

Title: Zophar's Parting Shot and Job's Rejoinder (Part 2)

Number: 0721Job21:1-34(22)

Text: 21.1-34

Central Idea: *When accused unjustly flee from God to God*

Date: July 25, 2021

{Read Selected Text / Prayer}

20:1-7 1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered, 2 “Therefore my disquieting thoughts make me respond, Even because of my inward agitation. 3 “I listened to the reproof which insults me, And the spirit of my understanding makes me answer. 4 “Do you know this from of old, From the establishment of man on earth, 5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the godless momentary? 6 “Though his loftiness reaches the heavens, And his head touches the clouds, 7 He perishes forever like his refuse; Those who have seen him will say, ‘Where is he?’

21:7-9 7 Why do the wicked still live, Continue on, also become very powerful? 8 "Their descendants are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes, 9 Their houses are safe from fear, And the rod of God is not on them.

[i] I came across this quote a few weeks ago as I was reading through 2 Corinthians

“Few portions of the New Testament pose as many problems for translators and interpreters as does 2 Corinthians. Few, therefore, are the preachers who undertake a systematic exposition of its contents.”

. . . Few . . . are the preachers who undertake a systematic exposition of its contents.”

I never knew that about 2 Cor.

Not seen any shortage of men preaching thru that book.

[ii] But I can say that about the BOJ

Preacher friend of mine was greatly surprised to hear that we are going thru the entire book, chapt by chapt (& usu. v. by v.).

I thot I'd check sermonaudio.com which may be t/largest database of sermons avail. Were lots of sermons on Job. I only found 1 person who systematically preached thru t/entire book: 44 sermons.

We are on that sort of pace. In fact, after this morning we will be 1/2 way thru t/book and today's message is #22.

My good friend Reid Ferguson preached systematically thru Proverbs. He later said that he would not likely do that again & would not recommend others do it either. That's kinda how I feel about Job . . .

May not always be good preaching. I do my best to be accurate. May seem redundant at times, but that's why so few do it. I'd like to say that U R witnessing a spectac. feat—but that sounds too self-serving!

[iii] This is part 2 of “The Last Words of Zophar and Job’s rejoinder”

We looked at Zophar’s last words in chapter 21 last week.

We will examine Job’s rejoinder (his response) this am.

As far as application is concerned, 1 key point I’ve been driving home

When accused (or suffering unjustly flee from God to God.

[iv] Last week I quoted Chuck Swindoll when he said that:

“The most treacherous enemy in the church is the tongue.”

That enemy, t/danger of our unrestrained words, hasn't changed.

What can be said about t/NT CH can also be said of t/days of Job over 4k yrs ago. Eliphaz, Bildad & esp. Zophar are noteworthy in that regard

Their accusation: That Job is suffering for his sin, flow from their faulty worldview

[v] Last time I gave you a lesson in deductive logic that may have left a few of you confused

As an example I gave you 3 points of a valid deductive argument, one that expresses their faulty worldview ==>

1. *The Wicked Suffer Calamity*
2. *Job is Suffering Calamity*
3. *Job is Wicked*

I said that this is a valid deductive argument in that t/conclusion follows t/premises. They are logically consistent. It's valid.

For an argument to be true, it doesn't only need to be valid, it must also be sound.

Example: I could say that all spiders have 6 legs; A tarantula is a spider; therefore, a tarantula has 6 legs.

That is a valid argument.

If it's true that spiders have 6 legs & that a tarantula is a spider ==>
then a tarantula has 6 legs.

It's valid, but it's not sound. IOW - it's not true because arachnids
have 8 legs, not 6.

ISW it may be valid to argue that ==>

1. *The Wicked Suffer Calamity*
2. *Job is Suffering Calamity*
3. *Therefore, Job is Wicked*

But it's not a sound argument.

It's not true that t/wicked always suffer disaster in this life—or that
those who do are necessarily wicked.

So a good deductive argument is both valid (logically consistent) &
sound (true).

[vi] That brings us back to Zophar in chapter 20 . . .

His argument matches his faulty view of how things work in G's econ

[vii] To Review our outline from last week:

I. The Last Words of Zophar (20:1–29)

A. The Wicked Die Young (20:4–11)

B. The Wicked Have Temporary Pleasure (20:12–22)

C. The Wicked Die Painful Deaths (20:23–29)

These are Zophar's last words (we don't hear from him again in t/bk).

