

Our Daily Homily - Job Part 2

by F.B. Meyer

F.B. Meyer explores the themes of divine justice, the importance of prayer, and the necessity of integrity in the life of a believer through the story of Job.

Scripture: Job 20:29, Job 21:22, Job 22:23, Job 23:3, Job 24:24, Job 25:4, Job 27:6, Job 28:14, Job 30:20, Job 42:5-6

Topics: "Divine Justice", "Humility before God"

Description

F.B. Meyer explores the profound themes of justice and divine knowledge in the Book of Job, emphasizing the connection between wrongdoing and its consequences. He highlights that while the wicked may seem to prosper temporarily, their ultimate fate is destruction, contrasting this with the eternal security of the righteous. Meyer encourages believers to trust in God's omniscience and to seek a deeper relationship with Him, recognizing that true wisdom and understanding come from God alone. He concludes by reflecting on Job's journey from self-righteousness to humility before God, illustrating the transformative power of divine revelation.

Transcript

This is the portion of a wicked man from God. Job 20:29

REPEATEDLY in reading this book we are reminded of the strong convictions entertained by thoughtful men among these Eastern peoples, of the sure connection between wrongdoing and its bitter penalty. The friends of the sufferer express their opinions in cold-blooded and unfeeling words; but we can detect their intense convictions beneath all that special suffering indicates the presence of special sin, and that all wickedness is sooner or later brought to light and punished.

We are less able to follow the track of God's providences in these crowded, hurrying days; but there can be little doubt of the connection between wrongdoing and punishment. The law is immutable. As a man soweth, so shall he also reap. The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless but for a moment. He shall disgorge his wealth; he shall suck the poison of asps in the remorse and bitterness of his soul; the heavens shall reveal his iniquity; and his descendants shall seek favor of the poor. These things are still to be seen among us, in the rise and fall of proud men and their families.

Let us go into the sanctuary of God, and consider their latter end; and as we contrast it with that of the poorest of his children, we shall find no reason to envy them. Even though no human tribunal sentence them, they carry the harpoon in their heart, and sooner or later it will bring them to a certain and awful

doom. It cannot be otherwise whilst God is God. The psalmist said:

"I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a green bay tree;
Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not."

Shall any teach God knowledge? Job 21:22

WE cannot tell God anything He does not know already. The most fervent and full of our prayers simply unfold in word all that has been patent to his loving, pitying eye. This does not make prayer needless; on the contrary, it incites to prayer, since it is pleasant to talk with one who knows the whole case perfectly; and it is a relief to feel that God's answers depend ■■ not on the information we bring Him, or even on the specific requests we make, but ■■ on his infinite and perfect acquaintance with circumstances and conditions of which we are altogether ignorant.

"Your Father knoweth." Quicker than lightning is his notice of every transition in your inner life ■■ of your downittings and your uprisings; of every thought in your heart; every word on your tongue; of the fretting of that inward cross; of the anguish of that stake in your flesh; of the enemy that, like a sword in your bones, reproaches you with the derisive challenge. "Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Yes, He knows it all, and loves you better than you know.

Do not presume to dictate to Him; do not dare to say that some other way would be better, some other lot more likely to develop your best self. He knows every track by which to bring sons to glory; and that He has chosen this one is a positive proof that it is the best, the one most adapted to your idiosyncrasies and needs. His ways are, higher than your ways, and his thoughts than your thoughts. You could not teach Him knowledge, or increase his love ■■ then trust both.

If thou return to the Almighty. Job 22:23

THESE words introduce a most exquisite picture of the blessings consequent on return to God. They do not fit the case of Job, to whom they were addressed, because he had not left God; and they sound strange as coming from the mouth of Eliphaz. Still they are full of sublime truth.

There are three conditions. ■■ We must retrace the steps of our backsliding and wandering lives. We must put away unrighteousness from our home■life and business engagements, so that the tent may be free from idols. We must be content to lay our most treasured possessions in the dust at God's feet for Him to deal with as He pleases.

