

Devotion on the Book of Job (Chapter Thirty-Six) - Saturday after Ash Wednesday - 16 February 2013, Anno Domini - (Forty-Sixth Anniversary of death of Kenneth Wayne Ogles, 1st Cavalry Div, KIA, Ia Drang Valley, Vietnam – 16 February 1967)



The first day of Lent, commonly called
Ash Wednesday.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ This Collect is to be said every day in Lent, after the Collect appointed for the day, until Palm Sunday.

I grow more and more excited in anticipating the final five chapters upcoming of Job. It may be my imagination, but I do believe that there is a pattern which may fit the Job experience. First of all, Job is accused before God by the Adversary of every man's soul – Satan (Job Chapter 2). God gives Satan limited powers to try Job for the benefit of a witness to all of us. Then, the friends of Job join in with the devil against Job to accuse him. If this does not ring any bells, just remember the times in which you were either justly, or unjustly, accused. Remember the suspicious looks of many of those whom you considered your friends? Did they, too, join in on the questioning of your character? Then comes Elihu to mediate your case between You and God the Father. Does he not stand in as a suitable type of Christ? The difference between the claims of Elihu and those of Job and his friends is this: Elihu speaks with great reverence always for God – His mercy, His power, and His justice. He speaks well the Mind of God, I believe. Has anyone else you know done this very thing? Did Christ come preaching the will and mind of God the Father? Did He assert that He and the Father were ONE? Did He come as a Mediator between God and man? *For there is one God, and one mediator between*

God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2:5) Job has been conducting both mind and argument as if God were imperfect and Job himself was perfect. In spite of all arguments and facts to the contrary, Job has persisted even more staunchly in the conviction of his righteousness and unfair justice at the hands of God. Now comes Elihu, much like John the Baptist, to prepare the way for the very Voice of God later in this Book. God will always provide a voice to His erring people – and He is patient in the provision thereof. God places people and experiences before the lost whom He will call so that they will know His voice when He speaks to them.

This chapter (36) and the following (37) constitute Elihu's final appeal to JOB. Apparently, Elihu does his job well, for his discourse is followed by that Voice above every other voice – the Voice of God beginning in chapter 38. As a God Commander, God often sends His artillerymen to soften the target area of the heart prior to His full-scale invasion. The issue has already been decided that God will be the victor, and the sinner whom He has targeted the one to capitulate without conditions. So we shall see with Job. This chapter can be divided in the following divisions: 1) Elihu's establishment of his credibility in counseling Job (verses 1-4); 2) He establishes God's justice in His dealing with Job (verses 5-16); 3) His warning to Job that his pride and petulance could lead to his complete destruction (verses 17-25); and 4) An illustration of God's terrible power and mystery through the means of a thunderstorm.

1) 1 Elihu also proceeded, and said, 2 Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf. 3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker. 4 For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. Whatever righteousness may be attributable to Elihu's arguments, he attributes to God. Surely every Gospel message to man on earth has its origins from afar beyond the Ivory Palaces. The god of Elihu is the same God of Job and is ever present with His chosen ones.

2) 5 Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom. God is without hate. He looks upon all with a design for mercy, but our hearts often bar that mercy. *6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.* It is the power of God that gives life, and sustains life, moment by moment. He will not hold a wicked and unclean thing in His grip forever, but will release the incorrigible sinner from His grip to fall into the only place that exists apart from Heaven – HELL! *7 He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.* Truly, as with parents of dear children, the eyes of the Lord are always on His people. He equates their standing to kings for they are sons and daughters of the King of Kings. *8 And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction;* In other words, if we become entangled in our old sins, He stands at the ready to bring us into a hard realization of the fact for purposes of our freedom. *9 Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. 10 He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.* This is precisely the process we observe taking place with Job in this Book. God is providing the means whereby Job will be shown his errors and will hear correction. He will hear God's voice calling him back to the right way. *11 If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.* We shall see, after Job has awakened to the righteousness of God, and returned to a spirit of humility and obedience, the precise fulfillment of this principle in chapter 42. *12 But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.* Why do God's people often perish needlessly? *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected*

knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. (Hosea 4:6) **13 But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.** Even when his error is revealed to his heart, the hypocrite will not acknowledge it and will remain without confession of guilt. **14 They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.** **15 He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.** God will cut off the youth of the wicked, but He will deliver the oppressed who recognize their depravity and turn from it. **16 Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place, where there is no straitness; and that which should be set on thy table should be full of fatness.** If Job will also hear good counsel, he, too, will be delivered from his misery.

3) **17 But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee.** **18 Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.** Is it ever wise to be wrathful toward a king who holds the power of life or death over you? How much more foolish to be wrathful towards one's Maker who holds the power of Eternal damnation over your head? **19 Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.** Since all Creation belongs to God, including your tired, little soul, God cannot be bought with bribes or threats of violence. **20 Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.** How dare you, Job, desire the long night of death over the promises of God! **21 Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.** Be careful, Job, to avoid iniquity of pride for you only add to your guilt by railing against God! **22 Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?** God is exalted by His wisdom. No one can teach with the power of God. In fact, all true teaching originates from God. **23 Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?** No man can bring an accusation against God. *Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.* **25 Every man may see it; man may behold it afar off.** We often look through the wrong end of the telescope so that we are made big and God caused to appear small. If we magnify God as we should, men will be convinced of Him from a great distance.

4) **26 Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.** Can an ant fathom the mystery of the mind of man? Can mortal man fathom the Mind of God that created every atom and causes them to adhere in substance? **27 For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof:** Man cannot yet cause it to rain upon the earth. He cannot control meteorological movements of air masses that bring wind and rain cycles. **28 Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.** **29 Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle?** I am almost amused at my wife's constant desire to check the weather forecast for weekends. The weatherman gets it right almost as often as he gets it wrong. Can man, at his command, dictate to the thunder? **30 Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.** Man has not even made voyage yet to the very depths of the sea. But god is there and has covered the ocean floors. He has made lights to brighten the day and to give a glow in the darkness. **31 For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance.** God judges us by the great deep, and also provides food for man as well as the beasts of the field and jungle. **32 With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt.** With lightnings, God covers His Hands and assails His enemies, and with the Light of Life He blesses the righteous. **33 The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.** To His righteous, God reveals His water of life, and even to the cattle of the field.

If you are overtaken by sorrows and distress, fear not for God is in the cloud, the lightning, and the rain for blessing. If we have lost our way in rebellion, His thunders will bring us back to a humble and obedient nature. But all sorrows are not a result of unrighteousness, but to show forth the glory of God in the heart of His faithful people.