But then we have ==>

II. Job's Rejoinder (21:1–34)

whereby he refutes each of Zophar's 3 points:

A. The Wicked Do Live Long Lives (21:7, 14-15, 16-21)

B. The Wicked Do Live Pleasurable Lives (21:8-13, 16)

C. The Wicked Do Die the Same as the Righteous (21:22-34)

Each of Job's 3 points addresses those of Zophar.

Point by point, Job takes Zophar's speech & shreds it to bits.

Let's look at that starting in v. 1 of t/21st chapter ==>

II. Job's Rejoinder (21:1-34)

Job's 1st point =>

A. The Wicked Do Live Long Lives (21:7, 14-15, 16-21)

First ==>

1. Introductory Comments (vv. 1-6)

3 words ==>

1 Then Job answered, [Zophar]

a. I don't think this has been a shouting match

I think t/atmosphere at t/town dump was at times a little heated, but mostly matter-of-fact.

(1) One can picture Job taking a deep breath with a heavy sigh

2 "Listen carefully to my speech, And let this be your way of consolation.

(b) Job wants them to do 2 things: Listen and find comfort in his words

(1) How can they find "comfort" in what Job has to say?

(a) There may be a bit of sarcasm here

Like saying: “Please listen carefully to what I have to say; this is the only comfort I expect from you,”

“Job ironically observes that the biggest consolation his friends could offer him would be to say nothing at all. Their speeches defending the doctrine of retribution have made them into “torturer-comforters” (16:2), even though they themselves (or Eliphaz at least) have represented their words as “God’s encouragements” (15:11).” [David J.A.

Clines, Job 21–37, vol. 18a, Word Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006), 522]

b. Job is pleading for a little patience

3 “Bear with me that I may speak; Then after I have spoken, you may mock.

c. He wants them to be patient—even as he justifies his own lack thereof

4 “As for me, is my complaint to man? And why should I not be impatient?

(1) Job’s complaint isn’t ultimately with them—it’s with God

When accused (or suffering) unjustly flee from God to God.

(a) He sees God as sovereign over what’s happened to him

5 “Look at me, and be astonished, And put your hand over your mouth.

d. To put one’s hand over his mouth was symbolic (x3)

(1) Respect

We see that in chapter 29 (Job's last reply to his friends) where he dreams about turning back t/clock:

2 “. . . As in the days when God watched over me; 3 When His lamp shone over my head, And by His light I walked through darkness; 4 As I was in the prime of my days, When the friendship of God was over my tent; 5 When the Almighty was yet with me, And my children were around me;

7 “When I went out to the gate of the city, When I took my seat in the square, 8 The young men saw me and hid themselves, And the old men arose and stood. 9 “The princes stopped talking And put their hands on their mouths; [Respect]

Something else symbolized by putting one's hand over one's mouth:

(2) Horror

Acc to Bildad, pple everywhere are horrified at what befalls t/wicked:

18:20 “Those in the west are appalled at his fate, And those in the east are seized with horror.

That's what Job sees here: Horror at his condition (covered w/infected pus-oozing sores; suffocating grief at t/loss of all things dear to him; feeling abandoned by God).

5 “Look at me, and be astonished, And put your hand over your mouth. 6 “Even when I remember, I am disturbed, And horror takes hold of my flesh.

Respect; Horror; ==>

(3) Awe (As in t/fear of God)

In chapter 40, after t/1st of God's 2 speeches directly addressed to Job, he is struck with a sense of fearful awe ==>

40:4 "Behold, I am insignificant; what can I reply to You? I lay my hand on my mouth.

That's vv. 1-6 which brings us back to our first main point ==>

A. The Wicked Do Live Long Lives (21:7, 14-15, 16-21)

"Zophar, you claim t/wicked die young? I beg to differ."

1. They live on and become strong (v. 7)

7 "Why do the wicked still live, Continue on, also become very powerful?"

a. Here is Job's central question [^]

They still live; continue living; & become strong.

(1) This is Job's counterpart to Zophar's central point in 20:5

20:5 ". . . the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the godless momentary."

1. They live on and become strong (v. 7)

2. They reject God and His ways (vv. 14-15)

14 "They say to God, 'Depart from us! We do not even desire the knowledge of Your ways. 15 'Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him, And what would we gain if we entreat Him?'"

a. Does this not sound like today's naturalistic, godless culture?

