

## **Day 61 - THURSDAY: December 29th**

Job 16 & 17

Job 16:1–22 NKJV

Then Job answered and said: "I have heard many such things; Miserable comforters are you all! Shall words of wind have an end? Or what provokes you that you answer? I also could speak as you do, If your soul were in my soul's place. I could heap up words against you, And shake my head at you; But I would strengthen you with my mouth, And the comfort of my lips would relieve your grief.

"Though I speak, my grief is not relieved; And if I remain silent, how am I eased? But now He has worn me out; You have made desolate all my company. You have shriveled me up, And it is a witness against me; My leanness rises up against me And bears witness to my face. He tears me in His wrath, and hates me; He gnashes at me with His teeth; My adversary sharpens His gaze on me. They gape at me with their mouth, They strike me reproachfully on the cheek, They gather together against me. God has delivered me to the ungodly, And turned me over to the hands of the wicked. I was at ease, but He has shattered me; He also has

taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces; He has set me up for His target, His archers surround me. He pierces my heart and does not pity; He pours out my gall on the ground. He breaks me with wound upon wound; He runs at me like a warrior. "I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, And laid my head in the dust. My face is flushed from weeping, And on my eyelids is the shadow of death; Although no violence is in my hands, And my prayer is pure. "O earth, do not cover my blood, And let my cry have no resting place! Surely even now my witness is in heaven, And my evidence is on high. My friends scorn me; My eyes pour out tears to God. Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, As a man pleads for his neighbor! For when a few years are finished, I shall go the way of no return.

Job 17:1-16 NKJV

"My spirit is broken, My days are extinguished, The grave is ready for me. Are not mockers with me? And does not my eye dwell on their provocation? "Now put down a pledge for me with Yourself. Who is he who will shake hands with me? For You have hidden their heart from understanding; Therefore You will not exalt them. He who speaks flattery to his friends, Even the eyes of his children will fail. "But He has made me a byword of the people, And I have become one in whose face men spit. My eye has also grown dim because of sorrow, And all

my members are like shadows. Upright men are astonished at this, And the innocent stirs himself up against the hypocrite. Yet the righteous will hold to his way, And he who has clean hands will be stronger and stronger. "But please, come back again, all of you, For I shall not find one wise man among you. My days are past, My purposes are broken off, Even the thoughts of my heart. They change the night into day; 'The light is near,' they say, in the face of darkness. If I wait for the grave as my house, If I make my bed in the darkness, If I say to corruption, 'You are my father,' And to the worm, 'You are my mother and my sister,' Where then is my hope? As for my hope, who can see it? Will they go down to the gates of Sheol? Shall we have rest together in the dust?"

Daily Deep Dive:

Job again responds in chapter 16 & 17 to Eliphaz.

The UCG reading plan states: "Job reproaches his friends for their treatment of him, calling them "miserable comforters" (Job 16:2) or, literally, "comforters of trouble"—people who make matters worse rather than better. If the shoe were on the other foot, he would not act like they are now acting but would try to be a source of encouragement and comfort to them (verses 4–5), in keeping with godly character.

"The phrase *shake my head at you* indicates a mocking posture (as in Psalms 22:7). However, the

word *comfort*, meaning 'to *nod* the head sympathetically,' is used in [Job] 2:11 of the friends who came to console him. [Yet they obviously failed in their mission.] In effect, Job is saying: 'Please nod your head with understanding instead of mocking and ridiculing me'" (*The Nelson Study Bible*, note on 16:4–5).

But they would not. Job sinks back into mourning his condition. Shockingly, he seems to refer to God as his tearing, hating, gnashing adversary or enemy (verse 9), though it is possibly that he is personifying his *illness*—continuing from the previous verse where he said, "My leanness rises up against me." The Hebrew word for "adversary" here can mean "a narrow or tight place," figuratively meaning trouble or affliction (Strong's Lexicon, No. 6862). Of course, it is clear, as we have seen, that Job thinks God counts *him* as if an enemy (Job 13:24; see also Job 19:11). Interestingly, however, in chapter 18 Bildad seems to think that Job is referring to him and the other two counselors as tearing beasts (and thus Job's enemy referred to here) and retorts that Job is the one tearing himself (see Job 18:3–4). It is true that Job saw himself as a fallen man who was being kicked while he was down—seemingly something only enemies would do. It is also

conceivable that Job realized that Satan, as the enemy of humanity and God, was particularly his own enemy.

In any case, whoever or whatever Job is labeling as his devastating enemy, there is no question in his mind that his illness and even the torment from his friends is ultimately from God—either directly or because God has allowed it. And this was in fact so. Job is correct in verse 11 when he states: "God has delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over to the hands of the wicked." For as we know, God had told the very king of the wicked, Satan the devil, "Behold, he is in your hand" (2:6).

Yet by the wicked here, Job probably had particular people in mind—passersby perhaps—who were taunting and even striking him and spitting on him, though he may be using these terms metaphorically for mistreatment (Job 16:10; Job 17:6; see also Job 30:1, Job 30:9–12). Indeed, if metaphorical, it is possible that Job is referring to his friends, classifying them among the wicked.

Job 16:9–11 seems to also be a foreshadowing of the suffering of Jesus Christ. The words "They gape at me with their mouth" are later used by David in Psalms 22:13—this psalm picturing the future suffering of the Messiah. In His time of greatest torment, Jesus finally came to the point

where He, like David, cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Psalms 22:1; Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34). Christ obviously felt some of what Job was feeling. "[Job 16] verses 18, 22, and 17:1 indicate that Job thought he would die before he could be vindicated before his peers; so he was concerned that the injustice done to him should never be forgotten. That is what he meant when he called on the earth never to cover his blood or bury his cry (v. 18). In Genesis 4:10–11 Abel's innocent blood was crying out to God as a witness against Cain. So Job was consoled to think his cry would continue after his death. And there is one in heaven who would listen to it (vv. 19–21)" (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, note on 16:18–17:2). In Job 16:21, Job longs for someone to intercede for him with God. On one level, this was probably a desire for Job's friends to cease from their accusations and start praying for him. Yet it may also anticipate the role of Jesus Christ, our Intercessor and Advocate (see Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1)."

[END]

Chapter 17:

The UCG reading plan continues: "In praying to God in Job 17:3, "Job uses the language of ancient business contracts and asks some 'pledge' (down payment) from God as

security against the vindication that will surely come. Only God can demonstrate Job's innocence and despite his despair and ambivalence he believes that God will" (*The Bible Reader's Companion*, note on verses 3–9).

The translation of verses 8–9 is disputed. Some see the meaning as truly righteous people being unhappy with the hypocritical friends—or that they would be if they were made aware of the situation. Yet others see Job as being sarcastic here—speaking of "the innocent" (his friends) stirred up against "the hypocrite" (himself). In context, the latter seems more likely. The Good News Bible paraphrases the passage this way: "Those who claim to be honest are shocked, and they all condemn me as godless. Those who claim to be respectable are more and more convinced that they are right." This flows right into verse 10: "As for all of you, come back and try again! But I will not find a wise man among you" (New Living Translation).

In the Hebrew wording of verses 11–16, it is not clear if Job is entertaining the possibility of hope and realizing the foolishness of wishing for death or if he is belittling the idea of hope and is in fact wishing for the relief death would bring." [END]

Job ends this response in such a place of hopeless and sadness. How awful this trial was, how awful to have to go through it alone without the love and comfort of good friends.