



Eternal PERSPECTIVE Job

BIBLE TEXT | JOB 23:1-17

1 Then Job answered and said: **2** "Today also my complaint is bitter; my hand is heavy on account of my groaning. **3** Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat! **4** I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. **5** I would know what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me.. **6** Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; he would pay attention to me. **7** There an upright man could argue with him, and I would be acquitted forever by my judge **8**."Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I do not perceive him; **9** on the left hand when he is working, I do not behold him; he turns to the right hand, but I do not see him. **10** But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold. **11** My foot has held fast to his steps; I have kept his way and have not turned aside. **12** I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food. **13** But he is unchangeable,[\[b\]](#) and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does. **14** For he will complete what he appoints for me, and many such things are in his mind. **15** Therefore I am terrified at his presence; when I consider, I am in dread of him. **16** God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has terrified me; **17** yet I am not silenced because of the darkness, nor because thick darkness covers my face.

DEVOTIONAL FOR JOB 23:1-17

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Every night, my 5 year-old son bravely climbs into his bed and goes right to sleep. Every night, about 3:30AM, he wakes up and realizes that he's surrounded by darkness and feels far away from us. Every night, he quietly walks across the dark house, climbing into our bed where he can feel comforted. While part of me wants to kick his tiny-hiney back to his own bed, I understand that my body is a source of comfort for him. Why would I send him back into a dark room where he feels alone and isolated?

Like a child alone in the dark, Job is suffering and is mourning the complete loss of the presence of God. Second Corinthians 1:1-2 says, "Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all



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comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles so that we may be able to comfort those experiencing any trouble with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." God's presence is Job's only source of comfort and now that presence is gone. None of Job's other trials compare to this isolation. As he complains, he doesn't beg for the restoration of his health, possessions, or family. He simply longs to once again be in God's presence. Job even begs for judgment, confident in his integrity and fully knowing that even judgment would lead to once again being in the presence of the one true God. Job knows that God still sees him and that He will use these trials to refine him, even if the lack of God's presence is crushing him.

As difficult as it is for us to watch this play out, Job was merely foreshadowing what was to come for Jesus on the cross. Jesus, who was never without God's presence, experienced this isolation as well. Our perfect Savior, bloody and hanging on a cross between thieves, yelled out to his Father, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" that is, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*", only to hear... nothing (Matthew 27:46). God the Father turned his back on the sin carried by God the Son on the cross. Jesus felt this soul crushing isolation from the only source of comfort in the entire universe.

Praise God for turning His back on His Son, so that He would never have to turn His back on us. Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, we understand that our life here on earth is as far as we'll ever be from God's immediate presence. As we walk through difficult seasons, even when we hear "radio silence" from our only source of comfort, may we cling to the confidence in who our God is, and the fact that he never truly leaves us, even when he seems so far away (Hebrews 13:5).

Questions:

1. When things get "dark" or "scary", where do you turn for comfort?
2. What do you do when you feel isolated from God? Does he ever actually leave us?
3. What can we learn through our own seasons of struggle? How has God used struggle to refine you?