In 2002, the Evangelical Union of the University of Sydney hosted a debate between an atheist, journalist Phillip Adams, and evangelical apologist William Lane Craig. The question was the existence & relevance of God.

Here are a few statements by Adams that illustrate a popular perspective:

“I think God, if he, she or it exists, should be ashamed of him, her, or itself. For the last couple of thousand years it has caused us nothing but trouble....”

“I do not respect the Judeo-Christian God because I regard him, or her, or it, as a brute who has created great cruelty and great horror in this world, if he, or she, in fact exists....”

“The one thing which we must agree on is that this division which exists between us—in your [Craig's] case over the existence of God or otherwise—should not stop us working together on the important issues involving justice, compassion and decency. At the end of the day, I have to say, God doesn't matter.” [Cited in David R. Jackson *Crying out for Vindication: The Gospel According to Job*, 68-69]

“At the end of the day, I have to say, God doesn't matter.”

2. The wicked reject God and His ways (vv. 14-15)

14 “They say to God, ‘Depart from us! We do not even desire the knowledge of Your ways. 15 ‘Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him, And what would we gain if we entreat Him?’”

Cf. Exo. 5:2 [Pharaoh] “who is the Lord that I should obey his voice . . . I don't know the Lord!”

3. They Seem to Avoid Calamity (vv. 17-18)

17 **“How often is the lamp of the wicked put out [death], Or does their calamity fall on them? Does God apportion destruction in His anger? 18 “Are they as straw before the wind, And like chaff which the storm carries away?”**

a. In 18:5 Bildad said just the opposite

18:5 “Indeed, the light of the wicked goes out, And the flame of his fire gives no light.

b. Here Job asks, “How often does that really happen?”

He seems to doubt that it happens at all!

c. We need to ask “What if?”

What IF G. designed it that t/moment you pass a certain threshold of sin you physically die?

(1) Everyone would be aware of this “sin meter” within them

“Can’t sin too much or I’ll die. Gotta serve this God or He will bring calamity & then take my life.”

What would this life be like?

(2) Remember — Job is about why a true believer serves God

1:9–11 9 . . . [The] Satan answered the LORD, “Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 “Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

11 “But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.” {expand upon}

(3) And we could ask: “what if believers were always rewarded in this life for being ‘good’”?

Want a bigger bank account; successful relationships; thriving family; a long healthy life? Be obedient to t/God you profess & He will give you all t/stuff in the world you can imagine. Some teach just that.

(4) Why does a true believer serve God?

B/C t/true believer knows Him. He fears Him. He loves Him. Regardless . . . Yes, there are eternal rewards; but that’s not our primary motivation. Our primary motivation is love and gratitude.

d. There’s no settled rule of heaven that doing good always brings happiness in this life & doing bad always brings tragedy (in this life) — but that’s the faulty view of Job’s friends

(1) Not to discount the fact that obedience to God and His ways has great reward—even in this life

That doesn’t mean that t/believer will be spared from tragedy.

A. The Wicked Do Live Long Lives (21:7, 14-15, 16-21)

1. They live on and become strong (v. 7)

2. They reject God and His ways (vv. 14-15)

3. They Seem to Avoid Calamity (vv. 17-18)

Lastly ==>

4. They Seem to Escape Judgment (vv. 19-21)

19 “You say, ‘God stores away a man’s iniquity for his sons.’

[Job is quoting one of t/3 here [^] Job’s response?] **Let God repay him so that he may know it. 20 “Let his own eyes see his decay, And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty. 21 “For what does he care for his household after him, When the number of his months is cut off?**

”You can argue that after t/wicked die their children will face judgement for their father’s sins. But why should that be true? After all, what does t/wicked man care about his family after he’s gone?”

Note 2 things. Only someone terminally depraved would have this attitude. The godless still care about their family’s welfare after they are gone.

Second, God does not judge the children for their father’s sins.

Each 1 is accountable for their own sin. God does not ==>

19 ‘. . . [store] away a man’s iniquity for his sons.’ [Job is mute on that statement]

Deut 24:16 “Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin.”

Jeremiah 31:30 “. . . everyone will die for his own iniquity . . .”

“The soul who sins is the one who will die” (Ezek 18:4)

Children may suffer because of their parent’s wickedness.

A parent may have an affair, an unlawful divorce, a licentious life.

