

Job 24-28 – Thursday, April 12th, 2018

Job 24 -- 1 "Since times are not hidden from the Almighty, Why do those who know Him see not His days? 2 "Some remove landmarks; They seize flocks violently and feed on them; 3 They drive away the donkey of the fatherless; They take the widow's ox as a pledge. 4 They push the needy off the road; All the poor of the land are forced to hide. 5 Indeed, like wild donkeys in the desert, They go out to their work, searching for food. The wilderness yields food for them and for their children. 6 They gather their fodder in the field And glean in the vineyard of the wicked. 7 They spend the night naked, without clothing, And have no covering in the cold. 8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains, And huddle around the rock for want of shelter. 9 "Some snatch the fatherless from the breast, And take a pledge from the poor. 10 They cause the poor to go naked, without clothing; And they take away the sheaves from the hungry. 11 They press out oil within their walls, And tread winepresses, yet suffer thirst. 12 The dying groan in the city, And the souls of the wounded cry out; Yet God does not charge them with wrong. 13 "There are those who rebel against the light; They do not know its ways Nor abide in its paths. 14 The murderer rises with the light; He kills the poor and needy; And in the night he is like a thief. 15 The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, Saying, 'No eye will see me'; And he disguises his face. 16 In the dark they break into houses Which they marked for themselves in the daytime; They do not know the light. 17 For the morning is the same to them as the shadow of death; If someone recognizes them, They are in the terrors of the shadow of death. 18 "They should be swift on the face of the waters, Their portion should be cursed in the earth, So that no one would turn into the way of their vineyards. 19 As drought and heat consume the snow waters, So the grave consumes those who have sinned. 20 The womb should forget him, The worm should feed sweetly on him; He should be remembered no more, And wickedness should be broken like a tree. 21 For he preys on the barren who do not bear, And does no good for the widow. 22 "But God draws the mighty away with His power; He rises up, but no man is sure of life. 23 He gives them security, and they rely on it; Yet His eyes are on their ways. 24 They are exalted for a little while, Then they are gone. They are brought low; They are taken out of the way like all others; They dry out like the heads of grain. 25 "Now if it is not so, who will prove me a liar, And make my speech worth nothing?"

- I have to say that chapter twenty-four is one of the more difficult ones here in this book of Job and this for a number of reasons.
- First, it seems that Job is lamenting about how the wicked seem to get away with their evil and as such continue with impunity.
- Basically, Job is asking the question of why God delays in bringing about a just and righteous judgment on those who do evil.

Psalm 73:1-4, 16-17 - 1 Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm. ...16 When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me— 17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.

Charles Spurgeon - "Job challenges all men to contradict what he affirms,—that the righteous may be greater sufferers, and the wicked may for awhile prosper, but that God will, in the end, overthrow the ungodly, and establish the righteous."

Job 25 -- 1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: 2 "Dominion and fear belong to Him; He makes peace in His high places. 3 Is there any number to His armies? Upon whom does His light not rise? 4 How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman? 5 If even the moon does not shine, And the stars are not pure in His sight, 6 How much less man, who is a maggot, And a son of man, who is a worm?"

- Chapter twenty-five brings us to the end not only of Bildad's rebuke and false accusation of Job, but also to the end of all three.
- Thankfully, it seems as though they have run out of steam so-to-speak, and here Bildad simply repeats the now tired argument.
- Namely, that of Job's guilt before a holy and righteous God, which is the only explanation as to why it is that he is suffering so.

Chambers - "Bildad is in touch with nothing, he is courageously heartless; he never thinks when he talks, but simply pours it out. The 'Bildad' type is often met with in the pulpit; men roll out phrases and talk the most ponderous stuff with nothing in it."

G. Campbell Morgan - "Without argument, Bildad made it perfectly clear that, in his mind, the guilt of Job was established. ...The brevity of this speech of Bildad is in itself suggestive, as it shows that even though Job has not convinced these friends of his that their philosophy does not include his case, he has succeeded in silencing them."

Job 26 -- 1 But Job answered and said: 2 "How have you helped him who is without power? How have you saved the arm that has no strength? 3 How have you counseled one who has no wisdom? And how have you declared sound advice to many? 4 To whom have you uttered words? And whose spirit came from you? 5 "The dead tremble, Those under the waters and those inhabiting them. 6 Sheol is naked before Him, And Destruction has no covering. 7 He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing. 8 He binds up the water in His thick clouds, Yet the clouds are not broken under it. 9 He covers the face of His throne, And spreads His cloud over it. 10 He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, At the boundary of light and darkness. 11 The pillars of heaven tremble, And are astonished at His rebuke. 12 He stirs up the sea with His power, And by His understanding He breaks up the storm. 13 By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent. 14 Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways, And how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?"

- Chapter twenty-six starts off as a response to Bildad in the previous chapter, then as we'll see ends up being a long discourse.
- I suppose in some way Job's long discourse can be seen as a closing argument of sorts, as he seeks to offer his final defense.
- What's interesting to me is that Job is able to talk at all, let alone continue talking, given his unspeakable suffering and agony.

Job 27 -- 1 Moreover Job continued his discourse, and said: 2 "As God lives, who has taken away my justice, And the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter, 3 As long as my breath is in me, And the breath of God in my nostrils, 4 My lips will not speak wickedness, Nor my tongue utter deceit. 5 Far be it from me That I should say you are right; Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. 6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; My heart shall not reproach me as long as I live. 7 **"May my enemy be like the wicked, And he who rises up against me like the unrighteous.** 8 For what is the hope of the hypocrite, Though he may gain much, If God takes away his life? 9 Will God hear his cry When trouble comes upon him? 10 Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call on God? 11 "I will teach you about the hand of God; What is with the Almighty I will not conceal. 12 Surely all of you have seen it; Why then do you behave with complete nonsense? 13 "This is the portion of a wicked man with God, And the heritage of oppressors, received from the Almighty: 14 If his children are multiplied, it is for the sword; And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread. 15 Those who survive him shall be buried in death, And their widows shall not weep, 16 Though he heaps up silver like dust, And piles up clothing like clay— 17 He may pile it up, but the just will wear it, And the innocent will divide the silver. 18 He builds his house like a moth, Like a booth which a watchman makes. 19 The rich man will lie down, But not be gathered up; He opens his eyes, And he is no more. 20 Terrors overtake him like a flood; A tempest steals him away in the night. 21 The east wind carries him away, and he is gone; It sweeps him out of his place. 22 It hurls against him and does not spare; He flees desperately from its power. 23 Men shall clap their hands at him, And shall hiss him out of his place.

- Chapter twenty-seven is another difficult chapter in the sense that Job, fully convinced that God is against him, still trusts Him.
- In other words, in a profound paradox, the God who has vexed and embittered his soul is the same God Who will restore him.
- To me, this speaks to how Job has not lost all hope in spite of all that has come upon him, and with very little faith trusts God.

Charles Spurgeon once preached a sermon on this text here in Job, appropriately titled, "A Vexed Soul Comforted." Kindly allow me to share some of what he had to say, as I think it will bless and encourage you as much as it did me, especially those who are going through a very difficult and painful trial. "Child of God, are you vexed and embittered in soul? Then, bravely accept the trial as coming from your Father, and say, 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' 'Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' Press on through the cloud which now lowers directly in your pathway; it may be with you as it was with the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, 'they feared as they entered the cloud,' yet in the cloud they saw their Master's glory, and they found it good to be there." ... "If it be the Almighty who has troubled us, surely he can also comfort us. He that is strong to sink is also strong to save. If he be almighty to embitter, he must also be almighty to sweeten. Oh, yes, that word 'Almighty' cuts both ways! It makes us tremble, and so it kills our pride; but it also makes us hope, and so it slays our despair."

Job 28 -- 1 "Surely there is a mine for silver, And a place where gold is refined. 2 Iron is taken from the earth, And copper is smelted from ore. 3 Man puts an end to darkness, And searches every recess For ore in the darkness and the shadow of death. 4 He breaks open a shaft away from people; In places forgotten by feet They hang far away from men; They swing to and fro. 5 As for the earth, from it comes bread, But underneath it is turned up as by fire; 6 Its stones are the source of sapphires, And it contains gold dust. 7 That path no bird knows, Nor has the falcon's eye seen it. 8 The proud lions have not trodden it, Nor has the fierce lion passed over it. 9 He puts his hand on the flint; He overturns the mountains at the roots. 10 He cuts out channels in the rocks, And his eye sees every precious thing. 11 He dams up the streams from trickling; What is hidden he brings forth to light. 12 "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? 13 Man does not know its value, Nor is it found in the land of the living. 14 The deep says, 'It is not in me'; And the sea says, 'It is not with me.' 15 It cannot be purchased for gold, Nor can silver be weighed for its price. 16 It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, In precious onyx or sapphire. 17 Neither gold nor crystal can equal it, Nor can it be exchanged for jewelry of fine gold. 18 No mention shall be made of coral or quartz, For the price of wisdom is above rubies. 19 The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, Nor can it be valued in pure gold. 20 "From where then does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? 21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living, And concealed from the birds of the air. 22 Destruction and Death say, 'We have heard a report about it with our ears.' 23 God understands its way, And He knows its place. 24 For He looks to the ends of the earth, And sees under the whole heavens, 25 To establish a weight for the wind, And apportion the waters by measure. 26 When He made a law for the rain, And a path for the thunderbolt, 27 Then He saw wisdom and declared it; He prepared it, indeed, He searched it out. 28 And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, And to depart from evil is understanding.' "

- Chapter twenty-eight is interesting for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that Job is falling back on what he knows.
- This is one of the best things to do when we don't know; we can fall back on and rely upon that which we do know about God.
- Such is the case here, Job is absolutely dumbfounded and does not know what God is doing so he goes to what he does know.