



REFLECT

1. What was Bildad's answer to the perennial question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"
2. Evaluate his answer. What is right and what is wrong with his answer?

ENCOUNTER

Job's second friend Bildad argued that God's administration of justice in this world is absolute. Bildad's theology is almost right. Yes, God is holy, and his justice is immovable. But as Christopher Ash says in his commentary, "Bildad has no room in his system for sacrifice... and ultimately no place for the cross of Christ. For him it is a pretty simple system of double retribution--good things happen to good people, bad things happen to bad people" (Ash, *Job*, 135).

Bildad forces us to ask how can God be just, punish all sin and still show his mercy to sinners. This is no small question. Paul answers that in Romans 3:23-26, one of the most important and deepest passages in the Bible.

3. What does Paul say about the extent of sin in verse 23?
4. What are some of the words and ideas in verse 24 that explain salvation?
5. How did God demonstrate his righteousness?

6. Why did God not always immediately punish sin in the past?
7. According to Paul, how can God be just, righteous and the one who declares sinners righteous?

TRANSFORM

8. In light of Romans 3, further evaluate Bildad's theology. How does his answer fall short in explaining sin and suffering?
9. How did this week's sermon deepen your understanding of suffering and/or God?

PRAYER REQUESTS