

Job's Friends

Job 2:11-13

We all need friends – this story about Job shows us that. Even when we don't want them around, we need friends. God created us for His fellowship, and even after Adam sinned, God made a way for that fellowship to be restored. That's how important it is to God, and that's how important it is to us.

Proverbs 17:17

17 A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Proverbs 18:24

24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Proverbs 27:10

10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.

John 15:13-15

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

His three friends are named for us in the Scripture. It shows us how important they were – important enough to Job, who was important enough to the Lord, that they are named for us. How important are our friends to us? These friends of Job would not be kind to him, as the story unfolds, and they, in fact,

seemed to turn on him. But, let's not be too hasty to condemn them – they were being true friends through most of it.

I. HIS FRIENDS "HEARD" – VS. 11A

A. *It doesn't say how they heard, but considering how important Job was to the region, and how well known he would have been, and considering what had happened to his family and his possessions, it doesn't take much imagination to figure out how he heard.*

B. *Once they did hear, it would appear that they contacted each other, and came as quickly as they could.*

C. *When we face trials in our life, it is good that our true friends hear – a true friend will respond when he hears.*

II. HIS FRIENDS "CAME" – VS. 11B

A. *It's not enough just to hear about a friend's calamities – if we don't go and see if we can help, we're not much of a friend.*

[2 Timothy 4:11](#)

¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

B. *Job's friends came – it would appear they came as quickly as they could, and they came together – "they had made an appointment together to come"*

C. They came for two reasons – the same two reasons we should help our friends:

1. "To mourn with him"

Romans 12:15

¹⁵ Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Hebrews 13:3

³ Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

2. "To comfort him" (has the idea of being sorry for the other person and the situation he was facing)

Genesis 37:35

³⁵ And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

John 11:19

¹⁹ And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

III. HIS FRIENDS "SAT DOWN WITH HIM" – VS. 12-13

A. Once they saw him from a distance, they didn't recognize him – the characteristics that made him recognizable had been so disfigured from the boils that he was unrecognizable – "and when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not"

B. When they saw him, they were so moved with compassion for what had happened to Job that they started weeping before they even got to him. Their mourning started before they got to him – that’s how bad things were for Job – vs. 12b.

C. "So they sat down with him" – this was a custom in the Middle East at that time – it was to show their "participation" in the trial he was facing.

Ezra 9:3

³ And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.

Nehemiah 1:4

⁴ And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

Lamentations 2:10

¹⁰ The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

Ezekiel 3:15

¹⁵ Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

Last spring, Mr. Alter's fifth-grade class at Lake Elementary School in Oceanside, California, included fourteen boys who had no hair. Only one, however, had no choice in the matter. Jan O'Gorman,

undergoing chemotherapy for lymphoma, faced the prospect of having his hair fall out in clumps. So he had his head shaved. But then 13 of his classmates shaved their heads, so Jan wouldn't feel out of place.

"If everybody has his head shaved, sometimes people don't know who's who," said 11-year-old Scott Sebelius in an Associated Press story (March 1994). "They don't know who has cancer, and who just shaved their head." Ten-year-old Kyle Hanslik started it all. He talked to some other boys, and before long they all trekked to the barber shop.

"The last thing he would want is to not fit in," said Kyle. "We just wanted to make him feel better." Jan's father, Shawn, choked back tears as he talked about what the boys had done. He said simply, "It's hard to put words to."

D. Things were so bad for Job, that they didn't say a thing to him for 7 days and nights.

Psalm 77:1-4

¹ I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

² In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

³ I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

⁴ Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

***E. The reason for that is given at the end of
verse 13 – "for they saw that his grief
was very great"***

Conclusion: How are we at being a friend?

Around the corner I have a friend,
In this great city that has no end.
Yet days go by and weeks rush on,
And before I know it a year is gone,
And I never see my old friend's face;
For life is a swift and terrible race.
He knows I like him just as well
As in the days when I rang his bell
And he rang mine. We were younger then...
And now we are busy, tired men...
Tired with playing a foolish game;
Tired with trying to make a name.
"Tomorrow," I say, "I will call on Jim,
"Just to show that I'm thinking of him."
But tomorrow comes -- and tomorrow goes;
And the distance between us grows and grows.
Around the corner! -- yet miles away...
"Here's a telegram, Sir."

"Jim died today."

And that's what we get -- and deserve in the end --
Around the corner; a vanished friend.

-- By Henson Towne