There are four consequences. ■■ Whatever we give up for God, we shall find again in Him; He shall become our treasure. Prayer shall have new zest, new success; be full of delight; become the interchange of face■to■face fellowship. There shall be more certainty and permanence in our decisions and achievements. Our decrees shall stand, our work shall last, our path shall be illumined with light. Trouble and trial shall depress us for only a brief space, like the passing of an Atlantic breaker over a lighthouse rock, whilst a glad relief shall always follow close on disaster.

Let us ask for all this in our daily prayer. O God, be my precious silver; give me delight in Thee; hear my prayers; may I decree what Thou canst establish; let Thy light shine on my ways; lift me up above all my depressions and fears ■■ that I may stretch out a strong hand to those who are in trouble.

"Oh, strengthen me, that while I stand

Firm on the Rock, and strong In Thee,

I may stretch out a loving hand

To wrestlers with the troubled sea."

O that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to his seat! Job 23:3

POOR tempest-driven man, he knew not that God was intimately near, nearer than breathing. There was no need for him to go forward and backward, on the right hand or the left. The Lord his God was nigh him, even in his heart; for his throne was pitched there on the sands of the desert, between Job and his pitiless accusers.

Thou needest not speak like this. Thou knowest where to find Him; thou canst find the way to his seat. He is to be found in Jesus, seated on the mercy-seat; in that room where thou sittest reading these words; in that railway train or store. No need to ascend into heaven, or descend into the abyss. Thou couldst not be nearer God, if thou wert in heaven. True, the obscuring veil shall be then removed.

"And without a screen,

At one burst shall be seen,

The Presence in which we have ever been";

but the dropping of the scales from our eyes will not make us nearer God than we are at this moment.

Now go to his seat, just in front of thee. Order thy cause before Him, and argue it. Wait to know the words with which He shall answer thee, and understand his reply. Only be sure that He will not contend against thee with his great power. Sometimes we are so bewildered and perplexed that we lose the realizing sense of God's presence; but there is no real difference. God is not really farther away; and nothing glorifies and pleases Him more than for us to go on speaking with Him as though we could see his face, and realize his embrace. Be still for a moment, and say, reverently and believingly: Lo, God is in this place.

Yet a little while, and they are gone. Job 24:24 (R.V.).

JOB here describes the insecurity of the wicked. He may have raged against the poor and innocent; but in a moment he comes down to Sheol, is hurried to stand before his Maker to receive his sentence. As he had treated the poor, so he is treated. As he had devoured the houses of the innocent, so he is devoured. "How are they become a desolation in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when Thou awakest, Thou shalt despise their image."

For those who fear God there is a greatly contrasted lot. They receive a kingdom that cannot be moved. Zion may be a desolation, and Jerusalem a wilderness; the holy and beautiful institutions in which their

early religious impressions were made may crumble; but they are come to the heavenly Jerusalem. The removing of those things that are capable of being shaken only makes more apparent those which cannot be shaken.

Where do you build your nest? In the trees of this world, that sway in the tempest, or may be hewn down by the woodman's axe; or have you learnt to build in the clefts of the Rock of Ages? Is your treasure in human friendships, which may change or be cut in twain by the sharp shears of death; or is it in the love of God, the unchangeable and everlasting Lover of souls? Let us look off from ourselves; from that diseased introspection that so confuses and dims our life; from the old fears that made us tremble and the old matters of which we must speak no more. And let us look upward and forward to that near future, which is so much larger and better than the past has been, and where we shall attain more than the heights of our dreams.

How then can man be just with God? Job 25:4 (R.V.).

THIS is the question of the ages. Man knows that he is as a worm, and worse. For no animal, however humble, has consciously and determinedly broken the law of God, and defiled its nature.