Other’s suffer t/consequences.

A parent may also hate G. and teach that to his children.
They will suffer for that—so long as they continue on in those ways.
That helps explain passages like Exodus 20:5 and Deuteronomy 5:9.

Bottom line is that each one is accountable to G. for their own sin.

I. The Last Words of Zophar (20:1–29)

A. The Wicked Die Young (20:4–11)

II. Job’s Rejoinder (21:1–34)

A. The Wicked Do Live Long Lives (21:7, 14-15, 16-21)

- 1. They live on and become strong (v. 7)***
- 2. They reject God and His ways (vv. 14-15)***
- 3. They Seem to Avoid Calamity (vv. 17-18)***
- 4. They Seem to Escape Judgment (vv. 19-21)***

Not only that, but 2d point ==>

B. The Wicked Do Live Pleasurable Lives (21:8-13, 16)

Six points here . . .

1. They have healthy children (vv. 8, 11)

8 **“Their descendants** [“descendants” transl. t/Heb word for “seed” which usu. means descendants in t/gen. sense] **are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes,**

1. They have healthy children—and grandchildren! (vv. 8, 11)

b. Note also verse 11 ==>

11 **“They send forth their little ones like the flock, And their children skip about.**

I rem. watching a documntry about Heinrich Himler & his family life. It showed family videos of his children skipping about & playing—even sitting in his lap as I remember it.

According to Job, not only do the wicked have healthy children==>

2. They don't experience the discipline of God (v. 9)

9 Their houses are safe from fear, And the rod of God is not on them.

a. "Rod" here being a euphemism for "discipline"

I have a book by 1 of t/Puritans "The Mute Christian Under the Smarting Rod". It's an exhortation for believers to endure G's disc. So it is true: G. does not disc. as children those who are not His.

Hebrews 12:6–8 6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." 7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

3. They have material success (v. 10)

10 "His ox mates without fail; His cow calves and does not abort.

a. Fertility among livestock was considered a sign of God's blessing

Deut. 28:11 "The LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground . . .

Psalm 144:13 Let . . . our flocks bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields;

4. They have joy (v. 12)

12 **“They sing to the timbrel and harp And rejoice at the sound of the flute.**

Picture t/X-Rejector living in t/lap of luxury, having pool parties in their multi-million dollar homes.

5. They are prosperous before they quickly die (v. 13)

13 **“They spend their days in prosperity, And suddenly they go down to Sheol. [the grave]**

a. They die quickly without lingering in illness and suffering

TEV “and quietly die without suffering.”

IOW - they go to their grave in peace.

6. They don’t recognize that all they have is due to God (16)

16a **“Behold, their prosperity is not in their hand . . .**

a. One wonders if Jeremiah had this in mind when he wrote:

Jeremiah 12:1–2 1 . . . Why has the way of the wicked prospered? Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease? 2 You have planted them, they have also taken root; They grow, they have even produced fruit. You are near to their lips But far from their mind.

Job adds==>

16b . . . **The counsel of the wicked is far from me.**

I’m innocent so why do I suffer when t/godless thrive?

Zophar's third point in chapter 20 ==>

C. The Wicked Die Painful Deaths (Job 20:23–29)

Job counters with his 3d point in chapt. 21 ==>

C. The Wicked Do Die the Same as the Righteous (21:22–34)

For the sake of time we'll go thru these vv. quickly . . .

1. Job affirms that God Knows All (v. 22)

22 “Can anyone teach God knowledge, In that He judges those on high?”

a. God Doesn't Learn Anything New

There are views out there that G. learns & grows. “Process theology”. Even t/Openness view of God, whereby it is falsely believed that God does not exhaustively know t/future.

If G. does not know what will happen in t/future; if anything takes Him by surprise, then He is changing. He's gaining knowledge.

That's simply false. He is perfectly omniscient in that He knows t/past, present & future all at once.

It all works according to His eternal plan.

b. As far as his judging those on high (2d half of the verse)

“Those that are on high” translates a single word in Heb., sometimes rendered “the exalted.”

22 Can anyone teach God knowledge, since He judges the exalted ones? [HCSB]

(1) We're not sure who Job has in mind

May be powerful people. May be heavenly beings. Regardless, G. is t/one who has all knowledge; he's t/source of all knowledge.

All truth is God's truth. How can it be otherwise?

