

**Bildad's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)**

Job 8

**Bildad Agrees With Eliphaz's Worldview**

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite spoke up and said:

- 2 "How long will you speak these things,  
seeing that the words of your mouth  
are like a great wind?  
3 Does God pervert justice?  
Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?  
4 If your children sinned against him,  
he gave them over to the penalty of their sin.

**Bildad Encourages Job to Repent**

- 5 But if you will look to God,  
and make your supplication to the Almighty,  
6 if you become pure and upright,  
even now he will rouse himself for you,  
and will restore your righteous abode.  
7 Your beginning will seem so small,  
since your future will flourish.

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

- 8 "For inquire now of the former generation,  
and pay attention to the findings  
of their ancestors;  
9 For we were born yesterday and do not have knowledge,  
since our days on earth are but a shadow.  
10 Will they not instruct you and speak to you,  
and bring forth words  
from their understanding?  
11 Can the papyrus plant grow tall where there is no marsh?  
Can reeds flourish without water?  
12 While they are still beginning to flower  
and not ripe for cutting,  
they can wither away  
faster than any grass!  
13 Such is the destiny of all who forget God;  
the hope of the godless perishes,  
14 whose trust is in something futile,  
whose security is a spider's web.  
15 He leans against his house but it does not hold up,  
he takes hold of it but it does not stand.  
16 He is a well-watered plant in the sun,  
its shoots spread over its garden.  
17 It wraps its roots around a heap of stones  
and it looks for a place among stones.  
18 If he is uprooted from his place,  
then that place will disown him, saying,  
'I have never seen you!'  
19 Indeed, this is the joy of his way,  
and out of the earth others spring up.

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

- 20 "Surely, God does not reject a blameless man,  
nor does he grasp the hand  
of the evildoers.  
21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,

and your lips with gladness.

- 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:

- 2 “Truly, I know that this is so.  
But how can a human be just before God?
- 3 If someone wishes 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 remained safe?
- 5 He who removes mountains suddenly,  
who overturns them in his anger;
- 6 he who shakes the earth out of its place  
so that its pillars tremble;
- 7 he who commands the sun and it does not shine  
and seals up the stars;
- 8 he alone spreads out the heavens,  
and treads on the waves of the sea;
- 9 he makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,  
and the constellations of the southern sky;
- 10 he does great and unsearchable things,  
and wonderful things without number.
- 11 If he passes by me, I cannot see him,  
if he goes by, I cannot perceive him.
- 12 If he snatches away, who can turn him back?  
Who dares to say to him, ‘What are you doing?’
- 13 God does not restrain his anger;  
under him the helpers of Rahab lie crushed.
- 14 “How much less, then, can I answer him  
and choose my words to argue with him!
- 15 Although I am innocent,  
I could not answer him;  
I could only plead with my judge for mercy.
- 16 If I summoned him, and he answered me,  
I would not believe  
that he would be listening to my voice—
- 17 he who crushes me with a tempest,  
and multiplies my wounds for no reason.
- 18 He does not allow me to recover my breath,  
for he fills me with bitterness.
- 19 If it is a matter of strength,  
most certainly he is the strong one!  
And if it is a matter of justice,  
he will say, ‘Who will summon me?’
- 20 Although I am innocent,  
my mouth would condemn me;  
although I am blameless,  
it would declare me perverse.

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

- 21 I am blameless. I do not know myself.  
I despise my life.

- 22 “It is all one! That is why I say,  
 ‘He destroys the blameless and the guilty.’  
 23 If a scourge brings sudden death,  
 he mocks at the despair of the innocent.  
 24 If a land has been given  
 into the hand of a wicked man,  
 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 “My days are swifter than a runner,  
 they speed by without seeing happiness.  
 26 They glide by like reed boats,  
 like an eagle that swoops down on its prey.  
 27 If I say, ‘I will forget my complaint,  
 I will change my expression and be cheerful,’  
 28 I dread all my sufferings,  
 for I know that you do not hold me blameless.  
 29 If I am guilty,  
 why then weary myself in vain?  
 30 If I wash myself with snow water,  
 and make my hands clean with lye,  
 31 then you plunge me into a slimy pit  
 and my own clothes abhor me.

**If Only There Were Someone To Arbitrate Between Us!**

- 32 For he is not a human being like I am,  
 that I might answer him,  
 that we might come together in judgment.  
 33 Nor is there an arbiter between us,  
 who might lay his hand on us both,  
 34 who would take his rod away from me  
 so that his terror would not make me afraid.  
 35 Then would I speak and not fear him,  
 but it is not so with me.

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

- 10:1 “I am weary of my life;  
 I will complain without restraint;  
 I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.  
 2 I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me;  
 tell me why you are contending with me.’  
 3 Is it good for you to oppress,  
 to despise the work of your hands,  
 while you smile  
 on the schemes of the wicked?  
 4 “Do you have eyes of flesh,  
 or do you see as a human being sees?  
 5 Are your days like the days of a mortal,  
 or your years like the years of a mortal,  
 6 that you must search out my iniquity,  
 and inquire about my sin,  
 7 although you know that I am not guilty,  
 and that there is no one who can deliver  
 out of your hand?

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

- 8 “Your hands have shaped me and made me,

- but now you destroy me completely.
- 9 Remember that you have made me as with the clay;  
will you return me to dust?
- 10 Did you not pour me out like milk,  
and curdle me like cheese?
- 11 You clothed me with skin and flesh  
and knit me together with bones and sinews.
- 12 You gave me life and favor,  
and your intervention watched over my spirit.
- 13 “But these things you have concealed in your heart;  
I know that this is with you:
- 14 If I sinned, then you would watch me  
and you would not acquit me of my iniquity.
- 15 If I am guilty, woe to me,  
and if I am innocent, I cannot lift my head;  
I am full of shame,  
and satiated with my affliction.
- 16 If I lift myself up,  
you hunt me as a fierce lion,  
and again you display your power against me.
- 17 You bring new witnesses against me,  
and increase your anger against me;  
relief troops come against me.

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

- 18 “Why then did you bring me out from the womb?  
I should have died  
and no eye would have seen me!
- 19 I should have been as though I had never existed;  
I should have been carried  
right from the womb to the grave!
- 20 Are not my days few?  
Cease, then, and leave me alone,  
that I may find a little comfort,  
21 before I depart, never to return,  
to the land of darkness  
and the deepest shadow,  
22 to the land of utter darkness,  
like the deepest darkness,  
and the deepest shadow and disorder,  
where even the light is like darkness.”

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