

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 19 Based on Job 8

When Job's friends heard and then saw that he was suffering they intended to comfort him. They ended up doing anything but that.

Then Bildad the Shuhite replied: "How long will you say such things? Your words are a blustering wind. Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right? When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin. (8:1-4)

Can you picture the scene? Job is sitting there with a fever, his body covered with burning, itching boils. He's lost everything and recently buried all ten of his children. Understandably he pours out his pain and sorrow to his friends only to hear, "Job, you're nothing but a windbag. But I will defend what is right. Accept it, your children all died in that tragedy because they deserved it."

How did his friends get so far from their good intentions? How can people injure one another so cruelly and maliciously and yet feel justified in doing so? The answer is that wrong behaviour is often justified in the cause of right thinking.

Poor Job, he wished for friends who understood that his words came out of his pain. "If only my anguish could be weighed," he says, "Does a wild donkey bray when it has grass?" (6:2, 5). He wanted someone who could see below the surface of his words and feel something for him.

Isn't that what we want when life hits us hard? We don't want theology. We don't want to be analyzed, corrected, or even advised. We value most those who can look past our words and even our frustration and respond to our sorrow. Thinking right plus acting wrong is always wrong.