1. God knows all

2. Death for All (vv. 23-26)

(1) Here's a picture of two people: One prosperous and happy, the other destitute and bitter (they die the same way according to Job)

23 "One dies in his full strength, Being wholly at ease and satisfied; 24 His sides are filled out with fat, And the marrow of his bones is moist, 25 While another dies with a bitter soul, Never even tasting anything good. 26 "Together they lie down in the dust, And worms cover them.

Worms are indifferent to the status of those corpses they feed upon.

3. Job's Accusation (vv. 27-28)

a. All the second person pronouns used here ("you") are plural indicting that Job is talking about all three friends

27 "Behold, I know your [p1] thoughts, And the plans by which you would wrong me. 28 "For you say, 'Where is the house of the nobleman, And where is the tent, the dwelling places of the wicked?'

b. Sounds like a summation of all that the friend's have said

28a "For you say, 'Where is the house of the nobleman . . . [leader, ruler, prince]

I take it to be a wicked ruler in keeping w/the 2d 1/2 of t. v.

28b . . . **And where is the tent, the dwelling places of the wicked?**

IOW, they are gone! The wicked die short, unfulfilled, lives.

4. Job's Answer (vv. 29-33)

a. Ask those who have been around the block a few times!

29 **“Have you not asked wayfaring men [travelers], And do you not recognize their witness?**

Look around; ask those who have seen it all!

b. You have to note verse 30: NAS translation is unfortunate (follows the KJV)—this gives the answer to question of v. 29

30 **“For the wicked is reserved for the day of calamity; They will be led forth at the day of fury.**

(1) The wicked is reserved for calamity and judgment!?

That's what Zophar has just been arguing! Is Job agreeing with him!

All along Job has argued that t/wicked live long, pleasurable lives.

(2) The problem is the word t/NAS translates “reserved” [^]

(a) Let me read to you a Hebrew lexical entry for this word

3104 שָׁקַד (šā·śāq): v.; ≡ Str 2820; TWOT 765—1. LN 68.34–68.57

(qal) **keep back, to withhold, restrain, halt, i.e., stop an action from occurring** (Ge 22:12); 2. LN 21.17–21.24 (qal) **spare, i.e., cause to be**

free from danger (Ps 78:50); 3. LN 22.35–22.37 (qal) **bring relief,**

i.e., have a favorable circumstance, and so not be in a state of trouble or pain (Job 16:5); (nif) *relieved* (Job 16:6; 21:30+), note: for NIV text in Eze 30:18, see 3124. [James Swanson, Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997)]
Same word is used in Job 16:5 where it's used in the sense of relief.

This isn't ==>

30a **“... the wicked ... reserved for the day of calamity ...**

It's 30a **“... the wicked ... relieved from the day of calamity ...**

(3) Listen to a few better translations:

30 **... the evil man is spared in the day of calamity ... he is rescued in the day of wrath** [ESV]

30 **that the wicked are spared from the day of calamity, that they are delivered from the day of wrath?** [NIV]

30 **Indeed, the evil man is spared from the day of disaster, rescued from the day of wrath.** [HCSB]

This is consistent w/Job's argument: The godless do seem to prosper.

Listen to the words of this commentator ==>

“That the wicked man is spared in the day of calamity: verse 30 is the testimony that can be obtained from travelers who support Job's claim “that when misfortune strikes, the wicked person escapes unhurt.” So Job contradicts the friends' teaching of retribution, being punished for evil.” [UBS Handbook]

c. Job continues to the end of the chapter

31 **“Who will confront him [wicked] with his actions, And who will repay him for what he has done?**

(1) Job does not see any justice!

32 **“While he is carried to the grave, Men will keep watch over his tomb. [honorable burial] 33 “The clods of the valley will gently cover him; Moreover, all men will follow after him, While countless ones go before him.**

This is the way of all flesh according to Job, good and evil alike

5. A Final Question to the three friends (v. 34)

34 **“How then will you vainly comfort me, For your answers remain full of falsehood?”**

a. That last word (“falsehood”) according to one O.T. scholar was a term that meant ‘violation of a sacred object’

It was to profane the sacred. He writes ==>

“Here, Job declares the Friend’s answers to be an act of faithlessness against the truth and by that token against God.” [Gordis, cited in Janzen, 157]

It is 1 thing to speak against truth (bad enough); it’s another to speak against God.

