

## PART 34: CHAPTER 6, VERSES 22- 30

by Rabbi Yitzchak Schwartz

22. Did I say give me a present or from your money offer to bribe my enemies?
23. Or to save me from the enemy's hand, and redeem me from the hand of the mighty?
24. Show me, and I will be silent; and make me understand how I have erred.
25. How clear are logical words! [But] your argument can prove nothing [since it is not based upon logic].
26. Do you think that your words can prove me wrong, your [Elifaz's] words are worthless.
27. You would even fall upon [verbally attack] an orphan, and you would dig a pit to destroy your friend.
28. And now turn to me, [and see] if I am not righteous [as you have claimed].
29. Now return [and examine my integrity again] and you will find that I have committed no sin, and examine me further and you will see that I was justified [in my claims against the G-d].
30. Is there deceit on my tongue? Can't my palate understand wickedness.

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### Commentary:

#### Verse 22-23

At times, even 'good' friends' may disappoint their comrades when asked to part with something important like money or to exert themselves physically. Iyov turns to his friends and asks them what difficult requests has he asked from them. He did not ask for money or to fight his battles. I [Iyov] have asked you only for some reasonable explanation for my suffering. You have not even supplied that.

## **Verse 24**

Your approach has been to prove from my suffering that I have sinned. But you have not revealed to me what that sin may be. The problem that needs to be resolved is that Iyov was absolutely righteous and did not deserve this type of treatment at the hands of the Creator that he served so faithfully. His friends have turned his problem into their answer; hence, Iyov suffers because he was not totally righteous. This, in Iyov's mind, is a ludicrous argument. The answer to Iyov's understandable confusion cannot be found in the source of the confusion itself. Iyov wants to know the reason why he suffers. If he has sinned he wants to know what his sin was. "I ask from you not money or physical exertion, only to help me understand what I have done wrong. What have I done that has caused me to receive such harsh judgment from Hashem?"

## **Verse 25**

If you want to prove a point you must use sound logical arguments. Often people try to prove their point based upon their personal perspectives and feelings. They rely on this as proof to their truthfulness. When you attempt to prove a point to someone you must clarify your thoughts to the point that their truth is self evident. When you try and pass off your well founded feelings as viable truths you are destined for trouble. Our feelings are inevitably going to be different than our friends and therefore can never be the basis for convincingly transmitting enduring truths.

## **Verse 26-27**

You [Elifaz] are so convinced of the truth of your argument that you think it is prophetic. I have heard no strength in your argument and needless to say I view them with disapproval and certainly reject the notion that they are prophetic. Despite the weakness of their argument people may force their point with less than perfect logic. At times they may view this as a sports-like challenge. This may not be the most mature and honorable form of behaviour but as long as no one is harmed it is excusable. However, in as much as it may cause pain and anguish to another it is ignoble. And if the offended party is unfortunate like an orphan or a friend in trouble you should be wise enough to argue your position with the clarity of logic and reason and leave off your feelings.

## **Verse 28**

Now Iyov turns to them with the sincerity of a truly righteous person. I [Iyov] am the focal point of this debate. The issue at hand is whether I am righteous and unjustly afflicted; or have sinned in some way and am deserving of this harsh treatment.

## **Verse 29-30**

Iyov beseeches them to examine his integrity of character over and over again and they will see that he has needlessly suffered. Iyov's friends accuse him of not admitting his sin. This could only be possible in one of two ways. Either Iyov is a liar or he cannot distinguish between good and evil, and therefore does not recognize his sins. To this Iyov responds that he is neither a liar nor a fool. Iyov

stands by his claim that he is a totally righteous man who suffers without cause.

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The author is the Rosh Hayeshiva (Dean) of Orchos Chaim Yeshiva in Jerusalem.