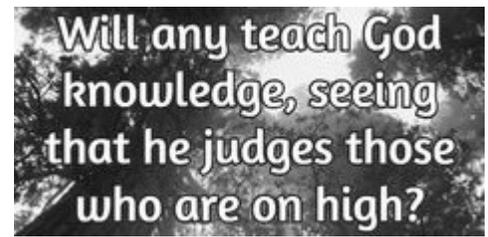


THE BOOK OF JOB –

“The Suffering and Consolation of the Christian”

Date: 2-11-18 Lesson: 11 Text: Chapters 20,21

Theme: “Will any teach God knowledge, seeing that he judges those who are on high?”



Text: (Job 20:1-29) Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said: (2) "Therefore my thoughts answer me, because of my haste within me. (3) I hear censure that insults me, and out of my understanding a spirit answers me. (4) Do you not know this from of old, since man was placed on earth, (5) that the exulting of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless but for a moment? (6) Though his height mount up to the heavens, and his head reach to the clouds, (7) he will perish forever like his own dung; those who have seen him will say, 'Where is he?' (8) He will fly away like a dream and not be found; he will be chased away like a vision of the night.

(9) The eye that saw him will see him no more, nor will his place any more behold him. (10) His children will seek the favor of the poor, and his hands will give back his wealth. (11) His bones are full of his youthful vigor, but it will lie down with him in the dust. (12) "Though evil is sweet in his mouth, though he hides it under his tongue, (13) though he is loath to let it go and holds it in his mouth, (14) yet his food is turned in his stomach; it is the venom of cobras within him. (15) He swallows down riches and vomits them up again; **God** casts them out of his belly. (16) He will suck the poison of cobras; the tongue of a viper will kill him. (17) He will not look upon the rivers, the streams flowing with honey and curds. (18) He will give back the fruit of his toil and will not swallow it down; from the profit of his trading he will get no enjoyment.

(19) For he has crushed and abandoned the poor; he has seized a house that he did not build. (20) "Because he knew no contentment in his belly, he will not let anything in which he delights escape him. (21) There was nothing left after he had eaten; therefore his prosperity will not endure. (22) In the fullness of his sufficiency he will be in distress; the hand of everyone in misery will come against him. (23) To fill his belly to the full **God will send his burning anger** against him and rain it upon him into his body. (24) He will flee from an iron weapon; a bronze arrow will strike him through. (25) It is drawn forth and comes out of his body; the glittering point comes out of his gallbladder; terrors come upon him.

(26) Utter darkness is laid up for his treasures; a fire not fanned will devour him; what is left in his tent will be consumed. (27) The heavens will reveal his iniquity, and the earth will rise up against him. (28) The possessions of his house will be carried away, dragged off in **the day of God's wrath**. (29) This is the wicked man's **portion** from God, the heritage **decreed for him by God.**"

(Job 21:1-34) Then Job answered and said: (2) "Keep listening to my words, and let this be your comfort. (3) Bear with me, and I will speak, and after I have spoken, mock on. (4) As for me, is my complaint against man? Why should I not be impatient? (5) Look at me and be appalled, and lay your hand over your mouth. (6) When I remember I am dismayed, and shuddering seizes my flesh.

(7) Why do the wicked live, reach old age, and grow mighty in power? (8) Their offspring are established in their presence, and their descendants before their eyes. (9) Their houses are safe from fear, and no **rod of God** is upon them. (10) Their bull breeds without fail; their cow calves and does not miscarry. (11) They send out their little boys like a flock, and their children dance. (12) They sing to the tambourine and the lyre and rejoice to the sound of the pipe. (13) They spend their days in prosperity, and in peace they go down to Sheol.

(14) They say **to God**, 'Depart from us! We do not desire **the knowledge of your ways**. (15) What is **the Almighty**, that we should serve him? And what profit do we get if we pray to him?' (16) Behold, is not their prosperity in their hand? The counsel of the wicked is far from me. (17) "How often is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out? That their calamity comes upon them? That **God distributes pains in his anger**? (18) That they are like straw before the wind, and like chaff that the storm carries away? (19) You say, 'God stores up their iniquity for their children.' Let him pay it out to them, that they may know it.

(20) Let their own eyes see their destruction, and let them drink **of the wrath of the Almighty**. (21) For what do they care for their houses after them, when the number of their months is cut off? **(22) Will any teach God knowledge, seeing that he judges those who are on high?** (23) One dies in his full vigor, being wholly at ease and secure, (24) his pails full of milk and the marrow of his bones moist. (25) Another dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted of prosperity. (26) They lie down alike in the dust, and the worms cover them.

(27) "Behold, I know your thoughts and your schemes to wrong me. (28) For you say, 'Where is the house of the prince? Where is the tent in which the wicked lived?' (29) Have you not asked those who travel the roads, and do you not accept their testimony (30) that the evil man is spared in the day of calamity, that he is rescued in the day of wrath? (31) Who declares his way to his face, and who repays him for what he has done? (32) When he is carried to the grave, watch is kept over his tomb. (33) The clods of the valley are sweet to him; all mankind follows after him, and those who go before him are innumerable. (34) How then will you comfort me with empty nothings? There is nothing left of your answers but falsehood."

STUDY NOTES:

1. Zophar reflects worldly thinking and pride - he is healthy and prosperous because he is good in himself and his affluence proves that. But in reality, all of life is fleeting
(Ps 73:18-20; 103:14-16; Eccl 2:18-23; Lk 12:16-21; 1 Tim 6:17; James 5:1-5)
2. Yet it is nonetheless true that on the day of God's wrath, the truly wicked WILL perish.
(Ps 75:8; Is 24:15-23; Am 5:18; Jn 3:36; Rom 1:18; Eph 5:6; Col 3:5,6; Rev 6:15-17)
3. God's knowledge is above our understanding, and he is only true Judge of all people.
(Ps 82:1; 86:8; 94:12; 135:5; Is 40:13,14; Jer 32:33; Rom 11:34; 1 Cor 2:16)

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"Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul has sought them. Though they are wonderful also in other ways, as stated in the gloss, yet at this place he calls them wonderful literally, because they are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes [Matt. 11:25], so that it is a wisdom hidden in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew (1 Cor. 2:8). As in Ps. 118:22-23, the stone that was rejected and yet was made the head of the corner is wonderful; and in Ps. 4:3 we read: "Know that the Lord has made His Holy One wonderful," so that He is an offense to the wise, but the power and wisdom of God to the little ones (1 Cor. 1:23-24).

But since this wisdom is so wonderful and hidden, he rightly says, "Therefore my soul has sought it." It must be sought because it is very much hidden to the proud. This is true not only of all words written in the Scriptures or anywhere but also of spoken words. When the precept from the mouth of a superior or from the mouth of a neighbor gives counsel, it always gives wonderful counsel, that is, unless the hearer is humble and obeys, it will fall and perish, because it is hidden from him and it becomes an offense and foolishness to him, because it sounds the opposite to him and appears to offer great damage, even though he offers nothing but something of his own opinion and demands rejection so that he might have a place. For he is an adversary.

Therefore he appears as an adversary with whom one must agree quickly. Thus this wonderful stone, though rejected, will crush him upon whom it has fallen, but he who has fallen on it will be broken (Matt. 21:42, 44). And it is better to fall on it and be broken than to be crushed by it when it falls. Therefore be humble and everywhere believe the Word of the Lord."

LIFE APPLICATION:

Will anyone teach God knowledge, seeing that he judges those who are on high?
So, when the wicked seem to prosper and the righteous falter, what is the hope to which we still hold?