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Closing observations . . .

1. Not Everything Job Claims is Correct

a. He implies that there is no ultimate justice (see that in v. 17)

Not true. More on that in a moment.

b. He implies that there is no difference between the death of a believer and an unbeliever (saw that in vv. 23-25)

Also not true.

2. There is a theological and philosophical necessity for judgment

a. Theological in that this is the teaching of God's Word

There will be a judgment. God does sometimes judge in this life; He will w/o exception judge in t/end. (Rev. 20:11-15).

b. There's also a philosophical-theological element

(1) If there is no God & no judgment, there are no morals

There is nothing that is absolutely evil . . . or good for that matter.

(2) We as a people demand punishment for depraved acts

A man molests children and we are indignant (as we should be).

That man's head should roll! (lit. or fig.).

Many of those who are against the death penalty change their minds if t/crime is egregious enough.

If some degenerate kills his wife, children, and then kills himself there is something w/i us all that cries out for eternal justice. After all, in an

atheistic universe he got off scot-free (in an A.U. what he did wasn't any different than what commonly occurs in the animal K.D. In fact, it was simply t/entirety of his genetic being that cause him to do it in t/first place). Naturalism — biology is destiny.

3. Why the godless prosper and the godly suffer is an age-old question

We've spend a bit of time looking at that already. We'll continue into t/future if God permits.

I was badly injured, our daughter killed, thru t/godless actions of a man driving drunk who should not have been in t/country in 1st place. Yet he survived with a few scratches and bruises. Doesn't seem right.

A few days after Giana passed, I received this note from a friend==>
Words simply can not express the sadness I have right now, knowing how much you are suffering. . . . Even though we haven't seen [Giana] since she was young, my heart is broken. I have such a hard time believing there is a God in times like this. . . . I am on the verge of tears thinking of you on this father's day, wondering what our Father, which art in heaven, really has in His plan...

Dilemma expressed many times in t/OT ==>
Habakkuk 1:13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor. Why do You look with favor On those who deal treacherously? Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up Those more righteous than they?

3. *Why the godless prosper and the godly seem to suffer is an age-old question*

But suffice to say that t/answer to that question is bound up in what we've said already: there will be a reckoning.

Romans 12:19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.

The rest we take by faith. Imp. of an eternal perspective (Psalm 73).

4. A Child of God Dies Differently than those who don't know Christ.

When t/18th c. revivalist John Wesley was asked what differentiated Christians from t/rest of mankind, he replied, "My people die well."

"Our God is the God from whom comes salvation. God is the Lord by whom we escape death." [Martin Luther]

"Live in Christ, die in Christ, and the flesh need not fear death" [John Knox]

Psalm 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His godly ones.

5. God is with us; he's good and just—even if we don't feel that way

“The God of Israel, the Savior, is sometimes a God that hides Himself, but never a God that absents Himself; sometimes in the dark, but never at a distance.” [Matthew Henry]

When accused (or suffering) unjustly flee from God to God.

“Therefore though You slay me, I will trust You.

For if You pursue my iniquity,

I will flee from You to Yourself,

And I will shelter myself from Your wrath in Your shadow,

And to the skirts of Your mercies I will lay hold

Until You have mercy on me.

And I will not let You go till You bless me.”

[From “The Royal Crown” by 11th c. Spanish-Jewish poet Solomon ibn Gabirol, cited in Talbert, 128]

I want to bring this all back to the Cross . . .

Remember Job said of the wicked==>

32 “While he is carried to the grave, Men will keep watch over his tomb. 33 “The clods of the valley will gently cover him; Moreover, all men will follow after him, While countless ones go before him.

There is One who had men, Roman guards, keep watch over His tomb. He wasn’t wicked. He was perfectly righteous. In fact, He was God in the flesh, JC, Job’s God // Savior.

The clods of the valley didn’t cover him.

Peter, one the day of Pentecost, declared of the resurrected Lord==>
Acts 2:31 he [King David] looked ahead and spoke of the
resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED
TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECA Y.
Psalm 16:10 prophetically fulfilled.

"[Christ] has not merely paid the penalty [for our sins, but] also he has
positively merited for us eternal life . . . merited for [us] the reward by
his perfect obedience to God's law." [J. Gresham Machen, cited in
Keller, Prayer, 69]

Therefore, we can run, flee, to our heavenly Father without fear.