

Bildad's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 8

Bildad Agrees With Eliphaz's Worldview

- 1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered,
2 "How long will you say these things,
And the words of your mouth be a mighty wind?
3 "Does God pervert justice?
Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?
4 "If your sons sinned against Him,
Then He delivered them into the power of their transgression.

Bildad Encourages Job to Repent

- 5 "If you would seek God
And implore the compassion of the Almighty,
6 If you are pure and upright,
Surely now He would rouse Himself for you
And restore your righteous estate.
7 "Though your beginning was insignificant,
Yet your end will increase greatly.

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

- 8 "Please inquire of past generations,
And consider the things searched out by their fathers.
9 "For we are *only* of yesterday and know nothing,
Because our days on earth are as a shadow.
10 "Will they not teach you *and* tell you,
And bring forth words from their minds?
11 "Can the papyrus grow up without a marsh?
Can the rushes grow without water?
12 "While it is still green *and* not cut down,
Yet it withers before any *other* plant.
13 "So are the paths of all who forget God;
And the hope of the godless will perish,
14 Whose confidence is fragile,
And whose trust a spider's web.
15 "He trusts in his house, but it does not stand;
He holds fast to it, but it does not endure.
16 "He thrives before the sun,
And his shoots spread out over his garden.
17 "His roots wrap around a rock pile,
He grasps a house of stones.
18 "If he is removed from his place,
Then it will deny him, *saying*, 'I never saw you.'
19 "Behold, this is the joy of His way;
And out of the dust others will spring.

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

- 20 "Lo, God will not reject *a man of* integrity,
Nor will He support the evildoers.
21 "He will yet fill your mouth with laughter
And your lips with shouting.
22 "Those who hate you will be clothed with shame,
And the tent of the wicked will be no longer."

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,

- 2 "In truth I know that this is so;
But how can a man be in the right before God?
- 3 "If one wished to dispute with Him,
He could not answer Him once in a thousand *times*.
- 4 "Wise in heart and mighty in strength,
Who has defied Him without harm?
- 5 "*It is God* who removes the mountains, they know not *how*,
When He overturns them in His anger;
- 6 Who shakes the earth out of its place,
And its pillars tremble;
- 7 Who commands the sun not to shine,
And sets a seal upon the stars;
- 8 Who alone stretches out the heavens
And tramples down the waves of the sea;
- 9 Who makes the Bear, Orion and the Pleiades,
And the chambers of the south;
- 10 Who does great things, unfathomable,
And wondrous works without number.
- 11 "Were He to pass by me, I would not see Him;
Were He to move past *me*, I would not perceive Him.
- 12 "Were He to snatch away, who could restrain Him?
Who could say to Him, 'What are You doing?'
- 13 "God will not turn back His anger;
Beneath Him crouch the helpers of Rahab.
- 14 "How then can I answer Him,
And choose my words before Him?
- 15 "For though I were right, I could not answer;
I would have to implore the mercy of my judge.
- 16 "If I called and He answered me,
I could not believe that He was listening to my voice.
- 17 "For He bruises me with a tempest
And multiplies my wounds without cause.
- 18 "He will not allow me to get my breath,
But saturates me with bitterness.
- 19 "If *it is a matter* of power, behold, *He is* the strong one!
And if *it is a matter* of justice, who can summon Him?
- 20 "Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me;
Though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty.

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

- 21 "I am guiltless;
I do not take notice of myself;
I despise my life.
- 22 "It is *all* one; therefore I say,
'He destroys the guiltless and the wicked.'
- 23 "If the scourge kills suddenly,
He mocks the despair of the innocent.
- 24 "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked;
He covers the faces of its judges.
If it is not He, then who is it?

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

- 25 "Now my days are swifter than a runner;

- They flee away, they see no good.
 26 “They slip by like reed boats,
 Like an eagle that swoops on its prey.
 27 “Though I say, ‘I will forget my complaint,
 I will leave off my *sad* countenance and be cheerful,’
 28 I am afraid of all my pains,
 I know that You will not acquit me.
 29 “I am accounted wicked,
 Why then should I toil in vain?
 30 “If I should wash myself with snow
 And cleanse my hands with lye,
 31 Yet You would plunge me into the pit,
 And my own clothes would abhor me.

If Only There Were Someone To Arbitrate Between Us!

- 32 “For *He is* not a man as I am that I may answer Him,
 That we may go to court together.
 33 “There is no umpire [arbiter/mediator] between us,
 Who may lay his hand upon us both.
 34 “Let Him remove His rod from me,
 And let not dread of Him terrify me.
 35 “*Then* I would speak and not fear Him;
 But I am not like that in myself.

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

- 10:1 “I loathe my own life;
 I will give full vent to my complaint;
 I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
 2 “I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me;
 Let me know why You contend with me.
 3 ‘Is it right for You indeed to oppress,
 To reject the labor of Your hands,
 And to look favorably on the schemes of the wicked?
 4 ‘Have You eyes of flesh?
 Or do You see as a man sees?
 5 ‘Are Your days as the days of a mortal,
 Or Your years as man’s years,
 6 That You should seek for my guilt
 And search after my sin?
 7 ‘According to Your knowledge I am indeed not guilty,
 Yet there is no deliverance from Your hand.

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

- 8 ‘Your hands fashioned and made me altogether,
 And would You destroy me?
 9 ‘Remember now, that You have made me as clay;
 And would You turn me into dust again?
 10 ‘Did You not pour me out like milk
 And curdle me like cheese;
 11 Clothe me with skin and flesh,
 And knit me together with bones and sinews?
 12 ‘You have granted me life and lovingkindness;
 And Your care has preserved my spirit.
 13 ‘Yet these things You have concealed in Your heart;
 I know that this is within You:
 14 If I sin, then You would take note of me,
 And would not acquit me of my guilt.
 15 ‘If I am wicked, woe to me!

And if I am righteous, I dare not lift up my head.
I am sated with disgrace and conscious of my misery.

- 16 'Should *my head* be lifted up, You would hunt me like a lion;
And again You would show Your power against me.
- 17 'You renew Your witnesses against me
And increase Your anger toward me;
Hardship after hardship is with me.

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

- 18 'Why then have You brought me out of the womb?
Would that I had died and no eye had seen me!
- 19 'I should have been as though I had not been,
Carried from womb to tomb.'
- 20 "Would He not let my few days alone?
Withdraw from me that I may have a little cheer
- 21 Before I go—and I shall not return—
To the land of darkness and deep shadow,
- 22 The land of utter gloom as darkness *itself*,
Of deep shadow without order,
And which shines as the darkness."

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