

# SOME KIND OF COUNSELING!

## (Scripture - Job 5:8-11)

**Introduction:** Just imagine if Job were living among us, and he was going through a similar situation, how would we have counseled him? We would have sat with him and prayed, and would have shared the love and mercy of God, and not the wrath of God with a righteous person like him, probably had holy communion to confess, reconcile, reestablish our new covenant of grace in Christ together. I am sure, spiritually, and morally, Job would have been comforted and lifted.

But the counselors here, the friends of Job, started accusing Job using many Scripture passages, and they aggravated him. It is easy to push away our children and loved ones through wrong kind of counseling and we have been doing it! We quote numerous Bible passages out of context incorrectly and push our loved ones away. This book is a serious warning for all of us, and it teaches us what not to say. So, let us carefully follow the tone of every person in the book of Job, and try to avoid such wrong counseling with our loved ones and friends.

We saw last week, the dream of Eliphaz, and what the Spirit whispered before him! Let me just bring it to your remembrance:

**Job 4:17. 17'Can a mortal be more righteous than God?  
Can a man be more pure than his Maker?**

Even though this statement is true, it was unnecessarily applied by Eliphaz in Job's context. Job never claimed that he was purer and more righteous than his God. What Job was lamenting about was, "Lord, what did I do wrong that I experience such harsh punishment? Can somebody tell me why it happened?"

So the vision of angelic spirit in Eliphaz's life was irrelevant in Job's context,

Also, we are not sure if the following verses in the fourth chapter after vs 17 is the continuation of that dream! It could very well be Eliphaz's perspective and opinion, and not the voice of the Spirit!

**Job: 4:18-21. If God places no trust in his servants,  
if he charges his angels with error,**

**19**how much more those who live in houses of clay,  
whose foundations are in the dust,  
who are crushed more readily than a moth!  
**20**Between dawn and dusk they are broken to pieces.  
unnoticed, they perish forever.  
**21**Are not the cords of their tent pulled up,

so that they die without wisdom?’

Here Eliphaz brings out the example of the fallen angels who rebelled against God, and thereby faced the severe judgement of God.

Basically, Eliphaz was saying, if God brings judgement on those powerful heavenly hosts, how can we escape who are made of clay or dust. We cannot stand before God and argue as though we are righteous. We will be squashed like a moth!

Also, if those holy angels fall so easily and commit sin, how can we as mortals expect to live holy life always? So in many different ways, Eliphaz started accusing that Job was a condemned sinner. Now Eliphaz challenges Job!

Job 5:1.1“Call now, is there anyone who will answer you?  
And to which of the holy ones will you turn?

Eliphaz implies here that not only God abandoned Job, but the whole community had rejected him, even the holy ones among them? The community rejected Job because they treated his disease more like a contagious disease. They ran away from Job as though he was a leper. Also, they all felt that Job was being punished for his sins. No one believed that he was innocent! No one would agree with him and defend him. What a miserable life! So Eliphaz had the popular opinion and popular vote - 99 percent!

The following verses are more like proverbs. So, I'll just go through some of them quickly. Now Eliphaz started calling Job as fool indirectly!

Job: 5:2-5. For anger slays the foolish man,  
And jealousy kills the simple.  
3“I have seen the foolish taking root,  
And I cursed his abode immediately.  
4“His sons are far from safety,  
They are even oppressed in the gate,  
And there is no deliverer.  
5“His harvest the hungry devour  
And take it to a place of thorns,  
And the schemer is eager for their wealth.

You can see that these texts are from proverbial wisdom literature. Now job was charged indirectly as a foolish, jealous person. His children and wealth were probably taken away because of his foolish attitude. Very serious charge indeed! Scriptural texts from proverbs were pulled out of the Bible and were applied indiscreetly in Job's life! Eliphaz started throwing Scriptural principles like stones to hurt Job, and not to heal him.

The next passage tries to validate the previous passage about foolish behavior!

Job 5:6,7. 6“For affliction does not come from the dust,  
Nor does trouble sprout from the ground,  
7For man is born for trouble,  
As sparks fly upward.

Trouble does not come from dust or ground, in other words, we create our own problems because of our own foolishness?

Or trouble comes because of their sins and their sinful nature. Trouble did not spring out like a weed overnight. Neither his trouble was random or accidental? Job's sin was direct result of his sin? But this blanket statement is not always true.

Human suffering is not always due to sin. There may be other reasons also for human sufferings!

Another way to look at this passage as the inaction that results from death. "Affliction does not come from the dust, nor does trouble sprout from the ground." But the problems stem from our life itself, our struggles from survival for our very existence brings out various problems in our lives. It shoots up like sparks from the stems of life itself. Very poetic!

The next few verses vs 8-16 are written more like psalms. Again, Eliphaz started throwing more random Scriptural principles at Job!

