

Turn in your Bible tonight to the book of Job, Chapter 8. We will be looking at select verses of Chapter 8, 9, and 10. Last week, we were introduced to Job's friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.

Look at this picture:



When they heard about what happened to Job, they travelled from their homes to comfort him. When they saw Job in the condition he was in, they wept, tore their robes, sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. They sat with Job in ashes and mourned for seven days and seven nights. I believe this shows they genuinely cared for Job. They listened to Job as he shared his grief and his pain. Then they did something that gets all of us in trouble sometimes. They opened up their mouths and spoke.

As Tim taught last week, we were introduced to Eliphaz and tonight we are introduced to Bildad. What do we know about Bildad? He is described as a Shuhite. In Genesis 25 we see that Abraham took another wife after Sarah died, and her name was Keturah. Keturah gave birth to a son, named Shuah. Through his lineage came the Shuhites who lived in the same region of the Land of Uz, and Edom, of where Job lived.

We left off last week with Job replying to his friend Eliphaz's response to Job's comments of how he is struggling with what has happened to him and in essence was saying, he lamented his birth. Bildad now takes up Eliphaz's line of thinking, "Job, you have sinned, and you should repent! I know exactly why God is doing this to you!" Let's read verses 1 to 4 in Job Chapter 8 to begin with as we see Bildad's response to Job.

Job 8:1-4

¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: ² "How long will you say these things, and the words of your mouth be a great wind? ³ Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert the right? ⁴ If your children have sinned against him, he has delivered them into the hand of their transgression.

As we read Bildad's words it seems Bildad feels he needs to come to the defense of God and that Job has unjustly questioned God.

Remember what we learned about Job. Job was described as one of the greatest men in the east. Job, sat in the city gate, meaning he had status, Job gave counsel to people, he served the poor and widows. Job's suffering goes beyond this little group. Job's sufferings are on display to many people. Because it is in the Word of God,

they have been on display to generation after generation to learn about suffering as a believer and the majesty of God Almighty.

With that thought there are several purposes to our sufferings. One is to show how strong our faith is or how weak our faith is and the areas we need to work on. Another one is the justice, the mercy, the longsuffering, and the love of God our Lord.

Our lives, our sufferings, our trials are on display to a world to see, “How are they going to react! What are they going to say about this?”

Back to Bildad! Bildad stumbles coming out of the gate! After listening to Job, he pretty much tells Job, “Job, you are just being a big blow hard!” If you are going to give counsel to someone, I would say this might not be the best way to begin. We are going to look at several aspects of Bildad’s counsel and Job’s reply to Bildad.

The first is God’s justice. Look at verse 3 again.

Job 8:3

³ Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert the right?

Bildad makes the claim that because God is just that Job has sinned and deserves all that is happening to him. Is Bildad’s assessment about God, correct? Yes! Of course! God is just! Look at the verse on the screens from Isaiah.

Isaiah 33:22

²² For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us.

God is Creator of the universe. Therefore, God not only created the laws of nature, but God also instituted the spiritual laws of what defines truth, right and wrong, sin and righteousness. God perfectly executes his justice and his will in all situations that occur on this earth.

Yes, God will judge sin! But not all situations that happen to us are because of our sin. We live in a broken, sin infested world and because of that fact we will experience sufferings, trials, and pains in this world. What Bildad is articulating is a belief that permeated throughout the Jewish nation and through even pagan beliefs is this. If you are going through a trial, it is all your fault, and you are deserving what you are getting. In verse 4 Bildad even related this belief to Job’s children.

Remember what we learned in John Chapter 9. Jesus and his disciples had just left the temple and they passed a blind man. The disciples asked Jesus, who sinned Jesus, this man, or his parents. What did Jesus say? ***“Neither! This was for that the works of God might be displayed.”***

Think about this. Job questions God, “God, not that I am blaming you, but please explain to me why this is happening?” Remember in Chapter’s 1 and 2, it says that Job never cursed God or sinned with his lips.

