

Friday, October 7, 2016

Long for

Job 29-30

Job continued his discourse: "How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me, when his lamp shone upon my head and by his light I walked through darkness!"

Job 29:1-3

The lament continues. There is a deep longing in Job's heart for days that were better. This is understandable. I am impacted when I think of Job declaring all these things through the torturous pain of the disease with which he had been afflicted. His skin is black and peeling and his body is burning with fever. It would be easy to jump into judgement but I read with amazement, considering the setting. I have seen people in deep pain that comes from disease. I have seen people with fevers and skin rashes and infections. I have seen the pain that keeps them from being able to speak coherently. That influences my thinking about Job and his words and thoughts. It is perfectly understandable to me that he would long for the days when he was not in this pain. It is understandable to me that he would long for times when it appeared he was more effective for the work of the Lord that he loved so much.

I know what it is like to cry out to the Lord from a place of severe pain. I know what it is like to ask God to restore me to a time when the pain was not in my life. I remember well considering the days gone by as better. I have prayed the same thoughts that are found in these verses.

Dear Lord, even as I long for better days from the past, help me, please, to live in Your glory in what You have determined is best for my today. Amen.

October 3-8, 2016

Saturday, October 8, 2016

Ended

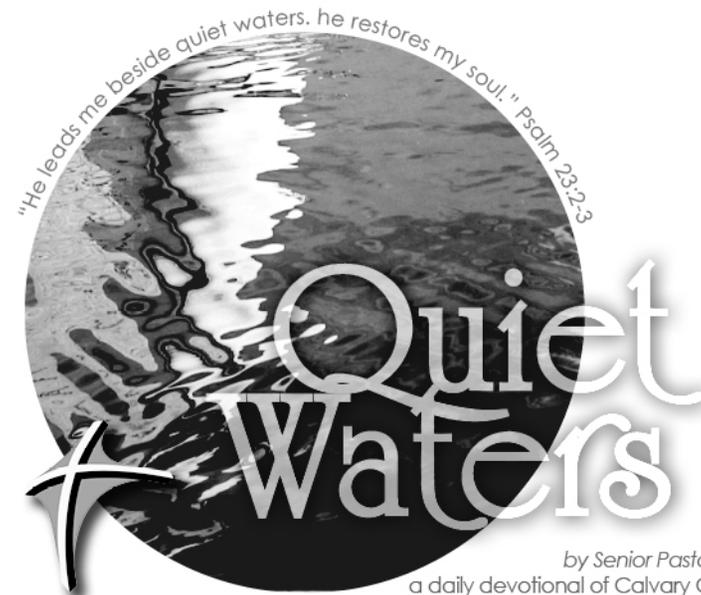
Job 31-32

The words of Job are ended.

Job 31:40b

Job has said all that he is going to say. He has completed his words. One is left to ponder where Job is at the end of his words. Remember Job 1:22, *"In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with any wrongdoing."* And 2:10, *"In all this, Job did not sin in what he said."* As the words of Job have ended, has he charged God with wrong or has he sinned in what he said? There are people on both sides of this question. Some say he did; others say he did not. Those who see Job in the wrong will view the theophany of God as a rebuke; those who do not will see Job as maintaining his integrity throughout his laments. Personally, I see a man afflicted beyond comprehension who held tightly to his love of God. Yes, he questioned God and yes, he did not understand God, but he loved God. That did not change. He did not declare that his righteousness was worthy of God, but he prayed for God to declare him righteous. I see a man who spoke the language of lament in a way that I can use as an example in my own life. Like Job, I know that my Redeemer lives and I know that He is sovereign and I know that He hears my cries of anguish for what they are. They are not an accusation against the God I love. They are a cry of longing to be in the presence of the One I love, away from the presence of sin.

My dear Father, thank You for the example of this man Job as he cried out in lament from a place of deep pain and confusion that comes from living in a world that is filled with sin. With Job, I long for the day that I am with You face to face, when in my flesh I see You. Amen.



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, October 3, 2016

Fairness

Job 21-22

Can anyone teach knowledge to God, since he judges even the highest? Job 21:22

Chapter 21 reminds me of Psalm 73 in some ways. Job seems to be lamenting the apparent unfairness of wicked people finding blessing while righteous people suffer. From everything that he can see, the wicked and the righteous are in many ways treated the same. The wicked do not get what they deserve. Even in death, their graves are the same as the graves of the righteous. From an earthly perspective, there is no difference. In fact, many times it appears that the evil make out better. Job concludes that the reasoning of his friends is faulty. It is false and it is nonsense. They cannot speak for God and God cannot be defined merely as a God of retribution. The rhetorical question he brings reveals that no one can teach knowledge to God.

How often am I tempted to look at what is happening and see it as unfair? If I am truthful with myself, many times I do not believe that I am being treated fairly. It may be very subtle, but it is part of my old man, my flesh. No matter what things appear to be, I must trust that God is a righteous judge and that He will judge justly.

O LORD, I praise You because You are a righteous Judge. Please Lord, help me rest in that truth. May it permeate my thought process so that I can follow the example of Christ, who "entrusted himself to him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23). Amen.

Tuesday, October 4, 2016

Treasured

Job 23-24

My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread. Job 23:11-12

I still try to imagine how Job processed all that was happening to him. I have the advantage of the unfolding of salvation history. I have the advantage of seeing things that have been made much more clear as more of the mystery has been revealed. As it relates to Job, I know that the accuser has been before the Lord. Job is left to try to understand with much less revelation. What I see, as I watch this amazing man of God wrestle with the circumstances of his life, is a man who has known God in the light and has followed Him with great intentionality. This is a man who has a relationship with God. In the darkness of his current situation, even in moments of doubt and confusion, he rests in the fact that God is God and that he has followed God well. He has treasured God above even the daily provisions of life. So now that those provisions have been taken away, he is left with that which he has treasured. He has not lost God and he is certain that God knows his heart and has seen his devotion.

I long to have these two verses true of my life so that I could say with great conviction that I have followed the Lord closely and that I have treasured Him above all else. Whatever happens, God will not be taken from me, nor will I be taken from Him.

Dear God, You are my treasure. I love You and I love following You. Your words are my strength and my shield and I hide them in my heart. You know my heart Lord. I lay it before You. Amen.

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

Whisper

Job 25-26

And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him! Who then can understand the thunder of his power?" Job 26:14

Job rehearses the magnificence, the sovereignty, and the splendor of God and then declares that, even after the proclamation of all that he has just recounted, it is but a whisper of what people hear of God. All that Job can see and know is but the outer fringe of His works. God is amazingly huge and magnificently more than can be expressed. There is not a way for His power to be understood. The rhetorical questions continue to permeate the reading of this account. In many ways, there is no answer for the questions and, in many other ways, the answers are obvious. Here, the answer is quite obvious. No one can understand the power of God. All that is known of Him—which is immense—is but a drop in the vastness of who He is. Job knows that well and his question serves as a reminder.

I may think I know many things about God, but even all I know (as He has revealed it to me) is but a small fragment of all that He is. I cannot understand God and the thunder of His power. I can only proclaim the whisper He has spoken through His Word and Spirit into my heart.

Dear God, I love Your whisper. I love that You have entrusted me with great truths about who You are, but I love even more that what I know is far from exhaustive and that You are far greater than anything I can express! I praise You, my God. Amen.

Thursday, October 6, 2016

Where?

Job 27-28

"Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air. Destruction and Death say, 'Only a rumor of it has reached our ears.' God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells..." Job 28:20-23

Where is wisdom to be found? Job declares that wisdom is of great value and poetically describes the greatness of the value as well as its elusiveness. He declares that it is of such great value that it should be sought and yet it is not to be found because no one can understand the way to get to wisdom. He then states that God understands the way to wisdom and He alone knows where it dwells. Wisdom is the fear of the Lord and shunning evil is understanding (28:28). Amen.

How many times I long for wisdom. So many times I talk to people who claim to be looking for it and yet I see that many times I am not really all that interested in finding the wisdom of God. I am far more inclined to rest in my wisdom. I have seen that in many others as well. I must learn to rest in the wisdom of God alone and to realize that that only comes to me as I seek it through Him. I do not know where wisdom is to be found, but I know Who does!

Dear God, lead me to Your wisdom. Give me a longing for it above any of my own. Let me never settle for less than Your understanding in every situation in my life. Help me see it of as great of value, as Job did! Amen.