

....Infants Which Never Saw the Light ~

Job 3:13 – 26

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~ Our Spiritual Safari is on a journey with Job from prosperity to impoverishment. We have seen God permit Satan to take away everything Job trusted in. At this time in our account, Job's possessions, his children, his wealth, the love and sympathy of his wife — and even his friends — have either been removed from his life, or have turned against him. In our last report, we left Job in the garbage dump on the outskirts of an oriental town; scraping his open sores with a piece of broken pottery and complaining to friends who were sitting around, shaking their heads at him in self-righteous and pious judgment. That's when Job simply stated that he wished he had never been born. It's a sad, bleak, and frightful picture in this leg of our expedition.

Job is being made a test case; let's just call him what he is: a guinea pig. Satan has challenged God by saying Job had a hedge set around him, and that he had everything he could ever want, but if God were to take those things away, Job would curse God to His Face. With that statement, the devil cast a slur upon all of mankind and upon God Himself in abject blaspheme. The created intelligences — the sons of God — must have literally cringed and blushed when they heard this fallen and utterly pious creature named Satan make these false and reprehensible charges upon Almighty God; the One Who had created Satan in the first place. Satan said that the only people who loved God were paid to do so. So, God permitted the devil to take one thing after another away from Job in an effort to break Job down.

You and I belong to a lost race, friends. I understand the doctrine of the complete depravity of mankind is not nice. It's difficult to accept that we are living down here on earth amongst a bunch of liars, thieves, frauds, haters, and murderers — but we do. That's our reality. I know that *YOU* don't think that *YOU* are like that, but, I'm afraid you are! We all are; because we belong to a lost race. That's why God isn't going to take us to Heaven as we are. We shall be changed to be like Him. If God took the

world to Heaven as we are today, Heaven would just be another world all over again! I don't know about you, but I cannot see any reason to duplicate this world in this universe – or in any other universe, either, by the way. Apparently, neither does God. I appreciate that.

The Lord Jesus Christ said to a refined, polished, and extremely religious Pharisee named Nicodemus, *“ye must be born again.”* We're all in the same boat; and that will be a comfort to some of us — and an insult to others. So, when we talk about *normal behavior*, let's make sure we define that. The psychologist has declared himself an expert by creating a chart. At one end of the graph, he writes *ABNORMAL* and at the other end he writes *ULTRA-NORMAL* – and a small minority are at either end. My question is: who said the middle is normal? I don't think it is – because we're *ALL* in *S-I-N*.

The creature known as man is frail, feeble and faulty. It's incredibly easy to upset the equilibrium of any human being. Departure from the *“normal”* pattern, and tipping the scales one way or another, is a ridiculously simple thing to do. The statistics I have seen indicate that one in ten people spend time in a mental institution; and two more of those ten have serious psychological problems that are never diagnosed or treated. Quite frankly, I think those figures are gross underestimates.

Now, God has placed certain props around man to make him stand straight and upright. Ecclesiastes declares, *“.... lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”* That's Ecclesiastes chapter seven verse twenty-nine, by the way. Well, the armor of protection and help that God has provided man – both the Godly and ungodly alike – are aids that provide a sense of security and well being. For example, God makes it rain on the just and the unjust alike. The wicked man gets just as much sunshine, air to breath and good health as those who are Godly and who love the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan knows that if he can get to those props and strip man of them, remove the soft and luxurious garments of safety, and steal the security blankets we all have, then he knows he can shake a man to his shoestrings, turn him upside down, destroy his moral, rearrange his thinking and, ultimately, brain-wash

that person! That's where the protective hedge that God places around us comes in.

As we know now, from studying the first part of the Book of Job, the devil is sometimes permitted to penetrate the protective hedge and strip a man down to his bare-naked soul. God permitted all of that and the brain-washing of Job, too! This book we are examining states this problem in no uncertain terms. However, we must go all the way to the New Testament for the solution. This is almost like the algebra books we all used in school where the problems are in the front of the book and the answers are in the back. That makes the Old Testament a most unsatisfactory book; which is also the reason so many so-called Christians totally and completely ignore it. Actually, none of the problems raised in the Old Testament are solved in the Old Testament. We might call the Old Testament "*expectation*" and the New Testament "*realization*."