Questioning God is not sin, disobeying God is sin! Pastor Kevin talked about the patience of God two Sundays ago. Pastor Kevin spoke to the fact that God’s mercy is extended each and every day we take a breath on this earth. In that mercy we have the opportunity to recognize God’s sovereignty, his holiness, our sinfulness, to surrender our lives to him and we have the opportunity to continuously reject God’s mercy. God’s patience to those that reject him will one day run out and they will be judged and the verdict of guilty will be placed on them for all of eternity in Hell.

God is patient in his execution of judgment, primarily for those that are lost to be saved. God is patient when it comes to executing his will, even in the trials and persecutions that his children go through. So, Job asked the question of why this has happened to him. What if God answered Job immediately? Would it have caused Job or even us not to seek God with all our heart through reading his Word and praying!

Knowing the answer immediately, would it cause us to be complacent to where we could not be molded in becoming more like Jesus in the understanding and knowledge of Jesus' sufferings, would it cause us not to notice God move each day and our faith strengthened as we go through the trial as we seek God to give us his mercies that are new every day!

When it comes down to it, I do believe we know why? It just takes our heart to catch up with our mind sometimes. Proverbs 3:5-8 says this, ⁵ *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.* ⁶ *In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.* ⁷ *Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.* ⁸ *It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.*

In all your ways, course of your life, journey, good and bad. Matthew spoke to this two Wednesday's ago, he said, *"The same God who gives us all good things is the same God who allows the bad for a purpose."* (Amen, Matthew)

It is in and through the waiting that the purpose is revealed to us and those around us that we are ministering to in our affliction. Job and his friends were not privy to the conversations that have been going on in the heavenly realm between God and Satan. They do not have the full picture here. God is being patient with Job and his friends, and he is being patient with his response. We don't see God's response to any of this until Chapter 38 of Job.

In verses 5, 6, and 7, Bildad tells Job, just seek God, he'll answer you, and he will give everything back to you. Let's read verses 5, 6, and 7.

Job 8:5-7

⁵ If you will seek God and plead with the Almighty for mercy, ⁶ if you are pure and upright, surely then he will rouse himself for you and restore your rightful habitation. ⁷ And though your beginning was small, your latter days will be very great.

Now through the counsel of Job's friends once in a while they actually give good advice. What Bildad is urging Job to do here is repent. Repenting of our sins is a very good thing to do. Would you not agree? The assumption is that the things that have happened to Job are because he has sinned. Also, that he has not yet sought out God.

Though this does not fit the situation here it is good advice for any of us to follow. If we are a true follower of the Lord Jesus, and we sin, then the Holy Spirit convicts us, and we will come to a point of confession and repentance and a desire to not sin because we know it grieves the Lord when we do.

1 John 3:9 is a convicting verse for us to remember.

1 John 3:9

⁹ No one born of God makes a practice of sinning for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

If we have unconfessed sin in our lives or we continuously and habitually sin, there is an issue within our lives and there is a barrier between us and God. In Isaiah 59:1-2 look at these verses.

Isaiah 59:1-2

¹ Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; ² but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Bildad used the term, that if Job seeks him, and he is truly blameless, then God may rouse himself for Job to answer him. In our unconfessed sin it may seem like God is a million miles away from us.

But he is not! God is not asleep, and we don't have to walk over to him like he is in his recliner and give him a good shove to listen to us. Psalm 121 tells us this in a promise to Israel:

Psalm 121:1-4

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? ² My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. ³ He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. ⁴ Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

We can take comfort in those words tonight. What situation are you in? God has not left you! God is right there for you to humble yourself before and let him give you strength as you may have to be waiting patiently for an answer, restoration, healing! In the sin, he is calling you to repent. In the trial, he will never forsake you as he takes you, like the potter does with clay, shape you, tear you down, build you back up, as he makes us more in the image of his Son Jesus Christ.

Bildad uses a couple of other arguments against Job that it is all his fault that these things happened, and that Job is accusing God of being unjust. Without reading them, in verses 8 through 10 Bildad tells Job he should consider either teachings or examples of their ancestors. They will prove what I am saying.