Our first effort is to go about to establish a righteousness of our own. Repeated failure only aggravates our misery and chagrin, till we fall helpless at the foot of Sinai. Our vows are broken, the law of God lies shivered around us, the thunders and lightnings make us afraid. Then God in the Person of Jesus comes to our help. First, He meets and satisfies the demands of the broken law, so that it can ask no more. With his own hands He works out, and brings in, everlasting righteousness. And finally, He produces in us that faith by which his finished work is applied to our conscience and heart.

By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But we are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation. God is Himself the Justifier of the ungodly. "Whom He called, them He also justified." He takes off the filthy garments, and clothes us in change of raiment.

But the condition is faith. We must believe in Him who justifieth the ungodly. They who believe are justified from all things. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not saved by believing about his work, but in Himself. The Greek of John iii. 16 might be rendered, Whosoever even believeth into Him. The motion of faith is ever towards the heart of Him who died, and rose, and lives. Then through our faith the Spirit produces a holy character.

How small a whisper do we hear of Him! Job 26:14 (R.V.).

JOB in thought passes through the universe. Sheol stands for the grave and the unseen world; Abaddon, for Satan, or for the great reservoirs in which the destructive agencies of creation have their home. With a marvelous anticipation of the conclusions of modern science, he speaks of the world as pendant in space. He passes to the confines of light and darkness, rides on the wings of the wind, discourses of the clouds, skims the mighty surface of the sea. All this, however, he deems as the outskirts of God's ways. It is but a whisper compared to the mighty thunder of his glory and power. If this is a whisper, what must the thunder be! If this universe is but a flower on the meadows of God's life, what must not God Himself be!

Perhaps we know something more of the thunder of his power than Job could, because we have stood beneath Calvary and seen Jesus die, and He is the wisdom and power of God; yea, we have witnessed

the exceeding greatness of his power, according to the working of the strength of his might, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.

Who of us can fathom or understand the power of God? But what a comfort to know that it is an attribute of his heart. God is not power, but He is love, and his love throbs through and commands his power. Be reverent when you kneel before the great and mighty God; but believe that all his power is engaged on the side of his weakest, neediest child. And more: cease not to wait upon God until He endue you with his mighty power, for service and for daily living. A Nasmyth hammer can break a nutshell without crushing or touching the kernel.

My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let go. Job 27:6

JOB had an ideal and clung to it. Have you such? A vision of what you may be, and, by the grace of God, will aim at being. Bishop Westcott says: ■■ "The vision of the ideal guards monotony of work from becoming monotony of life." Bitter indeed is life for those who have not seen the heavenly vision, or heard the calling upward of the voice that says, Come up hither. Any life looks more interesting and attractive when the light of our ideal falls on it, and we realize that every yard leads somewhere, and every step is one nearer the goal. So some one has suggested that "If we cannot realize our ideal, we may at least idealize our real."

But there are many hindrances, many adverse influences to combat, many suggestions that we should let go our ideal. We have so often failed, slipped where we thought we should stand, limped where we thought to overcome by wrestling. The crags are so steep, the encouragement we receive from fellow■■climbers so scant, the dissuasions and misconstructions ■■ like those Job had from his friends ■■ so many. But Jesus who inspired the ideal waits to realize it, if only you will open your heart and let Him enter. Do you hunger and thirst? then He will satisfy. He does not tantalize and disappoint the seeking soul.

"Have we not all, amid life's petty strife,
Some pure ideal of a noble life
That once seemed possible? It was. And yet
We lost it in this daily jar and fret,
And now live idle in a vague regret.
but still our place is kept, and it will wait.
Ready for us to fill it, soon or late:
No star is ever lost we once have seen ■■
We always may be what we might have been.

The deep saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. Job 28:14 (R.V.).

In this sublime chapter the holy soul goes in quest of wisdom, which is the perfect balance of the moral and intellectual attributes of the soul; that knowledge of God, and life, and truth, which is only possible

when the eyes of the heart have been enlightened to know; that radiancy of spirit which is enlightened and illuminated with God who is Himself the Light.

