but all this time they sat on the earth for this was a ritual that marked mourning and seven days was the usual length of it for the dead.

Application

In many ways the friends of Job did what we should do to help people who are hurting. Just be with them, saying little or nothing and letting them know we hurt with them. **Romans 12:15** how we should minister to people to- **Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Süm-pä-thā's is where we get the word sympathy we need to have sympathy with others.**

The best thing we can say is a simple and compassionate I am so sorry, accompanied by a hug or a gentle touch. A little girl came home from visiting a neighbor whose young daughter had recently died. "Why did you go over there?" her father asked. "To comfort her mommy," replied the little girl. "What could you do to comfort her?" asked the father. I climbed in her lap and cried with her". Often that’s the only thing we can do when someone is hurting--cry with them. One thing we should never do when visiting people who are enduring adversity is rob them of their feelings or minimize them. We should never say things like "Count our blessings... There will be times when just being with someone is far more important than anything we can say or do. We don’t have all the answers, so we shouldn’t try to give the impression we do. – **Proverbs 3: 5, 6**

II. Job’s Despair (3:1-10)

1. After seven days, the silence was over. Job starts to speak and we sense the depth of his grief and despair as chapter three opens. Three questions are upon his mind. Why was I even born (1-10). Why did I survive? (11-19) and last Why am I alive? (20-26). Six times he asks “why”? This is not uncommon for us either. Christians get depress too and ask why. There is nothing wrong in asking this question to God.

2. Job cursed the day he was born. He did not curse God, but rather the day of his own birth. He wondered, "Why was I born in the first place?" Never did Job speak of committing suicide, but his suffering was so intense that he wished he had never been born. Job’s disposition changed dramatically.

3. The man of patience and faith fell into despondency and depression. This often adds to the agony of a person facing major adversity. No-where in the book of Job does Job come closer to cursing God to His face than here in chapter 3. We see in this chapter that even a person of

great faith can become despondent and depressed over the problems of life. We see that a person as great as Job could have a struggle of faith should be an encouragement to all who are in similar situations. Never demonized someone for having a spirit of depression, it is a very real thing. Christian folks have the Holy Spirit the unsaved do not. --- gospel

4. This chapter too is God's inspired Word it reveals that God wants us to speak to Him honestly, even in our moments of greatest gloom and doubt. When we are hurting, we often say things we later regret and don't really mean. Job's suffering was so agonizing that he forgot the blessings of family and fortune he had enjoyed for many years. Present pain has the tendency to cancel the memories of past joys.

5. The chapter progresses as Job wishes he had died in child birth. That is what we read in next verses 11-19. He laments why did I not die at birth rather than have this trouble? It would have been better for me he thinks to have perished as soon as he was born. He continues in Verse 12. Why was I given to my mother and she nursed me? 13. If I just had died at birth, I would be at peace. I would be asleep and at rest. 14. I would be at rest with the world's kings and prime ministers, whose great building are empty and gone. 15 I would rest with princes, rich in gold, whose palaces were filled with silver. 16 Why wasn't I buried like a stillborn child, like a baby who never lives to see the light? 17 For in death the wicked cause no trouble, and the weary are at rest. 18 Even captives are at ease in death, with no guards to curse them. 19 Rich and poor are both there, and the slave is free from his master.

6. Last Job asks why don't I just die and this misery end. The language is steeped in the agony of despair. To Job's way of thinking, why keep on living when my quality of life is void? These are legitimate questions. He has lost his appetite, his joy. He is filled with pain and dread as we read the last verses of chapter three.

20. Oh, why should those in misery see the light of day and life to those who suffer?
21 I long for death, and it does not come and search for death like hidden treasure.
22 When death comes they are filled with joy and rejoice when they find the grave.
23 Why is life given when there is no future, when God allows such difficulties?
24 I cannot eat for my sighing and my groans are water running without end.
25 What I always feared has happened and I dreaded what has come true.
26 I have no peace, no quietness, no rest; only troubles have overwhelm me.”

In all of this Job never considers or tries to kill him-self. He questions God about why his life should continue but be clear he never contemplated suicide. **II Corinthians 12:8-10**

Conclusion:

The reality of life is that people even Christians have bouts of depression from time to time. We can't live in today's society without falling prey to this ill. It has been called the common cold of the soul. Sooner or later you catch one. The book of Job gives us one clear observation, “face your depression with truthfulness and honesty and speak to God and trust him to walk with you all the way through it.