Well, we have a problem with that one. Let's go back to just after Adam and Eve was escorted out of the Garden of Eden. Cain and Abel! Abel brought a sacrifice of worship acceptable to God. What did he get out of it?

Murdered!

Bildad uses another example, well several, but we are going to look at this last one before we move on to Job's response. Let's read verses 11 to 13.

Job 8:11-13

¹¹ "Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish where there is no water? ¹² While yet in flower and not cut down, they wither before any other plant. ¹³ Such are the paths of all who forget God; the hope of the godless shall perish.

I had to do some reading on the papyrus plant to get an idea of what the Bildad was proposing here.



The papyrus plant is native to northern Africa, primarily along the Nile River. It grows in marshy, wet, boggy soil. It is easily uprooted because of growing in the marshy areas and it takes a lot of water and if it does not get enough, it withers and dies.

The accusation here! Job maybe you aren't saved. Oh, you showed yourself to be at the outset but evidently you have left God. Those who reject God and go their own way will perish! The Hebrew word for godless is Hanep (khaw-nafe) meaning hypocritical. Again, the premise is true, but this is not the case with Job.

Bildad kind of finishes up here and Job responds to Bildad. Let look at verses 1 to 3 of Chapter 9.

Job 9:1-3

¹ Then Job answered and said: ² "Truly I know that it is so: But how can a man be in the right before God?

³ If one wished to contend with him, one could not answer him once in a thousand times.

What is in question through the words of Bildad? God's justice, his holiness, his power. Just do right Job and everything will be okay! Job tells Bildad, and really Eliphaz and Zophar, because they are sitting right there. I know very well that God is just, and he is perfect in all his judgments.

Job asks an all-important question. How can man be right or righteous before God? The word contend in verse 3 is a legal term. It's like being in a court of law. Here is Job, here are you and me! There is God! Now, was this trial specific to a sin that Job committed? No! Job and his friends do not know about the heavenly conversation going on between God and Satan. Is Job sinless? No!

No man, woman, or child could stand before God and claim of being righteous. We could not stand before God and say, "You know God, I am a good person, I don't do this, and I don't that." God in a soft voice, says, "Okay, but what about that, and that?" Let's just be honest with ourselves? Has anyone in this room not sin this week?

Psalm 14:2-3

² The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. ³ They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.

Jeremiah 17:9

⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Isaiah 64:6

⁶ We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind take us away.

Well, that is who we are! As Job says, if we attempt to contend with God, we have no answer for him. In verses 4 through 10, Job tells us why in a wonderful description of God. Look at it:

Job 9:4-10

⁴ He is wise in heart and mighty in strength —who has hardened himself against him, and succeeded?— ⁵ he who removes mountains, and they know it not, 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, and it does not rise; who seals up the stars, ⁸ who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea; ⁹ who made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the chambers of the south; ¹⁰ who does great things beyond searching out, and marvelous things beyond number.

The point again is that Job knew very well that God is perfect in wisdom, in strength. May we be reminded that God spoke the whole universe into existence and the laws that govern the nature he created. Romans 1, verses 19 and 20 says, ***For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*** In relation to that look at the screens and see what Jeremiah says in Chapter 10 verse 12.

Jeremiah 10:12

¹² It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.

God is God! God is Judge and Jury! What I mean by that is that he is the source, he is the sustainer, and holds all wisdom and all power of all that is in existence. We have nothing to bring to God that he didn't give us. If we put any boast in our knowledge, or our power, or our wealth we still fall way short because all of that is fleeting and passing away.

Look at what Job says in verse 19 of Chapter 9.

Job 9:19

¹⁹ If it is a contest of strength, behold, he is mighty! If it is a matter of justice, who can summon him?

If we try to arm wrestle God, we are going to lose every time. Job is saying if this was a matter of just strength, I have nothing to go against God with. If it is a matter of justice, right and wrong, holiness, again I have nothing for him.

Remember, that when Job first spoke, he talked about contending with God. That is a legal term, so let's visualize the court room again. As we do let's read verses 32 to 35 of Chapter 9.

