

Saturday, August 24

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Job 12:1 - 15:35

12 **1** Then Job spoke again: **2** “You people really know everything, don’t you? And when you die, wisdom will die with you! **3** Well, I know a few things myself— and you’re no better than I am. Who doesn’t know these things you’ve been saying? **4** Yet my friends laugh at me, for I call on God and expect an answer. I am a just and blameless man, yet they laugh at me. **5** People who are at ease mock those in trouble. They give a push to people who are stumbling. **6** But robbers are left in peace, and those who provoke God live in safety— though God keeps them in his power. **7** “Just ask the animals, and they will teach you. Ask the birds of the sky, and they will tell you. **8** Speak to the earth, and it will instruct you. Let the fish in the sea speak to you. **9** For they all know that my disaster has come from the hand of the LORD . **10** For the life of every living thing is in his hand, and the breath of every human being. **11** The ear tests the words it hears just as the mouth distinguishes between foods. **12** Wisdom belongs to the aged, and understanding to the old. **13** “But true wisdom and power are found in God; counsel and understanding are his. **14** What he destroys cannot be rebuilt. When he puts someone in prison, there is no escape. **15** If he holds back the rain, the earth becomes a desert. If he releases the waters, they flood the earth. **16** Yes, strength and wisdom are his; deceivers and deceived are both in his power. **17** He leads counselors away, stripped of good judgment; wise judges become fools. **18** He removes the royal robe of kings. They are led away with ropes around their waist. **19** He leads priests away, stripped of status; he overthrows those with long years in power. **20** He silences the trusted adviser and removes the insight of the elders. **21** He pours disgrace upon princes and disarms the strong. **22** “He uncovers mysteries hidden in darkness; he brings light to the deepest gloom. **23** He builds up nations, and he destroys them. He expands nations, and he abandons them. **24** He strips kings of understanding and leaves them wandering in a pathless wasteland. **25** They grope in the darkness without a light. He makes them stagger like drunkards.

13 **1** “Look, I have seen all this with my own eyes and heard it with my own ears, and now I understand. **2** I know as much as you do. You are no better than I am. **3** As for me, I would speak directly to the Almighty. I want to argue my case with God himself. **4** As for you, you smear me with lies. As physicians, you are worthless quacks. **5** If only you could be silent! That’s the wisest thing you could do. **6** Listen to my charge; pay attention to my

arguments. **7** “Are you defending God with lies? Do you make your dishonest arguments for his sake? **8** Will you slant your testimony in his favor? Will you argue God’s case for him? **9** What will happen when he finds out what you are doing? Can you fool him as easily as you fool people?**10** No, you will be in trouble with him if you secretly slant your testimony in his favor. **11** Doesn’t his majesty terrify you? Doesn’t your fear of him overwhelm you? **12** Your platitudes are as valuable as ashes. Your defense is as fragile as a clay pot. **13** “Be silent now and leave me alone. Let me speak, and I will face the consequences. **14** Why should I put myself in mortal danger and take my life in my own hands? **15** God might kill me, but I have no other hope. I am going to argue my case with him. **16**But this is what will save me—I am not godless. If I were, I could not stand before him. **17** “Listen closely to what I am about to say. Hear me out.**18** I have prepared my case; I will be proved innocent. **19** Who can argue with me over this? And if you prove me wrong, I will remain silent and die. **20** “O God, grant me these two things, and then I will be able to face you. **21** Remove your heavy hand from me, and don’t terrify me with your awesome presence. **22** Now summon me, and I will answer! Or let me speak to you, and you reply. **23** Tell me, what have I done wrong? Show me my rebellion and my sin. **24** Why do you turn away from me? Why do you treat me as your enemy? **25** Would you terrify a leaf blown by the wind? Would you chase dry straw? **26** “You write bitter accusations against me and bring up all the sins of my youth. **27** You put my feet in stocks. You examine all my paths. You trace all my footprints. **28** I waste away like rotting wood, like a moth-eaten coat.

14 1 “How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble! **2** We blossom like a flower and then wither. Like a passing shadow, we quickly disappear. **3** Must you keep an eye on such a frail creature and demand an accounting from me? **4** Who can bring purity out of an impure person? No one! **5** You have decided the length of our lives. You know how many months we will live, and we are not given a minute longer. **6** So leave us alone and let us rest! We are like hired hands, so let us finish our work in peace. **7** “Even a tree has more hope! If it is cut down, it will sprout again and grow new branches. **8** Though its roots have grown old in the earth and its stump decays, **9** at the scent of water it will bud and sprout again like a new seedling. **10** “But when people die, their strength is gone. They breathe their last, and then where are they? **11** As water evaporates from a lake and a river disappears in drought, **12** people are laid to rest and do not rise again. Until the heavens are no more, they will not wake up nor be roused from their sleep. **13** “I wish you would hide me in the grave and forget me there until your anger has passed. But mark your calendar to think of me again! **14** Can the dead live again? If so, this would give me hope through all my years of struggle, and I would eagerly await the release of death. **15** You would call and I would answer, and you would yearn for me, your handiwork. **16** For then you would guard my steps, instead of watching for my sins. **17** My sins

would be sealed in a pouch, and you would cover my guilt. **18** “But instead, as mountains fall and crumble and as rocks fall from a cliff, **19** as water wears away the stones and floods wash away the soil, so you destroy people’s hope. **20** You always overpower them, and they pass from the scene. You disfigure them in death and send them away. **21** They never know if their children grow up in honor or sink to insignificance. **22** They suffer painfully; their life is full of trouble.”