In a marvelous description of mining operations, which would arrest any company of miners in the world, if read from the Revised Version, Job declares it is not to be found in the deep. From one quarter of the universe after another, he receives the intelligence that it is not there. God alone has the secret; He only can communicate it, or give the disposition to appreciate and receive.

We must deal with God. Looking away from every other source of illumination and satisfaction, we must have close and searching fellowship with Him. Dr. Gordon was wont to say that evangelical faith consists not in a glance alone, but in a gaze. "We live in a very busy, perspiring time, when a thousand clamant calls assail us on every side; but we must have more time for visions if we would be well equipped for our tasks." Let us then turn from the quarters where we have been accustomed to draw our supplies ■■■ broken cisterns, with uncertain and brackish water ■■■ and let us come to God, the eternal source of life and peace. Love and rest we want, Thy love and rest, oh, give us! From men and things; from the mine, the deep, and the sea; from the murmur of human voices, and the crosslights of human interests, we come back to Thee, our Home.

Oh that I were as in the months of old! Job 29:2 (R.V.).

WE are irresistibly reminded of Cowper's sad complaint: ■■■

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed!

How sweet their memory still;

But they have left an aching void

The world can never fill."

We are all prone to think that the earliest days were the best; and it is quite possible they were. But we must carefully distinguish between the exchange of the freshness and novelty of our first love for a deepening and maturing love, and the loss of love. The streamlet may not babble so cheerily, but there may be more water in the river. We lose the green Spring, but is it not better to have the intense light of Autumn in which the fruits ripen? There may not be so much ecstasy, but there may be stronger, deeper experience. We should not reckon our position in God's sight by our raptures, and count ourselves retrograding because they have gone; there is something better than rapture: the peace of a settled understanding and unvarying faith.

Still, if it be really so, that you have left the old place on the bosom or at the feet of Christ, that your love is cooling and your spirituality waning, I beseech thee, get back! Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works. Jesus yearns to reinstate thee, and has permitted this restless longing for the past to come, that it may be with thee as in the months of old. Again his lamp shall shine above thy head, and the secret of the Lord shall be upon thy tent; thy steps shall be washed with butter, and the rock pour out rivers of oil; thy roots shall spread to the waters, and the dew shall lie all night upon thy branch.

I cry unto Thee, and Thou dost not answer me. Job 30:20 (R.V.).

IT may have seemed so to the sufferer; but there is not a cry that goes from the anguished soul which does not ring a bell in the very heart of God, where the Man of Sorrows waits, touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

I have sometimes gone to a telephone office, and have rung the bell, asking to be put in connection with my friend, but it has seemed impossible to get at him; either he has been engaged or absent, and one has found oneself speaking to a stranger, and the voice which replied has been unfamiliar. Thoroughly disappointed, one turns away. But this is never the case with God. And the comfort is, that He is most quick to succor those whose cry is lowest. As a mother goes about her work, she is less sensitive to the trains that thunder past, and the heavy drays, and the laughter of boisterous health, than to the stifled cry of her little invalid; and if there could be one thing more sure than another of awakening God's immediate response, it would be such broken cries as pain elicited from Job.

But the answer will come ■■ nay, it is on its way, timed to arrive in the fourth watch of the night. Perhaps the delay is the answer, because the heart needs to be prepared to receive the great gift when it comes. Perhaps, like the Syrophenician woman, you have to give Christ his right place as Lord, and take yours amongst the dogs. Perhaps the answer is coming all the time by one door, whilst you are looking for it through another; but you cannot and must not say that God is not answering. All the time you are crying, the answer is to your hand, awaiting your appropriation. Go to the post■office for the letter: hasten to the landing■stage for the ship ■■ it is in.

Mine integrity. Job 31:6

INTEGRITY is from the Latin word *integritas*, wholeness. It means whole■heartedness. It is interesting in this chapter to see what, in Job's estimation, it involved.

v.1. Purity in the look.

v.7. Cleanliness of the hands.

v.13. Thoughtfulness for domestic servants and underlings.

v.16. Justice to the poor and the widow.

v.17. Willingness to share morsels, and to be a father to the fatherless.

v.19, 20. Clothing for the naked.

v.21. The refusal to depute to others help which one might render.

v.24.. The heart weaned from the love of gold.

v.26. Refusal to turn aside to idols.

v.29. Inability to rejoice at the destruction of those who had derided and hated.

v. 33. The frank confession of wrong■doing.

It becomes us prayerfully to go over these items, and use them as the catechism of our soul; for if this was the standard of character for one who lived so many centuries before the full revelation of Christ, what should not our standard be! How impossible, however, it is to live like this from without! We must enshrine

within us the blessed Spirit of God, who alone originates and maintains that perfect love to God and man which compared to Job's maxims is as the heart to the body. Law is given as the expression of God's will for the regulation of life: but it is impossible to keep the law till we have the love; and it is impossible to have the love until we have the Lord Jesus Christ, through the Holy Ghost.

There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth understanding. Job 32:8 (R.V.).

ELIHU had waited whilst the three elder men said all that was in their hearts. He now excuses his youth and demands audience, because so conscious that the breath of inspiration had entered his soul. Wisdom is not with age; but wherever the heart is freely open to God, He will make it wise. We have received not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know.

George Fox tells us that though he read the Scriptures which spoke of Christ and of God, yet he knew Him not till He who had the key did open. "Then the Lord gently led me along and let me see his love which was endless and eternal, surpassing all the knowledge that men have in the natural state, or can get by history or books. I had not fellowship with any people, priests or professors, but with Christ, who hath the key, and opened the door of life and light unto me. His one message was the necessity of the Inner Light, the inward witness of the Spirit, his secret revelations of truth to the soul. "

This distinction needs to be deeply pondered. We have been trying to know God by the intellect, by reading the Bible intellectually, by endeavoring to apprehend human systems. There is, however, a deeper and truer method. "There is a spirit in man!" Open your spirit to the Divine Spirit as you open a window to the sunny air. Instantly God enters and fills. The Spirit witnesses with our spirit. The inbreathed life of God gives us light. We know by intuition, by fellowship with God, by direct vision, what the wise of this world could never discover.

If there be with him a messenger, an interpreter. Job 33:23

GOD is greater than man, and by his love seeks to hold man back from his purpose. Sometimes He comes in the visions of the night; sometimes in pain and sickness. But we are too dull to understand the inner reason of God's endeavors to deliver us from the brink of destruction; and therefore we need an interpreter, one among a thousand, to explain the meaning of his dealings, and to show us the way in which we should amend our ways. How often has the sick visitor, the minister, the friend, interpreted God's purpose, enabling us to see light in his light. There are few higher offices in this world than to act in this way between God and our fellows.

To perform this function, however, we need to understand two languages; the one of the throne, obtained from deep and intimate converse with our Father, while the other is man's native language of pain and sorrow. Each must be spoken perfectly before we can interpret: ■■

"And to the height of this great argument

Assert eternal Providence,

And justify the ways of God to man."

But, as Bunyan truly says, the best Interpreter is the Holy Spirit. As soon as the Pilgrim has passed the Wicket■gate, he is conducted through the Interpreter's house by the Interpreter Himself. Are you perplexed as to the meaning of God's Word, the dealings of God's providence, the mystery of God's moral

government? Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you through chamber after chamber, unfolding to you the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. They are for babes ■■ for the childlike and pure in heart. He will show you wondrous things out of his law.

He giveth quietness. Job 34:29

QUIETNESS amid the accusations of Satan. ■■ The great accuser points to the stains of our past lives, by which we have defiled our robes and those of others; he says that we shall fall again and again; he imputes evil motives to our holiest actions, and detects flaws in our most sacred services; he raises so great a hubbub that we can hardly hear another voice within our souls. Then the great Intercessor arises and saith, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: I have loved with an everlasting love, I have paid the ransom. So "He giveth quietness."

