

....An Iron Pen and Lead in the Rock Forever ~

Job 18:2 – 20:3

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~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God is witnessing round two of the discourse between Job and his three so-called friends. Bildad was the second to speak in chapter eight, and he begins again in chapter eighteen; because, of course, he isn't finished talking yet. He can't stop talking. These are actually rebuttal remarks; but nothing new or helpful has been contributed to the conversation since it began in chapter three. No, this conversation is degenerating quickly. My estimation is they aren't even listening to each other speak any more.

Bildad spews sick epigrams and crass clichés in his second speech. In our last report, we concluded with Bildad telling Job to shut up and listen so Bildad could speak. Job is looking at these men with contempt now; and Bildad can't understand why. Of course, they have all been contemptuous of Job since they arrived; and that has brought them to a Mexican standoff. I know they aren't listening to each other anymore; because they are too busy thinking about what they are going to say next. Either way, these three friends are no longer Job's friends. And this is where the situation becomes dangerous....

XVIII

¹ *Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,*

² *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.*

³ *Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?*

⁴ *He teareth himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?*

~ Bildad arrogantly informs Job that God doesn't run His universe to suit Job. Remember, Bildad is a traditionalist whose premises rest exclusively on the past. He believes that anything that was true in the past must be true today. Bildad advises Job that Job has walked right into a trap set for him by God — because Job has obviously been harboring some secret sins — and Bildad wants to know what that sin is. Bildad needs to know. Of course, we know Job doesn't have any secret sins because God has already told us that Job was perfect, upright, hated evil, and sinned not with his lips. Well, Bildad is saying that if Job would listen, then he could help him. However, if Job had sin to confess — and if Job had confessed — then these three and the crowd would have stoned Job. That's what they wanted to do, friends. You can just write that down.

Bildad is stating semi-accurate and fully pious platitudes in a matter-of-fact tone; as if they were the answer to a geometry problem. In geometry, when you take all the steps, you reach a conclusion. Once you deduce the conclusion — that's it. Unfortunately, geometry rests upon premises that must be accurate, or you can never reach a correct conclusion. For example, if "A" equals ten — but you factor "A" as equal to fifteen — you're going to conclude in error; even if the method has been followed properly! All three of these men - Bildad, Zophar and Eliphaz - have designed a formula based on erroneous premises; and life is a bit more complicated than that, anyways. None of these remarks have any present application to Job or his problems whatsoever. Problematic premises are one *HUGE* reason most so-called 'counseling' and 'mentoring' today is extremely dangerous. Those who desire to do such things are, quite frankly, almost always proud, arrogant — and just plain wrong....

⁵ Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.

⁶ The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.

⁷ The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down.

- 8 For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.***
- 9 The gin shall take him by the heel, and the robber shall prevail against him.***
- 10 The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.***
- 11 Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet.***
- 12 His strength shall be hungerbitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side.***
- 13 It shall devour the strength of his skin: even the firstborn of death shall devour his strength.***
- 14 His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.***
- 15 It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.***
- 16 His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.***
- 17 His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.***
- 18 He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.***
- 19 He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.***
- 20 They that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.***

21 Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

~ Verse eighteen is certainly a figurative expression describing the plight of the wicked. Of course, the wicked man is going to be judged; but Job already knows that! Verse nineteen is an utterly cheap and cruel shot; because Job has already lost all of his sons and daughters. See, these friends cannot believe that this much calamity could possibly happen to Job for any other reason than the reasons they have suggested – secret sins. They have no possible conception that God could have allowed these unexplained actions to happen to Job just because Satan accused God falsely. That thought never even entered their minds. Tragically, Job knows these three are wrong; however, their being wrong did not make Job right, either – and Job’s attitude towards and conception of God is completely wrong at this time. If you haven’t read all of our reports from the Book of Job, I suggest you go back and do so now. It will do you a world of good. Alright, we’re just going to leave this chapter at that, because Bildad is a mean man who is no longer worthy of our thoughtful consideration....

XIX

1 Then Job answered and said,

2 How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

3 These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me.

4 And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.

5 If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me, and plead against me my reproach:

6 Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

⁷ Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.

⁸ He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.

⁹ He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.

¹⁰ He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.

¹¹ He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.

¹² His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

¹³ He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.

¹⁴ My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

¹⁵ They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

¹⁶ I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I intreated him with my mouth.

¹⁷ My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's sake of mine own body.

¹⁸ Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

¹⁹ All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.

20 My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

22 Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?

23 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

28 But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?

29 Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.

~ This chapter contains the greatest display of faith we have seen from Job so far. Of course, the more Job's friends talked, the more they alienated Job. Unfortunately, Job thinks that because his friends are wrong he is automatically right; but he isn't. I feel Job should not have even replied any further. Many people think they have to defend themselves; and teaching the Word of God means putting yourself out there where others brutally criticize you. Well, we don't need to defend ourselves; because our true

friends know what we're all about — they don't need an explanation — and our enemies would never believe us anyways.

God has a way of correcting situations in His Own way and on His Own time frame when others hurt us. Again, I don't think Job should have even answered these men any further; he should have simply bowed to them in gracious dismissive condescension, thanked them, and said 'goodbye' as he showed them the exit. Now, I recognize that I don't operate under my own advice — I'm just telling Job what he should have done — because I'm an expert at that. Either way, Job is hell-bent on self-vindication; and most people are. If I could take my own advice, I would let time adjudicate my case — and that's my advice to you. Not only are none of us perfect, most of us are completely blind to our own faults — just as Job is at this time in which we are studying....

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¹ *Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,*

² *Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste.*

³ *I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.*

~ So, our Spiritual Safari interrupts old man Zophar to conclude this report because Zophar is, likewise, no longer worthy of thoughtful consideration. This will be the last time we hear from Zophar, too, thank God! Eliphaz and Bildad each make one more unfortunate brief speech. Remember, Zophar is the legalist who employs, mixes and matches the laws of nature with the spiritual laws of God at will to suit his own argument. Job has not won this battle of wit and wisdom, friends — in fact, God has not been glorified — so they have *all* lost. What Zophar does not know is that the Throne of law and order is also a throne of grace. Actually, Zophar knew nothing about grace at all. Even so, Zophar thinks he knows what he is talking about. He deems himself the competent authority on his own subjects. Well, he

couldn't be more wrong, and I think that's why God cuts him off completely after this statement. Let's move on ~

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