

Bildad's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 8

Bildad Agrees With Eliphaz's Worldview

- 1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
- 2 “How long will you say these *things*,
and the words of your mouth *be* a mighty wind?
- 3 Does God pervert justice,
or Shaddai pervert righteousness?
- 4 If your children sinned against him,
then he sent them into the power of their transgression.

Bildad Encourages Job to Repent

- 5 If you yourself would seek God,
then you would plead to Shaddai for grace.
- 6 If you *are* pure and upright,
indeed, now he will rouse himself for you,
and he will restore your righteous abode.
- 7 Though your beginning was small,
your end will be very great.

Bildad's Sermon—God's Judgment is Upon the Unrighteous

- 8 “Indeed, please inquire of former generations,
and consider what their ancestors have found,
9 for we *are of* yesterday, and we do not know,
for our days on earth *are* a shadow.
- 10 Will they themselves not teach you *and* tell you
and utter words from their heart?
- 11 Can papyrus grow tall where *there is* not a marsh?
Will reeds flourish without water?
- 12 While it *is* in its flower *and* is not plucked,
yet it withers before all grass.
- 13 So *are* the paths of all who forget God;
and *the* hope of *the* godless will perish,
14 whose confidence is cut off
and whose trust *is* a spider's house.
- 15 He will lean himself against his house, but it will not stand;
he will take hold of it, but it will not endure.
- 16 He *is* thriving before the sun,
and his plant shoots spread over his garden.
- 17 His roots twine over a stone heap;
he sees a house of stone.
- 18 If he destroys him from his place,
then it deceives him, *saying*, ‘I have never seen you.’
- 19 Look, this *is* the joy of his way,
and from dust others will spring up.

Bildad's Sermon—God's Blessing is Upon the Righteous

- 20 “Look, God will not reject *the* blameless,
and he will not uphold the hand of evildoers.
- 21 Yet he will fill your mouth *with* laughter
and your lips *with* a shout of joy.
- 22 *Those* who hate you will be clothed with shame,
and the tent of the wicked will be no more.”

Job's Response to Bildad (c. 2200 BC)

Job 9–10

Job Imagines Himself Being Vindicated in Court—But Who Can Defend Themselves Against God?

9:1 Then Job answered and said,

- 2 "Truly I know that *it is* so,
but how can a human being be just before God?
- 3 If he wants to contend with him,
he cannot answer him one *time* in a thousand.
- 4 *He is* wise in heart and mighty in strength;
who has resisted him and succeeded?
- 5 "*He is the one* who moves mountains, and they do not know *how*,
who overturns them in his anger.
- 6 *He is the one* who shakes *the* earth from its place,
and its pillars tremble.
- 7 *He is the one* who commands the sun, and it does not rise,
and he seals up the stars.
- 8 *He is the one* who alone stretches out *the* heavens
and *who* tramples on *the* waves of *the* sea.
- 9 *He is the one* who made *the* Bear and Orion,
the Pleiades and *the* constellations of *the* south.
- 10 *He is the one* who does great things beyond understanding
and marvelous things beyond number.
- 11 "If he passes by me, I would not see him;
and *if* he should move on, I would not recognize him.
- 12 If he would snatch away, who could turn him?
Who could say to him, 'What are you doing?'
- 13 God will not turn back his anger;
beneath him the helpers of Rahab bow.
- 14 How much less can I myself answer him?
How can I choose my words with him,
15 whom I cannot answer, even though I am righteous?
From my judge I must implore grace.
- 16 If I summon *him*, and he should answer me,
I do not believe that he will listen to my voice—
17 who crushes me with a tempest
and multiplies my wounds without cause.
- 18 He will not allow me to catch my breath;
rather, he will fill me with bitterness.
- 19 If it is a matter of strength, look, *he is* mighty.
But if it is a matter of justice, who can summon me?
- 20 Even though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me;
even though I *am* blameless, yet it would pronounce me guilty.

Job Declares Himself Innocent and Argues That the Blameless Suffer With the Guilty

- 21 "*I am* blameless; I do not care about myself;
I loathe my life.
- 22 It *is all* one; therefore I say,
'He destroys *both the* blameless and *the* wicked.'
- 23 When the whip kills suddenly,
he mocks at *the* despair of *the* innocent.
- 24 The earth is given into *the* hand of *the* wicked;
he covers the face of its judge—
if *it is* not *he*, then who *is* it?

Job Reflects On His Miserable Plight—No Matter What He Does, He Cannot Win

- 25 "And my days are swifter than a runner;
they flee away; they do not see good.

- 26 They go by like papyrus skiffs,
like an eagle swoops down on *its* prey.
27 Though I say, 'I will forget my complaint;
I will change my expression, and I will rejoice,'
28 I become afraid of all my sufferings;
I know that you do not consider me innocent.
29 *If* I shall be *declared* guilty,
why then should I labor in vain?
30 If I wash myself with soap,
and I cleanse my hands with lye,
31 then you plunge me into the *slime* pit,
and my clothes abhor me.

If Only There Were Someone To Arbitrate Between Us!

- 32 "For *he* is not a mortal like me *that* I can answer him,
that we can come to trial together.
33 There is no arbiter between us
that he might lay his hand on both of us.
34 May he remove his rod from me,
and let his dread not terrify me;
35 *then* I would speak and not fear him,
for in myself I am not fearful.

Job Cries Out to God—Why Are You Doing this? What is My Fault?

- 10:1 "My inner self loathes my life;
I want to give vent to my complaint;
I want to speak out of *the* bitterness of my inner self.
2 I will say to God, 'You should not condemn me;
let me know why you contend *against* me.
3 Is it good for you that you oppress,
that you despise the labor of your hands,
and you smile over the schemes of *the* wicked?
4 Do you have eyes of flesh?
Or do you see as human beings see?
5 *Are* your days as the days of human beings,
or your years as the days of man,
6 that you seek out my iniquity,
and you search for my sin
7 because of your knowledge that I am not guilty,
and there is no escaping from your hand?

Job Cries Out to God—Have You Created Me Only to Destroy Me?

- 8 Your hands fashioned me and made me altogether,
then you destroyed me.
9 Please remember that you made me like clay,
but you turn me into dust *again*?
10 Did you not pour me out like milk
and curdle me like cheese?
11 You clothed me *with* skin and flesh,
and you knit me together with bones and sinews.
12 You have granted me life and loyal love,
and your care has preserved my spirit.
13 " 'Yet you hid these *things* in your heart;
I know that this was your purpose.
14 If I had sinned, then you would be watching me,
and you would not acquit me of my guilt.
15 If I am guilty, woe to me!
But if I am righteous, I dare not lift my head;

I am filled with shame, and just look at my misery!

- 16 And *if my head* grows bold, you would hunt me as the lion in its prime;
and you repeat your exploits against me.
- 17 You renew your witnesses against me,
and you increase your vexation against me;
relief forces *are* against me.

Job Cries Out to God—Will You Give Me No Relief Before the End?

- 18 So why did you bring me forth from the womb?
I should have passed away, and no eye should have seen me.
- 19 I should have been as though I had not been;
I should have been brought from *the* womb to the grave.
- 20 *Are* not my days few? Let him leave *me* alone;
let him turn from me, and let me rejoice a little.
- 21 Before I go—and I will not return—
to *the* land of darkness and deep shadow,
- 22 to *the* land of darkness,
like *the* darkness of a deep shadow and chaos,
so that it shines forth like darkness.”

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