

The Silver Lining of Anger

Dark Clouds, Silver Linings-part 6

November 9, 2014

DAY 1: The taproot of anger

1. **The Ecclesiastes Experience**--Only God can meet our deepest needs. Nothing else we try will do. A deep sense of loneliness, emptiness or discouragement are dashboard lights, telling us our heart is trusting something other than drawing close to Christ and reflecting Him to others.

2. **The Job Experience**--Fear, anger and depression are also dashboard lights but point us to something different--a deep-seated commitment to get the "life" we think we need and deserve without having to depend on God. This is the taproot of every sin.

a. **Depression** is fueled by a priority belief that **no matter what I do**, I cannot get the "**life**" I believe I **need** and **deserve** in order to be happy.

b. **Fear** occurs when it appears to me that **I may not get** what I believe I need and deserve in order to be happy.

c. **Anger** occurs when someone or something **blocks** what I believe I need and deserve in order to be happy.

3. Much Christian preaching has paraded a rainbow-filled life. Follow the yellow brick road. You won't find that in the book of Job. Reading Job is like watching a great heavy-weight fight. There are three combatants. (1) Job, (2) his friends, and (3) God. For 35 chapters God only receives punches and roundhouse hooks. He throws nary a jab.

4. Starting with Job 3, Job unleashes his anger, sarcasm, scorn, frustration, and aggravation. Job lambasts God, challenges Him with an oath, baits Him to act, is abusive, and on the attack.

Job 9:17 He would crush me with a storm and multiply my wounds for no reason.

¹⁸*He would not let me regain my breath but would overwhelm me with misery.*

5. What strikes you from Job's fury toward God, and his accusations of God's character?

Job 9:23 When a scourge brings sudden death, he mocks the despair of the innocent.

*Job 9:30 Even if I washed myself with soap and my hands with washing soda,
³¹you would plunge me into a slime pit so that even my clothes would detest me.*

6. Job's anger is raw. What strikes you from these two verses in Job 9?

7. When was the last time you sensed anger at God? Which of the verses above most closely resembled the anger you sensed in your heart? How so?

DAY 2: Anger: Yelling for the reason why

1. Job's faith in Job 1 and 2 hits the wall in chapter 3.

*Job 3:20 "WHY is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul,
²¹ to those who long for death that does not come, who search for it more than for hidden
treasure,*

²² who are filled with gladness and rejoice when they reach the grave?

2. Job's life has caved in on him. His ten children are dead, and all his flocks and herds are gone. He is confused about God and the tragedies of life.

3. What is the essence of his complaint in Job 3:20-22?

4. What does this reveal about Job's inner world? What is he feeling? What is he thinking?

5. What is he struggling with?

Job 3:23 "WHY is life given to a man whose way is hidden, whom God has hedged in?

6. Back in Job 1, Satan claimed that Job was only devoted to God because of the blessings God gave Job, and that God had put a hedge of protection around him.

7. Notice how Job sees God's ways in his life. "*God has hedged (me) in.*" What do you think is Job's complaint against God?

8. Job's angry complaint about God and those who are on the edge of life now becomes personal. His theories about God's perceived inequity is now his own!

9. There are times in life where we question God's working in life. As long as we believe God *should* be working to make my life more manageable, provide blessings, and put up a hedge of protection against pain, when suffering hits we are going to be angry at God!

10. What strikes you from Job's story, today?

DAY 3: Yelling back in anger

1. Job's anger turns to fury!

*Job 7:11 "Therefore I will not keep silent; I will speak out in the anguish of my spirit, I will **complain** in the **bitterness of my soul**.*

¹² *Am I the sea, or the monster of the deep, that you put me under guard?*

¹³ *When I think my bed will comfort me and my couch will ease my complaint,*

¹⁴ *even then you frighten me with dreams and terrify me with visions,*

¹⁵ *so that I prefer strangling and death, rather than this body of mine.*

¹⁶ *I despise my life; I would not live forever. Let me alone; my days have no meaning.*

¹⁷ *"What is man that you make so much of him, that you give him so much attention,*

¹⁸ *that you examine him every morning and test him every moment?*

¹⁹ *Will you never look away from me, or let me alone even for an instant?*

²⁰ *If I have sinned, **what have I done to you, O watcher of men? Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you?***

²¹ *Why do you not pardon my offenses and forgive my sins? For I will soon lie down in the dust; you will search for me, but I will be no more."*

2. By Job 7, his anger has grown to bitterness (v.11).

3. Job then unleashes a series of eight questions. Place an "x" next to the words would you use to characterize the tone of his questions.

___ Cynical

___ Bitter

___ Angry

___ Sarcastic

___ Skewed vision of God

___ Accusatory

___ Arrogant

___ Scorn

___ Defiant

___ Rhetorical

Other: _____

4. Look back at Job's eight questions. Which one or two resonate the most with you? Why?

5. We would say, "I just can't take it anymore! What don't YOU DO SOMETHING?!?!"

6. There are times in life where we just cannot figure out what God is doing. He may seem distant, or in Job's case, God may seem like your enemy.

7. It's encouraging to know that when this happens to you, you are not alone. It seems to me that everyone has their "Job-Experience."

8. How are you moved to pray after reading today's passage?

DAY 4: Anger exposes our demanding spirit

1. Nobody likes to think of themselves as being entitled or having a demanding spirit. But anger exposes the truth that we have both. They may be hidden deeply in our hearts, but anger brings the reality of both to the surface.

Job 16:11 God has turned me over to evil men and thrown me into the clutches of the wicked.

¹² *All was well with me, but he shattered me; he seized me by the neck and crushed me. He has made me his target;*

¹³ *his archers surround me. Without pity, he pierces my kidneys and spills my gall on the ground.*

¹⁴ *Again and again he bursts upon me; he rushes at me like a warrior.*

2. Job's continued complaint is, "What did I do to deserve *this?!?*" But notice, this question is not a "knowledge" question. It is an accusatory question! Write out in your own words what you think Job is screaming at God.

3. Underline every phrase where Job accuses God of wrongdoing.

4. Circle the words or phrases that imply that God is something of a merciless hunter or merciless warrior.

5. What stirs in you as you read these words Job utters about God?

6. If you were God, and someone uttered these statements about you, how would you respond?

7. How do the words in these verses reflect a, "*I deserve better than this,*" belief?

8. Do any of the verse in today's passage reflect something you've been through? Have you ever felt like Job? Which of his statements are most reflective of a time you've been through?

DAY 5: Anger exposes our arrogance, the deepest driver of our sin.

1. Anger also exposes our arrogance. We trust our own eyes, our feelings, our thoughts, and our perspective. We forget that we are finite, temporal, and mere mortals. Somehow, our theology about God goes flying out the window! That God is infinite, eternal, sovereign, Creator, and judge escapes us.

2. Let's take another look at Job's anger-spewing diatribe at God, laden with sarcasm and satire. One writer calls this section, "Hailing the King of Chaos."

Job 12:13 "To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

¹⁴ *What he tears down cannot be rebuilt; the man he imprisons cannot be released.*

¹⁵ *If he holds back the waters, there is drought; if he lets them loose, they devastate the land.*

¹⁶ *To him belong strength and victory; both deceived and deceiver are his.*

¹⁷ *He leads counselors away stripped and makes fools of judges.*

¹⁸ *He takes off the shackles put on by kings and ties a loincloth around their waist.*

¹⁹ *He leads priests away stripped and overthrows men long established.*

²⁰ *He silences the lips of trusted advisers and takes away the discernment of elders.*

²¹ *He pours contempt on nobles and disarms the mighty.*

²² *He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings deep shadows into the light.*

3. How would you characterize this passage? What strikes you immediately about Job?

4. Job's words are full of:

- a. "God, you're not only treating me unjustly, but you're treating everyone unjustly!"
- b. "God, look at all the good people you treat poorly!"
- c. "What are you doing?! If I was in charge, this world would be a very different place!"

5. Job places himself in the judge's seat. His arrogance lifts him higher than God, making him God's judge.

6. We are so wrapped up in ourselves, getting our deepest needs as highest priority, that we miss:

- That God Himself is our first treasure, first pleasure, the joy of being in a relationship that really is undeserved, a love freely given, cannot be lost, that enjoys your presence and your company every day.
- God's purpose in our lives: to love Him and the people in our lives like we already love ourselves. To reflect the goodness of God in a dark world.

7. What is the silver lining of anger? As long as we arrogantly believe we know better, we are going to miss life's greatest treasure and God's greatest purpose for our lives. We usually don't realize these important truths without suffering, and as our arrogance is exposed for the folly it is. THEN we ask, how does God still love someone like me, after all the awful things I have thought about Him?