

## Job 8-10

As we fall back into the flow of the book of Job we remember that Job is suffering tremendously, and his “friends” are blaming him personally. He’s lost everything, his wealth, his kids have been killed, his own personal health, and he finds himself sitting in dust and ashes, despondent, depressed, and absolutely desperate for even an ounce of relief. He’s scraping his oozing and festering sores with broken pottery, he’s infested with worms all over his body, he’s stricken with fever, can’t sleep at night, writhes in pain all day, can’t eat, he’s basically a bag of bones, his skin is turning black and falling off. His friends come *to* him sit 7 days in silence *with* him, they’re mourning *for* him, finally Job cries out, and he curses the day of his birth, says, “I wish I’d never been born, or at the very least that I’d have died at birth.”

At that his friends finally begin to speak up. Eliphaz says, “Job, I hope you don’t mind, but if you’re going start speaking like that I’m gonna have to say something.” And he says, “Job you’ve said a lot of encouraging things to a lot of hurting people, but now that *you’re* hurting, now that tragedy has come to *you*, you won’t take your own advise, you’re whining and griping about your lot in life. But who ever perished being innocent? Where were the *upright* ever cut off? It’s people who plow iniquity and sow trouble who reap these kinds of things. Job you’ve got sin in your life and you need to repent and get right with God, I’ve seen this kinda thing before, so allow both my personal observation and spiritual revelation to bring confirmation to your situation. You need to seek the Lord, cry out *to* the Lord, don’t despise the chastening *of* the Lord, but get right *with* the Lord.”

Job responds, “How is that advice supposed to help me? To one who’s afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friends. I need someone to *listen to* me, to show and share the *love* of God *with* me, not sit here and try to *lecture* me, or lay faulty *logic* on me. A right word in due season is powerful, but you don’t have a clue, there’s no sin in my life, I’ve done nothing deserving of this.” And then he turns again and cries out to God and says, “God my days are coming quickly to an end, I’m begging You, look away *from* me, grant a little relief *to* me, if there’s some sin in my life *forgive* me please, that I might just have a taste of comfort before I die.”

Now Bildad speaks up, and to be honest with you its much the same thing as Eliphaz dished out, a little different angle, but same basic premise. “Do good you’ll prosper, do bad you’ll be punished.”

And let me encourage you guys to just buckle down and be prepared for a lot of repetition over the next 30 chapters, they’ll each get a few rounds in whereby they’re in essence restating much of the same type things until finally the Lord breaks in and sets everybody’s perspective in proper order. Right now they’re all discussing these things, from there they start *debating* them, and after that they begin *disputing* them. But this interim period just goes on and on and on. But isn’t that the way it seems in the midst of tribulation, the beginning overwhelms you, the end brings relief and renewal *to* you, but everything that takes place in the middle seems to drone and dredge on and on and on and on.

So here we go, Job needed comforters, he got critics, he needed to be encouraged, he got condemned, he needed to be refreshed, instead he got rebuked. And again I would just remind you, when people are in pain, going through the ringer, try not to focus so much on the words of their mouth as you do the cry of their heart, the need love not lectures or logic, minister to their heart, not their mouth and God can use you to bring healing to their lives.

### Vs1-3

So Bildad comes harsh straight out of the gate, as if Eliphaz wasn't rough enough, Bildad doesn't even offer a sense of sentiment, an ounce of encouragement, he just says, "Job, you're a big bag of wind."

Now, let me offer you just a little bit of advice. If you know someone who's depressed to the point of detesting his own life... (Now we have no indication that Job was ever suicidal, he loathed his life, *wanted* to lose his life, asked God to *take* his life, but we're not given any indication that he ever considered suicide as an optional way out. He understood that God is the giver and taker of life and he never sought to supersede that position.) But here's the deal, if you know someone who's down, depressed, detesting his/her life to the point of wanting to die, they're crying out *to* you, spilling their hurt *before* you, desiring some form of comfort or concern *from* you, when they're finished talking to you don't respond by saying, "You're big bag of wind, just full of hot air!"

That's what Bildad has just done, he looks at Job who's despising his life and insults him, tells him his words are just a lot of hot air. And what we're going to discover about Bildad is that he just takes a hard and legalistic approach to God. "Does God subvert judgment? Does the almighty pervert justice?" He's all about, "God does the right thing, period." And that's true, and that's another thing we need to bear in mind as we go through these discussions, in and of themselves there's lots of proper interpretation, but there's misguided application of the principles they develop. And Bildad is speaking about God's justice, His judgment that if you don't deserve it, He's not going to pour it out because He doesn't scourge the innocent, or support the wicked, He doesn't advance the cause of the sinner. "So Job if you're suffering, God's not doing you wrong, you must be in sin somewhere." And though Bildad is correct in that God is a God of justice, and perfect judgment, He's also a God of sovereignty, a God of grace and mercy, love and compassion, He's not up there with the big flyswatter in the sky waiting to swat us down the moment we make a mistake. So Vs 3 sets the stage for Bildad's whole line of reasoning, God is a God of justice, but he fails to consider any other of the attributes of God. And I don't think that he's necessarily trying to wound Job, he feels the need to defend God's justice. Job has questioned God, "Why would God allow me to suffer like this? I've done nothing wrong, or deserving of this type of treatment." And Bildad feels pressed to say, "Hey, if God has seen fit to bring this into your life, don't question *Him*, the problem's not in *Him*, it's in *you*, He's not perverse in His judgment." And as I said, it's true that God is light, but He's also love, so when God administers discipline it's going to be in love, not in seeking to squash you like the maggot you are, that's not God the Father, that's the god father.

So the situation isn't always cut and dry, black and white, there's a whole host of variables that enter into a given occasion, spiritual warfare not being one of the least, which is what Job is right in the middle of. But for Bildad it's as simple as  $1 + 1 = 2$ , sin + non-repentance = judgment poured out. The problem is that every tragedy that strikes our lives isn't God's judgment, that's the hurdle that none of these guys seem to be able to get over.

#### Vs4-7

You see, "Job the reason your kids were killed was because of sin in their lives, and the reason you're going through this is because of sin in *your* life, if you were pure and upright in God's sight, He'd prosper your life, and your latter end would be greater than your beginning." Now in reality that's going to happen, God's going to bless Job with twice his original state in the end, but not because of Bildad's reasoning.

Can you imagine the wound that was just inflicted, 1<sup>st</sup> of all he tells Job (who's deathly depressed) he's full of hot air, then he throws some whipped cream on that by saying his kids were in sin so God killed them, then he adds the cherry on top by telling Job that if he'd repent, if he were pure and upright in God's sight that He'd restore him and not kill him to. This is a man who was the priest of his home, offering sacrifices for his kids, carving out time to intercede for them with regularity. And when everything was taken from him, he bowed himself to the ground, worshipped the Lord and submitted to His sovereignty and now here this guy is, telling Job that he's not right in God's sight, his kids were low down sinners, but that if he'd just humble himself, repent, and get right, God would bless him. Now that's exactly the philosophy that Satan said he ascribe to, what a subtle temptation of the enemy. Remember when Satan said to God that Job served him because of the way He blessed him? Bildad is telling Job that if he'll just do what's pleasing in the sight of God, that God will restore and reward him, it's the merit system.

#### Vs8-10

So Bildad upstages Eliphaz. Eliphaz was all about personal observation, mingled with some spiritual revelation, Bildad says, "Consider the wisdom of past *generations*." And I'll agree that we can learn from the past, and the one who doesn't learn from it is doomed to repeat it and all of that. But one has said that the past is to be a rudder to guide us, not an anchor to hold us back, and just because something was said in the past, doesn't mean its right. We've mentioned before, lets start practicing modern medicine according to the wisdom of the text books of the ancients. Anyone want to get in line for being treated medically according to the standards of say even 150 yrs ago? Why not? Because you realize that not everything said, or understood in the past is pertinent for the present, nor is it necessarily even true. Now I did run across an interesting tidbit of information as I was preparing for this, I'd never done the math. But Ab was born approximately 290ish yrs after the flood, now Noah's son Shem lived 502 yrs after the flood of which Abraham was his descendent, Ab died at age 175, now when you do the math you realize that Shem out lived Abraham by 35 yrs. So it's possible that even Isaac was hearing of the flood, and pre-flood conditions from a 1<sup>st</sup> hand account, be that as it may, if Job was contemporary with Jacob (Isaac's boy).