Job 5:8-11 8"But as for me, I would seek God,  
And I would place my cause before God;  
9Who does great and unsearchable things,  
Wonders without number.  
10"He gives rain on the earth  
And sends water on the fields,  
11So that He sets on high those who are lowly,  
And those who mourn are lifted to safety.

Here Eliphaz was accurate in describing who God is, and he tells Job what Eliphaz would do if he were in Job's shoes!

He would seek God, unlike Job.  
He would bring his cause before the Lord!  
God will lift those who are lowly.  
And He comforts those who mourn.

Then Eliphaz adds more Scriptural principles.

Job: 5:12-15. 12"He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd,  
So that their hands cannot attain success.  
13"He captures the wise by their own shrewdness,  
And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.  
14"By day they meet with darkness,  
And grope at noon as in the night.  
15"But He saves from the sword of their mouth, And the poor from the hand of the mighty.

Here again proverbial wisdom shows up to verse 16.. You can read it for yourself. But these Scriptural quotes does not apply to Job. Comparing Job with the wicked, it only makes the matter worse for him!

But then Eliphaz brings out an important point about God in the following passage.

Job 5:16-18. 16“So the helpless has hope,  
And unrighteousness must shut its mouth.  
17“Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproveth,  
So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.  
18“For He inflicts pain, and gives relief;  
He wounds, and His hands also heal.

God is the help of the helpless! He will intervene in His time and deliver His people. But God is not going to hear the cries of the wicked. When calamity happens to those who mock God with their lives, God will laugh at them.

Eliphaz speaks the Word of truth in vs 17,18. Blessed are they whom God reproveth! God does not reprove the wicked. He let them go according to their own foolishness and fall into their own snares. But with the righteous, He will reprove, and put a brake to their foolish ride toward evil and destruction. So, the suffering we reap due to God's anger is indeed a blessing in disguise! God chastens whom He loves!

So, thank God for His correction and chastening! He may inflict pain on us, but eventually He will relieve our pain, He will hurt us, but He will heal us also! Great words of wisdom!

The following passage is like proverbs. God will deliver from seven troubles!

Job:5:19-23 19“From six troubles He will deliver you,  
Even in seven evil will not touch you.  
20“In famine He will redeem you from death,  
And in war from the power of the sword.  
21““You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue,  
And you will not be afraid of violence when it comes.  
22““You will laugh at violence and famine,  
And you will not be afraid of wild beasts.  
23““For you will be in league with the stones of the field,  
And the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.

God will redeem you From Famine,  
In war time from the sword.  
You will be hidden from the scourge of tongues  
You will not be afraid of violence.  
You will laugh at famine and violence.  
You will not be afraid of wild animals.  
You will be in the league with stones of the field,  
The beasts of the field will be at peace with you!

But then Eliphaz adds more blessings from the following verses. Vs 24-27.

Job 5:24-27. 24““You will know that your tent is secure,  
For you will visit your abode and fear no loss.  
25““You will know also that your descendants will be many,  
And your offspring as the grass of the earth.  
26““You will come to the grave in full vigor,

Like the stacking of grain in its season.  
27“Behold this; we have investigated it, and so it is. First  
Hear it, and know for yourself.”

Your tent will be secured.  
You will fear no loss  
Your descendants will be many  
You will come to the grave in full vigor

First you hear these Scriptural principles, and then you experience or know for yourself!

Many words of wisdom, but most of them would aggravate Job rather than comfort him. This is some kind of counseling. There is evil in many words. This kind of preachy counseling will destroy the listener, and not comfort him or her. Are we not doing the same thing to our children and loved ones? We try to spray the Scriptural principles like bullets and try to blow them away! That is not a good counseling. This chapter teaches us how not to do it. Let me summarize it in my conclusion.

## **Conclusion:**

1. Be specific when you quote Scripture passages. It must pierce the soul like laser surgery and must perform precision surgery to remove the spiritual cancer cells out of our body. That means we must be highly skilled in what we are doing. Not everyone can counsel.
2. Don't use the Word of God in general and apply it in the wrong context. Such practice will cause more harm than good as in the case of Job.
3. Do not judge others and come to a hasty conclusion. Eliphaz did. We do not have the complete picture of everything, what was God's role, what was Satan's role, what was the person's actions and inactions that resulted in calamity, what was the outside circumstances, what was other people's roles etc. There is too much information we do not know!
4. Do not counsel anyone if you are not led by the Lord to do so. Many marriages have gone worse, many parent/children relationship have become sour because of bad counseling. Beware!
5. If you were not led to do counseling, just be with that person, and speak words of comfort when they are writhing in pain and pray for them. Do not be tempted to go after who, what, when, where, how, why details of their situation unless they are willing to share and ask for your guidance. Most of the time, people just want us to listen to their feelings and empathize their situations.

Remember, God has given very powerful Word of wisdom. We can use it as a healing balm or use it as a dynamite to blow people up. Beware how you handle the Word of God!

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