Quietness amid the dash of the storm. ■■ We sail the lake with Him still, and as we reach its middle waters, far from land, under midnight skies, suddenly a great storm sweeps down. Earth and hell seem arrayed against us, and each billow threatens to overwhelm. Then He arises from his sleep, and rebukes the winds and the waves; his hand waves benediction and repose over the rage of the tempestuous elements. His voice is heard above the scream of the wind in the cordage and the conflict of the billows. Peace, be still! Can you not hear it? And there is instantly a great calm. "He giveth quietness."

Quietness amid the loss of inward consolations. ■■ He sometimes withdraws these, because we make too much of them. We are tempted to look at our joy, our ecstasies, our transports, or our visions, with too great complacency. Then love, for love's sake, withdraws them. But, by his grace, He leads us to distinguish between them and Himself. He draws nigh, and whispers the assurance of his presence. Thus an infinite calm comes to keep our heart and mind. "He giveth quietness."

None saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night? Job 35:10

DO you have sleepless nights, tossing on the hot pillow, and watching for the first glint of dawn? Ask the Divine Spirit to enable you to fix your thoughts on God, your Maker, and believe that He can fill those lonely, dreary hours with song.

Is yours the night of doubt? ■■ A holy man tells us that once as he was sitting by the fire, a great cloud came over him, and a temptation beset him to think that all things came by nature; and as he sat still under it, and let it alone, a living hope arose in him, and a true voice said, "There is a living God who made all things." And immediately the cloud and temptation vanished away, and life rose over it all. His heart was glad, and he praised the living God. Was not this a song in the night?

Is yours the night of bereavement? ■■ Is it not often to such God draws near, and assures the mourner that the Lord had need of its beloved, and called "the eager, earnest spirit to stand in the bright throng of the invisible, liberated, radiant, active, intent on some high mission"; and as the thought enters, is there not the beginning of a song?

Is yours the night of discouragement and fancied or actual failure? ■■ No one understands you, your friends reproach; but your Maker draws nigh, and gives you a song ■■ the song of hope, the song which is harmonious with the strong, deep music of his providence. Be ready to sing the songs that your Maker gives.

"What then? Shall we sit idly down and say

'The night hath come; it is no longer day'?

.....

Yet as the evening twilight fades away,

The sky is filled with stars, invisible to day."

Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any. Job 36:5

WHAT entrancing assurances are contained in this and the preceding sentence! To think that in all our wayfarings through this world One that is perfect in knowledge is always with us, and One that is mighty is pledged to bring us through! Nothing could be desired beside. This makes prayer new. It is a child's confidential whisper to the One who is attent to the lowest murmur, who cannot forget, who will not relinquish a purpose which He has formed though years pass, and who is able to do exceeding abundantly.

It is because God is so great that He despises none. If He were less than infinite, He might overlook. The boundlessness of his being has no ebb, fails of no soul He has made, and is as much at any one point as if He had no care or thought beside. In fact, those that man despises stand the best chance with God. Just because no one else cares for them, he must; just because no one else will help them, He will. This is necessary to his nature.

When a philanthropist adopts a certain lapsed section of the community, he does so because no one else will. It becomes a matter of honour with him that none of these, outcast by all else, should miss his help. And God has constituted Himself Champion, Guardian, and Saviour, of all who have no help from their fellows. Friendless, forlorn, helpless, despised, He recognizes and meets the claim of their urgent necessity. Bruised reeds, bits of smoking tow, half-consumed fire-brands, lost sheep, prodigal sons, waifs and strays, homeless, destitute, neglected ■■ these have a first claim on the Almightyness of the living God.

