

FRIDAY, July 16, 2010:

Job 37:13 *“He causes it to come, whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy.”*

Here is a love story. A young man and a young woman were deeply in love and while he was away with the Navy for three years, he wrote to her every day without fail. At the end of the three years came the happy wedding – she married the postman.

For the young sailor in the above story, the good news was that the girl he loved was falling more and more in love; the bad news was that her feelings of love had nothing to do with him.

The same thing can happen to us sometimes when we are going through tough times. It is easy to wonder what God is up to! But like our verse says, sometimes things happen the way they do “for His land.” In other words, what is going on really has nothing to do with us; God is simply at work taking care of His world. Because we are walking with Him, we end up going through it with Him.

The thing to do is to remind yourself that you'd rather be with God in a storm than to have smooth sailing without Him.

So be of good cheer today. Your storm will pass and a better day will come and when it does, you will be very thankful that you choose to trust God and stay with Him through the tough times.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 8:23-27

SATURDAY, July 17, 2010:

Job 37:13 *“He causes it to come, whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy.”*

Leprosy is a terrible disease. What happens is that you can't feel pain. Your hand could be on a hot stove and you wouldn't even know it until you smelt your flesh burning.

Sometimes we forget that pain is a mercy. A marriage is in greater danger when one or both of the two grow numb toward each other than if they are fighting. When you stop feeling anything, the relationship is on a slippery slope.

When you can go hours and days at a time without hunger pains, it is a sign that something is seriously wrong with you.

When your emotional state is such that you abandon fear and wisdom and embark on a course of recklessness, disaster is not far off.

So today, though it may be painful and hard to bear, the fact that you still feel pain is a sign that you still have the capacity to love, to live and to care. The world has seldom been changed for the good by satisfied people. It has usually been changed by hurting people. They chose to leverage the pain and tragedy for something good.

If you know Sonja and me well, you know that after we had been married about five years we almost lost our marriage. But pain brought us to our senses and caused us to get back in the game and rebuild our relationship. That experience birthed in Sonja a desire to help others save their marriages. Looking back the pain truly was a mercy. I probably would not be writing this if not for it.



Pastor Kemp's Weekly Devotional

For the week of July 11, 2010

Daily Reflection Questions:

- Reflection: Of what eternal benefit was my day?
- Reflection: What eternal truth(s) did I observe today?
- Reflection: Did my behavior match my values?
- Reflection: What am I thankful for today?

What I am thankful for this week:

MONDAY: _____

TUESDAY: _____

WEDNESDAY: _____

THURSDAY: _____

FRIDAY: _____

SATURDAY: _____



MONDAY, July 12, 2010:

Job 37:14 *“Listen to this, O Job; stand still and consider the wondrous works of God.”*

I remember a time that Sonja and I spent several days at a motel. One morning Sonja commented on the fact that the coffee pot in our motel room was a “left-handed” pot. I had never heard of such a thing and went to check it out; sure enough, the handle seemed to be designed to best accommodate a left-handed person.

However, it turns out that it was not really a left-handed pot. What had happened was that the handle was loose and because I had been using it all week, my left-handedness had pushed the handle to the position it was in. ☺ In other words, my character (who and what I was) shaped the pot.

I thought of that as I read Job 36-37 today. These chapters deal with the handiwork of God and how it reveals His character. In other words, the shape of the world around us reveals the character of God.

If we are not careful, we can become confused about what is a reflection of the hand of God and the hand of man. It is so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day affairs of life and miss what God is doing in our lives.

Like Elihu advised Job, I advise you to take the time each day to stand still and consider the wondrous works of God.

A system that I have designed for you to do this is the “Daily Reflection Questions” included with this devotional (see opposite side of page). I encourage you to take the time each day to really answer each of these questions. They will help you to tune out the “noise” of life and tap into the “news” of life – what God is doing.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 111:7-8

TUESDAY, July 13, 2010:

Job 37:5 *“God thunders marvelously with His voice; He does great things which we cannot comprehend.”*

Charles Eames, whom some argue was the greatest furniture designer of the twentieth century, said there are two questions one should ask about every small town: First, “What is the quality of their bread?” Second, “What is the quality of their parades?” This is the story of life – the day-by-day and a few big events. I believe this is also how God works in our lives. For the most part, God is at work in our lives giving us our daily bread. But we all know that every once in a while, something big comes along. We may consider it a joy or a sorrow, but if we understand that our lives are in the hands of God, then we can rest in the peace of knowing that even if we do not understand it, we can still trust in God who does all things well and for our good.

A few days ago, I was talking with a man in my church whose family is going through a particularly tough time. I told him, “You are living in the book of Job right now.” But I also reminded him of how the book ends. That may describe you today; you may be living in the book of Job, but remember, God does all things well and with Him, all things end well.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 57:15

WEDNESDAY, July 14, 2010:

Job 37:6-7 (New Century Version) *“He says to the snow, ‘Fall on the earth,’ and to the shower, ‘Be a heavy rain.’⁷ With it, he stops everyone from working so everyone knows it is the work of God.”*

Sometimes God brings a storm into our lives to simply get us to stop! That’s right, sometimes the only way He can get our attention is for some unexpected event or circumstance to come roaring into our lives and put us on our knees before Him.

Today, you may be going through one of those “storm” times. You may feel that God is really pouring it on right now; don’t think too hard of Him, He’s just trying to get your attention to tell you that He loves you and desires that your affections and attention be focused first and foremost on Him / for truly He is the only source of real joy and happiness.

The following little “ditty” says it well:

*His thoughts were slow,
His words were few and never
formed to glisten.
But he was a joy to all his
friends,
You should have heard him
listen!*

Remember, God is not impressed with all your achievements and busyness, but He is impressed with your desire to simply be with Him. Stop! Listen...

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 46:10

THURSDAY, July 15, 2010:

Job 37:13 *“He causes it to come, whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy.”*

Have you ever met a walking “bitterness bomb?” You know the type; it is the person that has had heartbreak, betrayal or calamity come into their lives and they just can’t let it go.

Often the root of the bitterness is that they can’t understand why God would allow what happened in their life to happen.

Our verse today gives at least three reasons that God allows suffering to come into our lives. I’d like to finish the week examining each of them.

The first reason that suffering can come into our lives is that ***we need it!***

I know that is not what you wanted to hear! But it is true. When I was a boy my parents had a saying that they would use when I kept pushing the edge of propriety. They would say, “David, you’re itching for a switching.” It was almost like I needed a spanking, just to clear the air and get a new start.

That is what correction is: God’s way of correcting something in our lives that has gone awry.

When bad things come into our lives it is not God saying, “Take that, you sorry rascal!” It is often him saying, “Examine your life and see what needs correcting.”

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 3:11