15 **1** Then Eliphaz the Temanite replied: **2** “A wise man wouldn’t answer with such empty talk! You are nothing but a windbag. **3** The wise don’t engage in empty chatter. What good are such words? **4** Have you no fear of God, no reverence for him? **5** Your sins are telling your mouth what to say. Your words are based on clever deception. **6** Your own mouth condemns you, not I. Your own lips testify against you. **7** “Were you the first person ever born? Were you born before the hills were made? **8** Were you listening at God’s secret council? Do you have a monopoly on wisdom? **9** What do you know that we don’t? What do you understand that we do not? **10** On our side are aged, gray-haired men much older than your father! **11** “Is God’s comfort too little for you? Is his gentle word not enough? **12** What has taken away your reason? What has weakened your vision, **13** that you turn against God and say all these evil things? **14** Can any mortal be pure? Can anyone born of a woman be just? **15** Look, God does not even trust the angels. Even the heavens are not absolutely pure in his sight. **16** How much less pure is a corrupt and sinful person with a thirst for wickedness! **17** “If you will listen, I will show you. I will answer you from my own experience. **18** And it is confirmed by the reports of wise men who have heard the same thing from their fathers— **19** from those to whom the land was given long before any foreigners arrived. **20** “The wicked writhe in pain throughout their lives. Years of trouble are stored up for the ruthless. **21** The sound of terror rings in their ears, and even on good days they fear the attack of the destroyer. **22** They dare not go out into the darkness for fear they will be murdered. **23** They wander around, saying, ‘Where can I find bread?’ They know their day of destruction is near. **24** That dark day terrifies them. They live in distress and anguish, like a king preparing for battle. **25** For they shake their fists at God, defying the Almighty. **26** Holding their strong shields, they defiantly charge against him. **27** “These wicked people are heavy and prosperous; their waists bulge with fat. **28** But their cities will be ruined. They will live in abandoned houses that are ready to tumble down. **29** Their riches will not last, and their wealth will not endure. Their possessions will no longer spread across the horizon. **30** “They will not escape the darkness. The burning sun will wither their shoots, and the breath of God will destroy them. **31** Let them no longer fool themselves by trusting in empty riches, for emptiness will be their only reward. **32** They will be cut down in the prime of life; their branches will never again be green. **33** They will be like a vine whose grapes are harvested too

early, like an olive tree that loses its blossoms before the fruit can form. **34** For the godless are barren. Their homes, enriched through bribery, will burn. **35** They conceive trouble and give birth to evil. Their womb produces deceit.”

1 Corinthians 15:29 - 58

15 29 If the dead will not be raised, what point is there in people being baptized for those who are dead? Why do it unless the dead will someday rise again? **30** And why should we ourselves risk our lives hour by hour? **31** For I swear, dear brothers and sisters, that I face death daily. This is as certain as my pride in what Christ Jesus our Lord has done in you. **32** And what value was there in fighting wild beasts—those people of Ephesus—if there will be no resurrection from the dead? And if there is no resurrection, “Let’s feast and drink, for tomorrow we die!” **33** Don’t be fooled by those who say such things, for “bad company corrupts good character.” **34** Think carefully about what is right, and stop sinning. For to your shame I say that some of you don’t know God at all. **35** But someone may ask, “How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?” **36** What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn’t grow into a plant unless it dies first. **37** And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. **38** Then God gives it the new body he wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed. **39** Similarly there are different kinds of flesh—one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. **40** There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies. **41** The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory. **42** It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. **43** Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. **44** They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies. **45** The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person.” But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. **46** What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. **47** Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. **48** Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man. **49** Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man. **50** What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last

forever.**51** But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! **52** It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. **53** For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.**54** Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: “Death is swallowed up in victory.**55** O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? ” **56**For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. **57**But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. **58** So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

Psalm 39:1 - 13

39 1 I said to myself, “I will watch what I do and not sin in what I say. I will hold my tongue when the ungodly are around me.” **2** But as I stood there in silence— not even speaking of good things— the turmoil within me grew worse. **3** The more I thought about it, the hotter I got, igniting a fire of words: **4** “ LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered— how fleeting my life is. **5** You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath.”
Interlude **6** We are merely moving shadows, and all our busy rushing ends in nothing. We heap up wealth, not knowing who will spend it. **7** And so, Lord, where do I put my hope? My only hope is in you. **8** Rescue me from my rebellion. Do not let fools mock me. **9** I am silent before you; I won’t say a word, for my punishment is from you. **10** But please stop striking me! I am exhausted by the blows from your hand. **11** When you discipline us for our sins, you consume like a moth what is precious to us. Each of us is but a breath. Interlude **12** Hear my prayer, O LORD ! Listen to my cries for help! Don’t ignore my tears. For I am your guest— a traveler passing through, as my ancestors were before me. **13** Leave me alone so I can smile again before I am gone and exist no more.

Proverbs 21:30 - 31

21 30 No human wisdom or understanding or plan can stand against the LORD . **31** The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD .