**Job 9-12** - May 16th

Job

**9**Then Job replied:

**2**“Indeed, I know that this is true. But how can mere mortals prove their innocence before God? **3**Though they wished to dispute with HIM, they could not answer HIM one time out of a thousand. **4**His wisdom is profound, His power is vast. Who has resisted Him and come out unscathed?
**5**He moves mountains without their knowing it and overturns them in His anger.
**6**He shakes the earth from its place and makes its pillars tremble.
**7**He speaks to the sun and it does not shine; He seals off the light of the stars.
**8**He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea.
**9**He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south. **10**He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted. **11**When He passes me, I cannot see Him; when He goes by, I cannot perceive Him. **12**If He snatches away, who can stop Him? Who can say to Him, ‘What are you doing?’
**13**God does not restrain His anger; even the cohorts of Rahab cowered at His feet.

**14**“How then can I dispute with Him? How can I find words to argue with Him?
**15**Though I were innocent, I could not answer Him; I could only plead with my Judge for mercy. **16**Even if I summoned Him and He responded, I do not believe He would give me a hearing. **17**He would crush me with a storm and multiply my wounds for no reason. **18**He would not let me catch my breath but would overwhelm me with misery.
**19**If it is a matter of strength, He is mighty! And if it is a matter of justice, who can challenge Him]?
**20**Even if I were innocent, my mouth would condemn me; if I were blameless, it would pronounce me guilty. **21**“Although I am blameless, I have no concern for myself; I despise my own life. **22**It is all the same; that is why I say, ‘He destroys both the blameless and the wicked.’
**23**When a scourge brings sudden death, He mocks the despair of the innocent.
**24**When a land falls into the hands of the wicked, He blindfolds its judges. If it is not He, then who is it?

**25**“My days are swifter than a runner; they fly away without a glimpse of joy. **26**They skim past like boats of papyrus, like eagles swooping down on their prey. **27**If I say, ‘I will forget my complaint, I will change my expression, and smile,’ **28**I still dread all my sufferings, for I know you will not hold me innocent.
**29**Since I am already found guilty, why should I struggle in vain?
**30**Even if I washed myself with soap and my hands with cleansing powder,
**31**you would plunge me into a slime pit so that even my clothes would detest me.

**32**“He is not a mere mortal like me that I might answer Him, that we might confront each other in court. **33**If only there were someone to mediate between us, someone to bring us together, **34**someone to remove God’s rod from me, so that His terror would frighten me no more. **35**Then I would speak up without fear of Him, but as it now stands with me, I cannot.

**10**“I loathe my very life; therefore I will give free rein to my complaint and speak out in the bitterness of my soul. **2**I say to God: Do not declare me guilty, but tell me what charges You have against me.
**3**Does it please you to oppress me, to spurn the work of your hands, while you smile on the plans of the wicked? **4**Do you have eyes of flesh? Do you see as a mortal sees?
**5**Are your days like those of a mortal or your years like those of a strong man,
**6**that you must search out my faults and probe after my sin - **7**though you know that I am not guilty and that no one can rescue me from your hand?

**8**“Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me?
**9**Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again?
**10**Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese, **11**clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews? **12**You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.

**13**“But this is what you concealed in your heart,
    and I know that this was in your mind:
**14**If I sinned, you would be watching me
    and would not let my offense go unpunished.
**15**If I am guilty - woe to me! Even if I am innocent, I cannot lift my head,
for I am full of shame and drowned inmy affliction.
**16**If I hold my head high, you stalk me like a lion and again display your awesome power against me. **17**You bring new witnesses against me and increase your anger toward me; your forces come against me wave upon wave.

**18**“Why then did you bring me out of the womb? I wish I had died before any eye saw me.
**19**If only I had never come into being, or had been carried straight from the womb to the grave! **20**Are not my few days almost over?
    Turn away from me so I can have a moment’s joy **21**before I go to the place of no return, to the land of gloom and utter darkness, **22**to the land of deepest night, of utter darkness and disorder, where even the light is like darkness.”

Zophar

**11**Then Zophar the Naamathite replied:

**2**“Are all these words to go unanswered? Is this talker to be vindicated?
**3**Will your idle talk reduce others to silence? Will no one rebuke you when you mock?
**4**You say to God, ‘My beliefs are flawless and I am pure in your sight.’
**5**Oh, how I wish that God would speak, that he would open his lips against you
**6**and disclose to you the secrets of wisdom, for true wisdom has two sides.
    Know this: God has even forgotten some of your sin.

**7**“Can you fathom the mysteries of God?
    Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?
**8**They are higher than the heavens above - what can you do?
    They are deeper than the depths below - what can you know?
**9**Their measure is longer than the earth
    and wider than the sea.

**10**“If he comes along and confines you in prison
    and convenes a court, who can oppose him?
**11**Surely he recognizes deceivers;
    and when he sees evil, does he not take note?
**12**But the witless can no more become wise than a wild donkey’s colt can be born human.

**13**“Yet if you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him,
**14**if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent,
**15**then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear.
**16**You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by.
**17**Life will be brighter than noonday, and darkness will become like morning.
**18**You will be secure, because there is hope; you will look about you and take your rest in safety. **19**You will lie down, with no one to make you afraid, and many will court your favor. **20**But the eyes of the wicked will fail, and escape will elude them;
    their hope will become a dying gasp.”

Job

**12**Then Job replied:

**2**“Doubtless you are the only people who matter, and wisdom will die with you!
**3**But I have a mind as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Who does not know all these things?

**4**“I have become a laughingstock to my friends, though I called on God and he answered - a mere laughingstock, though righteous and blameless!
**5**Those who are at ease have contempt for misfortune as the fate of those whose feet are slipping. **6**The tents of marauders are undisturbed, and those who provoke God are secure - those God has in His hand

**7**“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you.
**9**Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?
**10**In His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.
**11**Does not the ear test words as the tongue tastes food?
**12**Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?

**13**“To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are His.
**14**What he tears down cannot be rebuilt; those he imprisons cannot be released.
**15**If he holds back the waters, there is drought; if he lets them loose, they devastate the land. **16**To him belong strength and insight; both deceived and deceiver are his.
**17**He leads rulers away stripped and makes fools of judges.

**18**He takes off the shackles put on by kings and ties a loincloth around their waist.
**19**He leads priests away stripped and overthrows officials long established.
**20**He silences the lips of trusted advisers and takes away the discernment of elders.
**21**He pours contempt on nobles and disarms the mighty.
**22**He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings utter darkness into the light.
**23**He makes nations great, and destroys them; He enlarges nations, and disperses them. **24**He deprives the leaders of the earth of their reason; He makes them wander in a trackless waste. **25**They grope in darkness with no light; He makes them stagger like drunkards.