Alright, so the devil is in the process of brainwashing Job at the time in which we are studying, by stripping him of every sense of well-being in his life; and that's critical if we want to understand the dialogue and conversation Job will have with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. Of course, one of our basic needs comes in the form of material substance. Animals are born with coats on. You and I have to have someone get us a coat when we are born; or we aren't going to make it long in this world. Animals can generally fend for themselves from day one – but not helpless man. Man is a totally helpless creature from day one. Animals can stand out in the weather; but if food, clothing and shelter are not provided for man, then we'll be finished before we begin.

We're told in Scripture God has given us all material things to enjoy and sustain us. God wants man to enjoy all things He has given us in this world, too; even though the curse of sin is upon all things. God has provided for man in a most wonderful way. Physical things reveal the mercy of God. Prosperity is a gift we are to share with others; and there's nothing wrong with building a bigger barn — as long as we don't begin to depend on those things. Tragically, the prosperity and affluence man has these days, particularly in this country, have debased many otherwise well-intentioned people and programs.

The wealthy man spends billions of dollars passing out crumbs to the poor in order that his mind might be somewhat eased, enabling him to enjoy the wealth he is hoarding. Don't think that is true? – Well, you're wrong, my friends – that's *ABSOLUTE* truth. Solomon will teach us all about this tenet of Scriptural truth in Ecclesiastes. The only thing the wealthy and selfish man can possibly do is rub a little feel-good oil on a thoroughly deprived and troubled awareness. Our gadgets, comforts, and conveniences are only creating a prison for us; and we renovate the walls to be a little higher every day. There was a time when people tried to “*get away from it all*” — by going on a vacation to the beach or mountains; but, today, they take their phones, computers and other devices with them, and they remain just as trapped everywhere they go as they ever were at any other waking moment of their lives. If they unplug for ten minutes, they feel as if the entire world has passed them by.

The Christian today needs to take some meaningful time alone with God to make an inventory of their life; but that almost never happens. Most never consider if they are trusting in stuff; or if they are they trusting God. Satan isn't stupid, friends; he knows how to deceive – and it is easy for him to do so – all while we aren't even remotely aware of what he is doing. Well, Job didn't have any choice because he lost *ALL* things. Every possible comfort in this life was taken from Job. That made Job not want to be in this world; but he wasn't removed from his Foundation.

Further, God has given us loved ones in this life. They are gracious props to bring us joy and purpose. That's one reason God makes babies so cute and attractive, and they never have bad breath. That makes us want to cuddle them and hug them – and loving, caring for, protecting and nurturing a child is a tremendously wonderful thrill. As the child grows, he turns to his parents for love and sympathy. When he skins his knee by falling off the bicycle, he runs to mom to kiss it and make it all better. Of course, that kiss doesn't do anything physically — but it sure does help psychologically. In the absence of needs being met in a tender-loving and caring manner, the child develops conflicts and complexes; and, at the same time, as the child begins to grow, they begin to automatically reject authority.

Well, God made us all that way. And, in our spiritual life, there comes a day God begins to push His little baby eagles towards the edge of the nest. It's a long ways down from this mountaintop of God. If the baby eagle attempts to fly, then it won't be thrown out of the nest and forced to learn to fly. If they struggle and fall, father eagle will swoop in faster than lightening to catch the struggling chick. Later, God's love for us becomes transferred to others and, ultimately, is passed on to their children. Job lost all of his children – seven sons and three daughters.

That brings us to another major factor in the well-being of mankind, and that is health. There is much debate today regarding suicide and the right to die in the face of terminal illnesses or bad health. There are a great multitude of dear saints who are laid out flat on their backs in sickness and diseases; but who have learned to trust God in a way that you and I have likely not learned yet. The devil stole Jobs health, too; and, believe me, it was physically devastating. It also worsened his psychological suffering.

The devil also tragically took away the love of Job's wife. God had given Adam a "*help meet*." That means the woman is the other half of a man. She is the one who responds to the man. Marriage was instituted for the welfare and happiness of man. Many men brave the world — faithful and strong — and fight their battles and daily grinds while standing as a courageous and fearless creature; but, at the end of the day, they want to go home and pillow their heads on the breasts and in the laps of someone who cares about them and who understands them. No Samson was ever weaker in the arms of a woman than the man who has a good and loving wife. Job lost that comfort, too.

