

FRIENDSHIP

USING YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS

TO SHOW OTHERS YOU CARE.

WEEK **4**

JOB'S FRIENDS

Job 2:11-13 (Job 1-2, supporting); 1 Thessalonians 5:11

MEMORY VERSE | Proverbs 17:17

Job was an honest and righteous man. He had great respect for God and did his best to avoid doing what was wrong. Job had a large family—seven sons and three daughters. And he owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 1,000 oxen, and 500 donkeys. Job had everything a person could ask for.

One day, however, tragedy struck. A messenger ran up to Job's house.

"Sir! We've been attacked!" the messenger panted. "While your oxen were out plowing the field, the Sabeans came and carried them off! Your donkeys, too! And they killed some of your servants with their swords!"

"Oh, no! That's horrible. We must do something," Job responded, in a bit of shock.

While they were still talking, a second messenger ran up to Job. "Job! Job! I have some terrible news! There was a lightning storm out where the sheep were grazing. They're all dead, Job. All 7,000 sheep. Many of your servants were struck as well."

"I... I can't believe this," Job stammered. "We'll have to tell the servants' families."

At that moment, a third messenger came running up.

“What now?” Job braced himself for the worst.

“We’ve been attacked by the Chaldeans!” the breathless messenger relayed the bad news.

“They’ve taken your camels, sir. And killed the rest of your servants.”

“Can this day get any worse?” Job thought. But before he could finish the thought, a fourth messenger walked slowly up to Job, a heartbroken look on his face.

“Just tell me,” Job said quietly.

“As you know, sir, your sons and daughters were at a party at your oldest son’s house. Out of nowhere, a great wind came and blew the house down. Your seven sons and three daughters . . . they’ve all died.”

***Job didn’t accuse
God of wrongdoing.
He praised Him.***

Job grabbed the robe he was wearing and pulled with all his might until it tore. He cried in anguish over his great loss. He was so despondent, he shaved his head completely bald.

“I was born with nothing. I’ll leave with nothing. *The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away. May . . . [the Lord] be praised,*” Job called out in pain. Despite everything that had happened, Job didn’t accuse God of wrongdoing. He praised Him.

Some time later, Job’s misfortune continued to grow. Painful and itchy sores broke out all over Job’s body, from head to toe. Job’s wife was outraged.

“Are you still going to be faithful to God?” she yelled. “You should curse Him instead!”

“No!” Job was firm. “We accept the good from God; we must also accept the bad.”

Job had three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. They heard about all of Job’s troubles and decided they should go and see him.

“What should we do when we get there?” Eliphaz wondered aloud.

“I don’t know,” Bildad responded. “What would any good friend do?”

“We could try to cheer him up. Maybe sing a funny song?” Zophar chimed in.

“We accept the good from God; we must also accept the bad.”

They thought about what it might feel like if a friend tried to cheer them up when they weren’t in the mood. Might it make Job feel even worse?

Eliphaz spoke up again. “Maybe we could save the funny songs until later.”

“Yes, perhaps it would be best if we tried to feel what he’s feeling,” Bildad agreed. “If he’s happy, we rejoice with him. If he’s miserable, we mourn. “

This sounded like the best idea, though they still had more questions.

“What do we say when we see Job?” Eliphaz asked his friends.

"I know. We could start by giving him advice. You know, telling him all the stuff he's been doing wrong," Zophar suggested.

Again, they pondered what it would feel like if someone they knew tried to give them advice soon after tragedy struck. Was that the best choice for a friend?

Bildad suddenly came up with the best idea of all. "Or . . . we could say nothing. We could just be there for Job if he needs us. We could listen."

As they got closer to where Job lived, they saw him from a distance. He was shaved bald and bandaged from all the sores. They could hardly recognize him. It was worse than they thought. They knew Job needed them now more than ever. So Job's friends began to cry loudly. And they tore their clothes, just as Job had torn his. And they sprinkled dust on their heads.

For a week, they sat with Job, no one saying a word. No funny songs, no magic tricks. Just three men choosing to be there for their hurting friend. Job's friends weren't always the greatest friends, but for seven days, they sat beside him when he needed them the most.



Let's
Talk!

That's what friends do, isn't it? They encourage you when you really need encouraging.

Are you that kind of friend? Are you a cheerleader for your friend when they've got a big opportunity coming up? Do you remind your friend they matter when they're feeling unappreciated? Are you like Job's friends, just being there for your friend during their hardest times? The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "So encourage one another with the hope you have. Build each other up." Share with each other about a friend or family member who is going through a hard time—or who just has something cool and exciting happening in their life and needs someone to cheer them on. Brainstorm things you can do this week to be an encouragement to that friend. Then, take turns praying for each other, asking God to help you encourage your friend.