

Condensed Milk

"...like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation...." 1 Peter 2:2

Job: The Word on Suffering -- Part 13 (Based on Job 3:1-26)

Is there something spiritually wrong with me if I get the blues or even depressed when life is difficult? Should I feel guilty?

We have noticed that, in God's opinion, there was no one Job's spiritual equal (1:8). And in the first two chapters Job has shown remarkable resilience. But at the end of chapter 2 Job begins to crack. For seven days he says nothing, even to his friends. Then in 3:1-10 Job states that he wishes he had never been born – "May the day of my birth perish, and the night it was said, 'A boy is born!'" Since he was born, however, Job goes on (:11-19) to wish that he had been born dead – "Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb?" Finally, having been born and having survived his birth Job longs to die (:20-26) – "Why is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, to those who long for death that does not come, who search for it more than for hidden treasure...?"

If Job lived today we would say that he was clinically depressed. His true friends would urge him to see a doctor or counsellor and to perhaps take some anti-depressants.

The first lesson we learn from this is that even spiritually grounded people can feel overwhelmed. We have a hard time accepting this of ourselves and in others. When was the last time you told someone that you feel discouraged, that you feel abandoned by God or that you're having a hard time coping with life?

Part of our humanity is having an emotional breaking point. It was true of Job but more importantly it was true of Jesus. It was Jesus who said to his friends, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death..." (Matthew 26:38). If both Job and Jesus could acknowledge the breaking of their emotional strength can't we do so as well?