Longevity of life had begun to radically deplete by this point. So Bildad says, “Our lives are like a shadow, but lets consider the wisdom of the ancients, we don’t live too long, but we’re not too far removed from an eye witness account of the flood, what were the things they understood, having lived for hundreds of years?”

But I think this particular reminder is good for us to think through; our lives are like shadows. The Psalmist said, “*Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.*” Ps 39:5. And again, “*Man is like a breath; His days are like a passing shadow.*” Ps 144:4 It’s no wonder that Moses said, “...*teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.*” Ps 90:12 The bible is clear that we all have an appointment with death, and after that the judgment, we need to be living in light of eternity, with wisdom, eternal perspective, because the one among us who lives the longest, doesn’t have much time. How much less the rest of us? Bildad says, “I realize we don’t live like they used to, what was it that they learned in all their years?” And he begins to rifle off some of these sayings.

Vs 11-18

Now again generally speaking we would agree with his logic, for every effect there’s a cause. And the general thought here is that there must be something wrong with Job’s root system. “Can the papyrus grow with out a marsh, or a reed with out water? If they’re drying out it’s because they’ve been removed from the water source. Job your life is withering, you must not be in the water, you’ve forsaken, and forgotten God, now you’re saying you’re innocent, but the hope of the hypocrite will be cut off.”

“And these things you’re leaning on (Integrity, innocence, you’re saying you’ve done nothing wrong) those things will hold up like a spiders web, you can hold it fast, but it won’t endure.” And he says that when the wicked are uprooted it’s like they were never even missed, “If he’s destroyed from his place, then it will deny him, saying, ‘I have not seen you.’” Put your hand in a bucket of water, and yank it out, how long it takes the water to fill in the hole is how long you’ll be missed, like you were never even there. What a comfort.

Vs19-22

Another invitation to restoration through repentance.

Now Job responds to Bildad, and the thought of God’s justice system leads Job into the idea of a courtroom setting. You know, “Speaking of God’s judgment, His justice, how could I litigate my case against God? How am I to cross examine Him?” Notice

Ch9

Vs1-2

Job says, “I understand what you’re saying Bildad, God *is* just, He *doesn’t* pervert judgment.” And as he speaks here of being righteous, the question isn’t really one of salvation, it’s one of vindication, that’s Job’s dilemma, how can a man vindicate himself before God? Even if he thought he had a good case, he’s too puny to present it or defend it with any real significance. “How could I present my cause, my case before God?” Notice

Vs3

And ironically when God breaks in and asks Job a series of about 77 questions, guess how many Job is able to answer? Not one, this word, “contend” is a legal word, he’s speaking of cross examining, arguing in a court case, who can contend with God? “If God were to cross examine me, out of 1,000 questions I couldn’t answer 1.”

Vs 4-10

So Job starts rifling off some of the various attributes of God, “He’s unlimited in wisdom, all powerful, invincible, He removes mountains, shakes the earth, the sun and the stars are at His beck and command. He alone spreads out the heavens, has created the nebula, the expanse of the solar systems, does great things past finding out, yes wonders with out #. Now how do you stand and plead your case against a Being such as that?”

Vs11-12

He’s all powerful in nature, invincible in nature, invisible in nature, and unaccountable to any man. What man is going to hold God in check? “Hey, what are you doing there?” “He’s not accountable before me, and He’s invisible *to* me, so how could I subpoena Him even if He walked right by me?”

Vs13-15

In other words, there’s no winning a court case against the Almighty, even if I had what I considered to be an airtight case, I’d be out witted, out reasoned, out rationalized, all I could do would be to beg for mercy, to throw myself upon the mercy of the court.

Vs16

“You know I’m at the point where if I prayed and God answered in the affirmative, that I wouldn’t even believe it was really Him answering my prayer.” This is raw honesty, and before we get too critical of Job, remember Acts 14. Peter had been imprisoned, the disciples were praying for his release, the angel of the Lord freed him, and when he showed up at their house, they didn’t believe it was really him. Oh they’d been praying fervently, but they didn’t believe that God would answer them in reality. So to falter in our faith is unfortunately more of a common reality than probably most of us would readily like to admit.