Men see not the bright light which is in the clouds. Job 37:21

THE world owes much of its beauty to cloudland. The unchanging blue of the Italian sky hardly compensates for the changefulness and glory of the clouds. Clouds also are the cisterns of the rain. Earth would become a wilderness apart from their ministry. There are clouds in human life, shadowing, refreshing, and sometimes draping it in blackness of night; but there is never a cloud without its bright light. "I do set my bow in the cloud! "

If only we could see the clouds from the other side where they lie in billowy glory, bathed in the light they intercept, like heaped ranges of Alps, we should be amazed at their splendid magnificence. We look at their under side; but who shall describe the bright light that bathes their summits, and searches their valleys, and is reflected from every pinnacle of their expanse? Is not every drop drinking in health-giving qualities, which it will carry to the earth?

O child of God! If you could see your sorrows and troubles from the other side; if instead of looking up at them from earth, you would look down on them from the heavenly places where you sit with Christ; if you knew how they are reflecting in prismatic beauty before the gaze of heaven, the bright light of Christ's face ■■ you would be content that they should cast their deep shadows over the mountain slopes of existence.

Only remember that clouds are always moving, and passing before God's cleansing wind.

"Green pastures are before me, which yet I have not seen;

Bright skies will soon be o'er me, where the dark clouds have been:

My hope I cannot measure, my path of life is free;

My Saviour hath my treasure, and He will walk with me."

Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades? Job 38:31 (R.V.).

THE seven stars of the Pleiades always stand for the sweet influences of spring; Orion for the storm and tempest. In this sublime catechism, Jehovah asks Job if he has any control over the One or the other. As it is with the year, so with our life.

There are times when the PLEIADES are in the ascendant. The winter is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come. Doves coo their love notes in the trees, and the flowers gem the soil. Days of hope, of radiant light, of ecstatic joy! Days in which God seems to be making a new heaven and a new earth within us! Days when our Beloved shows Himself through the lattice-work, and says, "Come, my beloved!" Oh, tender influences of the Pleiades, we would that ye might ever stay, filling us with immortal youth! When God bids them shine, no one can bind them. When He gives joy, none can give sorrow. No mortal man can restrain the outburst of Nature's spring. You might as well stay the resurrection of the Son of God and his saints!

But ORION has his work as well. Storms come; the drenching rain veils the landscape; the mighty billows are lashed to fury. But all works for good. The blast in the forest snaps off dead wood. The rain fills up the wells. Frost pulverises the earth. When God binds Orion, man cannot unloose him; "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." But when the Almighty unlooses Orion, like another Samson, he does his work of devastation, before which we must find refuge in the cleft of the Rock.

"God sendeth sun,

He sendeth shower,

Alike they're needful for the flower."

Knowest thou? Job 39:1

THE catechism of this chapter is designed to convince man of his ignorance. How little he knows of nature! Even though centuries of investigation and research have passed, there are still many questions which baffle us. And if we know so little of the Creator's handiwork, how much less do we know of Himself, or the principles on which He acts!

The knowledge of God is not intellectual, but moral and spiritual. Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, are made known to Love and Obedience. Let the Love of God be shed through the heart, and the will of God be the ruling principle of life, and there will be given a knowledge of God which the research of the investigator could never gain. "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God . . . they are spiritually discerned." Knowest thou?

Dost thou know the exceeding greatness of his power, which He wrought in the Resurrection of thy Lord ■■■ that it is all around thee waiting to do as much for thee also; lifting thee, dead weight as thou art, to sit in the heavenlies?

Dost thou know the hope of his calling to a life within the veil, with the veil behind thee, and the light of the Shekinah ever on thy face?

Dost thou know the riches of his glorious indwelling, that He is prepared so to infill thee, that thou shalt partake of the very life wherewith He liveth and reigneth evermore?

Dost thou know the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, of the love that passeth knowledge; and Christ Jesus the Lord?

I am of small account; what shall I answer Thee? I lay mine hand upon my mouth. Job 40:4

WHAT a different tone is here! This is he who so vehemently protested his innocence, and defended himself against the attacks of his accusers. The Master is come, and the servant who had contended with his fellows takes a lowly place of humility and silence.