So, Job's friends have come to mourn with him, and they must have seemed like an oasis of comfort appearing on the high sands of his desert life; unfortunately, they were nothing in the world but a mirage. In the end, Job will call them "*miserable comforters*," and we're going to see exactly why as we progress through Job's book. What else could the devil do to Job after destroying his entire value system? The disturbing answer to that question is that Job will also lose his sense of worth and dignity in his own personality. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? I pity the young person who throws their life away with alcohol, drugs, or to please a group

of evil-minded conspirators. Only God attaches any value whatsoever to the entity known as mankind. We're only more valuable than the birds of the air because Christ died for us. Our worth is measured only in the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

During the dark ages, a brilliant scholar fell sick and was picked up off of the side of the highway by a passerby. The doctors thought the man was a drunken bum. They contemplated whether or not to operate on what they deemed a seemingly worthless creature. See, the devil wants us to lose our own worth and dignity because, when we do, we also lose our sense of compassion and respect for human life. When the devil gets us in that choke hold, we will inevitably lose our sense of love and justice. At that point, we will become critical and cynical — and that's exactly what is going to happen to Job before this story is over....

13 For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,

14 With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

15 Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

16 Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light.

17 There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

18 There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

19 The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.

20 Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul;

21 Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

22 Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?

23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?

24 For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.

25 For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.

26 I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

~ So, Job perceives death as annihilation. His main complaint is the oblivion of death has been denied him. There are two things Job says in this chapter; one, he wishes he had never even been born and, two, having been born, he wishes he had died at birth. There simply isn't any relief for Job at this time. This chapter is wonderful language, and is certainly dramatic. Job pictures death as preferable to being alive. Job has sunk very low at this time. Life is nothing but a burden to Job now. He doesn't want to continue living. Job says that the feeling of a miner discovering gold couldn't be better than the feeling he would have if he could just stop existing. That's bad, friends – really bad.

This poor man is in a desperate and desolate condition. Job feared all of this even when he was living in the lap of luxury – and, here it is. That's the fear of a whole bunch of people today, too; and, as a result, they reach for that security blanket of worldly stuff in all manner of different things. Of course, they don't reach out for the Savior. How many of us are truly trusting the Bible as our security blanket? Job didn't have a Bible; in fact, this is the oldest book of the Bible! Trouble has come to Job, and it almost appears that he has lost his faith in God; but he hasn't. This is just the

naturally bitter complaint of a man who tastes the dregs in the bottom of his cup of life. Job doesn't understand *any* of this, either.

We need to understand that while the words Job's friends speak are recorded in Scripture — and our record is inspired — that doesn't make those words true! Satan was *NOT* inspired to tell a lie, but the record tells us the devil *DID* lie! Many people assume that, just because something is written in the Bible, that automatically means the thing is true. Well, we must understand who is saying what about whom and at what time regarding what topic before we can discern the accuracy of any statement. In the Book of Job, we need to be *VERY* aware of this need for context. I have spent a lot of type and space on this because it *MUST* be understood to understand the dialogue we're going to consider as we move forward. This is the main reason most well-meaning Christians thoroughly misquote and misunderstand the Book of Job.

Job's three so-called friends have been sitting by him for three days wagging their head in condescension; silently asserting Job has finally been caught in a sinful lifestyle. The statements Job has now made don't contain the answer to his problems; it's just black pessimism. That's where our Spiritual Safari will have to leave Job in this report, too. As we continue on in our expedition, his three friends begin to talk with him. Maybe I should say they talk *AT* Job. The first will be Eliphaz — whose name means "*God is strength*" or "*God is fine gold*;" and Eliphaz will give three speeches. Then, Job will answer him each time. Bildad, whose name means "*son of contention*" will chime in; and Bildad is one very mean man — brutal, crude and blunt in his method. Job will answer him, too. After that, the same will happen with Zophar; whose name means "*sparrow*" — he twitters — and his tongue is as mean as Bildad's. Maybe worse. He makes scandalously untrue insinuations about Job. Job is heading for a difficult time with his three friends in our safari. Unfortunately, when we are in trouble, we can almost always count on more trouble — usually coming from those who are closest to us ~

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