Vs17-20

If I had my day in court, how could I stand against the wisdom of God? Even being completely innocent I’d be all tongue tied under cross examination, get confused and witness against myself.

## Vs21-24

Job finds himself in the mindset we run up against all too often in the world, “God isn’t fair, why do the wicked prosper, the righteous perish, how could a God of love allow this, or do nothing about the other?” That’s the interesting thing about free will, everybody has it, and whether they choose to exercise it in godliness, or wickedness is up to them. And people want to do whatever they want to do, but when someone else does something they don’t approve of, than how could God allow that? Well, because He honors they’re free will as well as yours, doesn’t mean they won’t be accountable before Him ultimately, but God allows us the freedom to make decisions personally that may or may not be right before Him. But Job is translating that as “God just doesn’t care, He isn’t fair.”

## Vs25-31

“Even if I try to put on a happy face and forget about my problems what will that change? I’m still guilty (seemingly) before God, rejected by my friends, and if I get all cleaned up God’s going to counter me, plunge me into a pit and I’ll be filthy.” He’s convinced he’s in checkmate, and God’s got him cornered

## Vs32-35

Look at Vs 33 (read). Job is crying out for a Mediator, a man who can bring God and man together, that they might be reconciled one to the Other. And of course you know where I’m going with this, what Job was crying out for God has provided in the person of Jesus Christ Of Whom Paul said, “...*there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,*” 1 Tim 2:5 God, becoming a Man that He might build the bridge, and span the gap between sinful man and a holy and righteous God, extending His hand to me, being Himself at the right hand of the Father making intercession for me and He bridges the gap, brings us together. Job was crying out, seeing the need for Jesus centuries and centuries ago.

## Ch 10

## Vs1-3

“God does it please you to punish me and prosper the wicked?” These are tough questions that he asks that at times we all feel, we see the wicked prosper, the righteous being oppressed and we ask “Why?” But we’ve got to maintain the eternal perspective, remember that Satan is the prince of the power of the air the “god” of this world, and you bet he’ll (Satan) will seek to prosper the wicked and oppress the righteous. And we do well to remember we live in a fallen world, where the ungodly rise to positions of power and pervert that platform. There’s spiritual warfare, so it’s not always this cut and dry, but when we’re in front of the tree it’s sometimes difficult for us to see the forest. That’s where we need each other, to help us maintain proper perspective, but Job isn’t getting any of that, he’s getting insult added to his injury.

## Vs4-9

The psalmist tells us, “*For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.*” Ps 103:14 Job is saying, “Are you going to pound me back into the ground?” And really what he’s getting at here as he’ll speak about being formed in the womb, given favor and life from God is that he doesn’t understand why God gave him life if all his life was ultimately going to amount to was this insatiable unending suffering. And “God if you created me to suffer, I wish You’d have let me go straight from the womb, to the tomb.”

Vs10-17

Job feels like he’s in a catch 22, “If I do well You’re going to knock me down, if I fall short in sin You’re going to punish me, I can’t win here.”

Vs18-22

Well, on that up lifting note our time together has come to a close. Job couldn’t see what God was doing, or what purpose all this served, how it could glorify God and all the rest. But look at how God has used Job and magnified Himself through Job (Both then) and throughout the centuries. Often times we don’t understand tragic situations, how God could use them, or bring glory to Himself *through* them, but we can rest assured that there’s nothing that’s been committed to God’s trust in faith and in love is ever wasted. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, if a man’s steps are of the Lord, how then can a man understand his own way? God never asked us to comprehend him, but to commit *to* and trust *in* Him.

Prayer Points:

God help us to trust in You, to continue in our commitment *to* You even when times are tough, and we don’t understand “why”. Help us to realize that things aren’t always black and white, cut and dry, simple math adding up to a logical conclusion. Sometimes its more complex than that, several variables that we may not even have the capacity to consider in the moment. And in that moment Lord may we rest *in* You, lean *on* You, and draw strength *from* You. We thank You for the encouragement of Your Word, we get to thinking sometimes that difficult days are limited to us personally, that no one else goes through what we do, when in reality we all struggle from time to time. Help us to bear one another’s burdens be comforters in our brothers and sisters time of need, not critics, thank You for the comfort with which You comfort us by Your Spirit.