The first step in the noblest life, possible to any of us, is to learn and say that we are of small account. We may learn it by successive and perpetual failures which abash and confound us. It is better to learn it by seeing the light of God rise in majesty above the loftiest of earth's mountains. "When I was young," said Gounod to a friend, "I used to talk of 'I and Mozart.' Later I said, 'Mozart and I.' But now I only say 'Mozart.'" Substitute God, and you have the true story of many a soul.

The next step is to choke back words, and lay the hand on the mouth. Silence and meditation! Not arguing or contending! Not complaining or murmuring! Not caviling or criticizing! But just being still ■■■ still, that you may feel God near; still, that you may hear Him speak. "Take heed of many words," said George Fox; "keep down, keep low, that nothing may reign in you but life itself."

The greatest saints avoided, when they could, the society of men, and did rather choose to live to God, in secret. A certain one said, "As oft as I have been among men I returned home less a man than I was before. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto Jesus, thy Beloved. Stay with Him in thy closet, for thou shalt not find elsewhere so great peace." How good it would be to lay our hands on our mouths rather oftener, whether in silence with our fellows, or in the hour of secret prayer!

Who then is he that can stand before Me? Job 41:10 (R.V.).

THE first catechism had been on Job's knowledge; now it turns on his power. The pivot of the one was, Knowest thou? of the other, Canst thou? If a man cannot stand before one of God's creatures, how much less before the Creator! If we dread the wrath of the enraged crocodile, what should not be our dread before the wrath of the Eternal? Canst thou stand before Him? Canst thou strive against Him, with any hope of success? Canst thou force thyself, unbidden and unfit, into the presence of the Most Holy? Thou couldst not intrude on an earthly sovereign; how much less on Him, in whose sight the heavens are not clean?

"Eternal light! eternal light!

how pure the soul must be,

When placed within thy searching light,

It shrinks not, but with calm delight

Can live, and look on Thee!"

But Jesus can make it possible. Through Him we draw nigh to God. We have boldness to enter into the Holiest of All by his Blood. We may, through Him, be able to say, with Elijah, "Thus saith Jehovah, before whom I stand." Jesus is the minister of the heavenly sanctuary, and in virtue of his office He is able to bring us into, and maintain us within, the Most Holy Place. He comes out to take its by the hand; and then, having fulfilled in us the good pleasure of his will, He brings us in and places us before the face of God for ever. Like Solomon's servants, we evermore stand before the king, see his face, and hear his words.

"The sons of ignorance and night

May dwell in the Eternal Light,

Through the Eternal Love."

Now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. Job 42:5,6

THIS is the clue to the entire book. Here is a man, who was universally known as perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil; who abounded in beneficent and loving ministries to all who were in need; to whom respect and love flowed in a full tide. He was not conscious of any failure in perfect obedience, or of secret sin; indeed, when his friends endeavored to account for his unparalleled calamities by suggesting that there was some discrepancy between his outward reputation and inward consistency, he indignantly repelled the charge, and repudiated the impeachment.

But there were inconsistencies and failures in him that needed to be exposed and put away before he could attain to perfect blessedness and enjoy unbroken peace. If man could not discover them, and if Job were unconscious of them, they were, nevertheless, present, poisoning the fountain of his being; as a hidden cesspool, whose presence is undetected, may be doing a deadly work of undermining the health of an entire household. So God let the man into his presence; and, like Isaiah, Ezekiel, Peter, and many others, he at once confessed himself vile. The light of the great white throne exposes all unsuspected blemishes. Have you ever seen God! Oh, ask for that vision, that you may know yourself! In proportion as we know God, we abhor ourselves. Then Jesus becomes unspeakably precious. Through his death we pass into the true life, and begin to intercede for others. We never have such power for the blessing of the world as when we lie most humbly at the feet of God.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/fb-meyer/our-daily-homily-job-part-2/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net