

The weight of his calamity, vv.2-3

- I. Eliphaz's counsel reveals that he's not honestly taken into account just how great Job's calamity is. He's come with a diagnosis and cure but never fully examined the patient.
 - A. He would've been far less critical of Job and much more patient and forbearing with his outburst if he'd duly weighed his loss.
- II. So the first thing Job highlights is the weight of his calamity.
 - A. In effect, Job says if you put his complaints in Chp 3 on one side of a scale and his calamity from Chps 1-2 on the other, his calamity far outweighs his complaints!
 - B. His is not the complaining of a fool, but the testimony of overwhelming misery and pain. He hasn't complained without cause. In fact, he's not complained as much as he had cause.
 - C. That's why his words in Chp 3 were rash. They were cut short and bungled by the greatness of his grief. He couldn't express himself any better or more clearly because his indescribable grief swallowed up his words and muddled his speech.

The source of his calamity, v.4

- I. He calls his afflictions *arrows* because, like the arrows used in war, they've come upon him speedily, unexpectedly, silently, and sharply.
- II. And he calls them *terrors* arrayed against him because they've surrounded him like a besieging army, which terrifies the soul.
- III. But, still, what makes these arrows and terrors so terrifying is that they've come from the Almighty Himself. *This* is what troubles Job most of all; and *this* is what his friends couldn't see.
 - A. He definitely felt all his temporal losses; but what cut him to the heart more than all was to think that the God he loved and served had laid him under the marks of His displeasure.
 - B. Job saw himself as one experiencing God's anger; and it was *this* that gave way to the outburst in Chp 3.

The reasonableness of his complaint, vv.5-7

- I. A comparison from the animal kingdom.
 - A. If brute beasts have the sense to only complain when they have cause, can Job be found guilty or counted unreasonable if he complains when he has not only cause, but such cause as he has!?

- II. A comparison from the dinner table.
 - A. How can Eliphaz be surprised or upset if Job refuses to take his advice, when everything he offered him in Chps 4-5 was insipid and inedible? Eliphaz's counsel makes Job sick to his stomach.
 - B. Of course, Eliphaz's medicine wasn't bad in itself. But it was wrong in Job's case. He'd brought the prescription for a hypocrite; but Job, *says the Lord* (Job 1.1, 8; 2.3), is no hypocrite.

Reflections for Application

- I. There are several instructions here for dealing with sufferers.
 - A. We need to exercise the greatest sympathy and sensitivity when ministering to the hurting. When we sit with the hurting, if we want to be of any help to them, we've got to learn how to take their suffering to heart and how to put ourselves in their place, cp. Lam 1.12
 - B. We need to see that afflictions are heavy burdens—especially afflictions that strike the soul, Pr 18.14. We should never underestimate the weight & heaviness of a broken spirit.
 - C. We need to see that great burdens have a real affect on what a person says and does.
 - D. We need to see what a grief it is to the hurting when we don't seem to be sensible of their grief.
 - E. *How clear it is that we need to pray to God for the grace and help to be real comforters to sufferers. We need to pray for true fellow-feelings, for the ability to see the real cause hidden behind all the symptoms, and for the wisdom to know what medicine to offer a sufferer.
- II. There's a sharp warning here for the impenitent.
 - A. If righteous Job cried out like this, then what will you do when God shoots His poisonous arrows at you!?
- III. This passage points to the great comfort sufferers have in Jesus
 - A. How thankful we should be that Christ is a shield and fortress about us from the wrath of God, Ps 17.8; 27.5; 91.1-10!
 - B. How thankful we should be that Christ has thoroughly weighed our sorrows and is full of fellow-feeling in all our afflictions (Isa 53.7; Ps 9.12; Mt 8.17; Heb 4.15)!
 - 1. No wonder He can comfort us in all our afflictions (2Cor 1.4).
 - 2. Let us go to Him today with all our sorrows, for He will uphold us, comfort us, and be our joy.