Job 9:32-35

³² For he is not a man, as I am, that I might answer him, that we should come to trial together. ³³ There is no arbiter between us, who might lay his hand on us both. ³⁴ Let him take his rod away from me, and let not dread of him terrify me. ³⁵ Then I would speak without fear of him, for I am not so in myself.

What is an arbiter? It is a person selected to settle a dispute, primarily a judge. Think about this! We are in that courtroom setting. The arbiter walks in and there is this other guy to introduce the case. Your honor to your left sits Job, he has been called blameless, and upright man, fears God and turns from evil. He is a man and is not perfect and does sin from time to time. To your right your honor, is God! He, well he, well, he's God!

See the one to be the arbiter would hold the authority to decide the case. There is no one that holds authority over God! Job could not call on someone to judge between he and God. God is Judge and Jury!

Therefore, how can man be right before God? As Tim shared last week, Eliphaz and now Bildad are putting the emphasis on us and our works. We have already covered what our works are like.

We unto ourselves bring nothing of righteousness before God, but this! Righteousness was imputed to Abraham because of what? He believed God! What is another word we could use alongside believed? Faith, maybe even trust! I know I say this a lot, but all the Old Testament commands of worship instituted by God were a foreshadowing of what really makes us right before God!

Let's look to Isaiah 53 again:

Isaiah 53:3-6

³ He was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

As 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, that as Jesus was on the cross, ***“For our sake he made him to become sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”***

Did you catch a particular word in that verse? Might! That we MIGHT become the righteousness of God! What has got to come first? Repentance! The realization that God is holy, and we are not, he is just to judge sin, and he is merciful to provide salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

The Apostle Paul wrote these words to the church in Philippi in Philippians 3:8-9

Philippians 3:8-9

⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

This is where we understand that Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us. We were talking about legal terms before, now we are talking about an accounting term. In relation to righteousness, we have nothing in our salvation account. We bring nothing to salvation except this.

Repentance, faith in who Jesus is and what he did on the cross and his resurrection, being the perfect sacrifice for us. God now adds Jesus' righteousness to our salvation account.

And our account goes from 0 to Jesus' blood applied! Hallelujah!

Now, everything is perfect, and we will not have any problems in this world whatsoever! Well, that is the dilemma we are in here with Job, isn't it? When we have bad theology about God, we can put unrealistic expectations on God and on life.

I will say this, yes, some of our decisions bring the suffering upon ourselves, as well as our decisions can bring suffering upon other people because our decision to say, do, or handle a situation in a sinful manner. Job is suffering and his friends are just adding to that suffering by what they are saying.

Just like Job, all suffering is not always because of our own sin. Yes, we may want answers just like Job. We can only see what is in front of us sometimes. We don't see what God is doing and we don't see where he is taking us. We trust the Lord is just and merciful and realize it is not about us, but it is about his glory to be revealed.

Job still has questions, he is seeking answers, but may we remember back in Chapter 2 it says, through all this he does not curse God or sin with his lips. In Chapter 10 Job is still questioning and he makes this claim before God in verses 8 and 9.

Job 10:8-9

⁸ Your hands fashioned and made me, and now you have destroyed me altogether. ⁹ Remember that you have made me like clay; and will you return me to the dust?

Job is still lamenting his birth, but as it says in verses 8 and 9. God made him, and he has made you and he sees you and he hears you! In the suffering we may not see beyond the hand placed in front of our face, but God is good, and he is just, and he is merciful, and we may not come out of the suffering on this side of heaven. But God is with us, and he will never forsake us!

Several points I would like to share as I close. Our sufferings are never without a purpose that shows us how strong or how weak our faith is. In either case the suffering is there to strengthen our faith and trust in the sovereignty of God. Our sufferings are never meant to isolate us, there are those that love you and maybe not in the same way but remember there are loved ones suffering alongside you.

Ultimately our sufferings are not about us, but are to reveal the glory and strength of God our fortress, our buckler, our shield, our Might Counselor, our Prince of Peace! Take heart dear children! Glory is coming! Until then! Stand firm in the promises and blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ!