

....Blackish By Reason of the Ice ~

Job 6:15 – 8:22

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~ It's a wonderful blessing to have good friends. Solomon said, "*.... a friend loves at all times, but a brother is born for adversity.*" Well, Job's three friends — Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar — have come to minister to him; but they aren't showing him any love. In fact, they have only added to his tremendous suffering — and have made the situation much worse. With friends like these — who needs friends? See Job's "*friends*" couldn't help him — because they didn't know God, they didn't know Job, and they didn't know themselves.

We concluded the last leg of our expedition with Job's complainant answer to Eliphaz's condescending opening remarks; and we'll read the rest of that in this report. We'll also examine Job's second friend — Bildad the Shuhite — and consider his deeply sarcastic statements in chapter eight in this report. None of these three are sympathizing with Job. Each of them are really saying, "*.... well, Job, the jig is up — it's all out in the open now....*" They insinuate that a sinful life has caught up with Job, and God is judging Job for his sins. Of course, we know that's not true, because God has already told us Job was perfect, upright, hated evil, and hadn't sinned with his lips during this entire ordeal.

In our last two reports, we heard from Eliphaz, who was seemingly the leader of the band of miserable comforters; and he fancied himself a man of exclusive experience and understanding. He was a spiritualist who had a wild and crazy dream with secret visions that were, well, they were just nothing! His favorite statement was, "*I have seen....*" Unfortunately, Eliphaz was spiritually as blind as a bat. There are many pious people just like him today, too; they claim some superior knowledge of God when they have no earthly idea Who God is — or how He works in the lives of believers. So, Job is continuing to answer old man Eliphaz as we begin this report....

VI

15 My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away;

16 Which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid:

17 What time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.

18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

19 The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.

20 They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.

21 For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid.

22 Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

23 Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

24 Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

25 How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?

26 Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?

27 Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your friend.

28 Now therefore be content, look upon me; for it is evident unto you if I lie.

29 Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in it.

30 Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my taste discern perverse things?

~ The Hebrew language in verse fifteen means, “... as a mirage in the desert.” When Job saw his friends coming to his side, he thought he had found an oasis of help on the high sands of his suffering; but they turned out to be nothing but a mirage. Job continues his complaint by telling these “friends” that they have completely misunderstood him; and that their evaluation of his situation was grossly incorrect. Some of the things Eliphaz has said so far have been good – but Eliphaz’s statements simply aren’t applicable to Job at this time. Eliphaz has made a holy and pious religious blunder in diagnosing Job’s suffering. If you have cancer, but your doctor diagnosis you with arthritis, then that doctor will have no further credibility – and he should lose his license to practice; because it may already be too late to get a correct second opinion.

See, friends, when we give our exhortations to another person it is critical that we are accurate in what we are saying from the Word of God. Only then will people begin to listen to us. If we give proper Godly advice, and then that person goes elsewhere for another opinion, then we are ‘off the hook’ when and if they accept other, errant advice; and that’s almost always what will happen, too, by the way. People really don’t want to hear the truth from the Word of God, for the most part; they want to have their pre-conceived notions about hopeless problems confirmed – and that’s it. They can never recognize this truth, either. Well, these men did not know God, they did not know Job, and they didn’t know themselves – at all. They neither understand nor believe that their assumption of Job’s sin was all wrong. You and I know they are wrong, however, because God Himself has told us Job was perfect, upright, hated evil, and sinned not with his lips throughout this ordeal. So, Job continues to answer Eliphaz in chapter seven....

VII

1 Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?

2 As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:

3 So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

4 When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

7 O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.

8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

9 As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

10 He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

11 Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

12 Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

13 When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

14 Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:

15 So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.

16 I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity.

17 What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?

18 And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?

19 How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

20 I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?

21 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.

~ Alright, there seems to be no ceasing of Job's sorrow because, well, because there was no ceasing from his sorrow! Job is a sick man in deep trouble at this time. Job's world has caved in, and he is distraught and frustrated. His friends are going to continue to ignore that and, as a result, Job will find no comfort from them. Even Job's wife has already suggested suicide. The people in Job's life should have had some pity and mercy for his pain-wracked body. These events were driving him to episodes of delirium. Job felt he had an incurable disease – and I think it was incurable – except by God Himself. He senses the end is near and, in his retched condition, Eliphaz has paid no attention to that whatsoever. I call these three “*friends*” of Job's friends — but I'm not really sure they were friends; because a friend must actually know you – and they didn't know Job.

I must admit at this point, our Spiritual Safari isn't doing a very good “*study*” of the Book of Job. To capture the complete depth and meaning of these truths, we would need at least a thousand more reports. This book of the Bible is as rich as cream, and is worthy of *much* more thoughtful

consideration than I am able to provide. The profound truths, if laid out completely, would simply overwhelm us.

Job just wants to die at this point, and he tells his friends, basically, to shut up, go away, and let him pass in peace. Frankly, Job also says he wishes God would leave him alone, too. Job senses he is being tested by God, but he has no idea what's going on. It is an awful picture that is difficult to look at. Job isn't even saying he is not guilty of sin. He admits he has sinned. What is confusing to Job is why he has been seemingly selected as the target of an attack like a notoriously debauched criminal. Job was a sinner, but he didn't see himself as a totally depraved and flagrantly degenerate vile man — yet! A little mercy would be refreshing — but he isn't going to get it — yet.

Job concludes his remarks by telling his friends he'll be glad when he is dead because they won't be able to bother him anymore. We're seeing a complete break-down of integrity in the man named Job. When a person reaches this point in their life, they are an easy mark for the devil. It happens to *MANY* today who attempt to fight without God. They usually hit the bottle, take some drugs, or just surrender to a sinful lifestyle. When a man gets to the place Job is at, he will do one of two things: fall down and worship God — or — curse God to His Face. Satan is betting that Job will break under all the pressure — but the devil was wrong about Job....

VIII

¹ Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

² How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

³ Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

⁴ If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression;

⁵ If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

9 (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)

10 Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

12 Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

13 So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.

15 He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.

18 If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

19 Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

21 Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.

22 They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

~ Bildad is what we would call a “*traditionalist*.” This is the man who bases the present entirely upon the past. The crux of his argument is found in verse eight. What a traditionalist does is pick up a rock or dig up a fossil and examine it; and from that examination, they attempt to conclude what is going to happen next. The evolutionist is really just a traditionalist in a half-hearted disguise. Either way, their theories all rests upon assumed past premises that could never be proven. For example, there are only two possible explanations for the origin of this universe: creation and speculation. Evolution is speculation and, irrespective of which explanation you decide to follow, you are going to do so by *FAITH*, my friends; and it is frighteningly easy to have faith in the wrong thing.

It’s small and simple-minded thinking to pick up a bone, assign it a date, and state a theory of how it fits into the development of mankind. In the end, if we are honest with ourself, we’ll admit we cannot know. God asks, “... *where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?*” Well, Bildad uses the expression, “... *when I was young...*” — and Bildad says they’ve been doing it his way ever since. He uses ancient sayings and proverbs of pious platitudes; but nothing new is added to the conversation. Bildad is basic — and much cruder than Eliphaz. Bildad chimes in and is supposed to be a friend — but he doesn’t help Job; in fact, all he has accomplished is hurting Job very badly.

When Bildad calls Job’s words “*strong wind*” in verse two, he is attempting to humiliate Job by strong repartee. I think everyone in the crowd who had gathered laughed. These are certainly smart men; but my conclusion is that it was really Bildad blowing like wind. In all fairness, they are *ALL* windy in this book, including Job. Well, even so, the intellectual contest definitely

appealed to everyone there. Today, we just don't find men of this mental caliber. All that appeals to men today is physical brute strength and wealth. If you have either one of those, you can be as dumb as a tree and people will follow you all day long – but I digress, sort of.

Bildad is saying that Job is getting exactly what Job deserved; and verse four is just mean and awful speech. It may be the meanest thing anyone could have said to Job. When Job tries to defend himself, the insults by his “*friends*” become stronger and personal. The suggestion in verse four is that Job’s children were destroyed because they were sinners like their dad. I can’t think of anything that would hurt more than that. Remember, God has already told us in the very beginning of this book that Job’s children weren’t destroyed for that reason; so, we know Bildad is just guessing, he’s vicious, and he’s wrong — all at the same time. Further, Bildad tells Job that if there weren’t something radically and sinfully wrong in his life, then God would heal him and restore him immediately. Well, God is going to do that before this book is complete — but not now.

Verse eight brings the evolutionary theory of ancient times. Bildad believes everything works according to a law based on old sayings and outdated science. Bildad is saying that he knows everything, and Job knows nothing. When Bildad says “... *we are but of yesterday*” – that *WAS* true of Bildad – and it *IS* true of you and me, too. Mankind is an extremely late Johnny-come-lately! We haven’t been around very long in the big scheme of things. God just doesn’t seem fit to inform us about what He has been doing in eternities past. Quite frankly, I’m not interested in what God did five hundred billion years ago; but I’m very interested in what He is going to be doing five hundred billion years from today - because I expect to be around for that.

All of the aforementioned is precisely what separates Bildad from Paul the apostle. Paul pointed to the future with the Lord Jesus Christ when he said, “... *I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*” Bildad is just stuck in the mud of the past. The rocks we brought back from the moon several decades ago haven’t revealed one useful piece of information. In fact, those rocks could have been taken from anyone’s

backyard and we would have extracted the same amount of knowledge. It would have been a whole lot easier and cheaper economically.

The point is: neither the spade of the archeologist nor the collection of sample photos from distant galaxies can even begin to teach us what we need to know. We're seemingly very smart about worldly things – but they're ultimately just a guess. The things of God and eternity just aren't known — and cannot be known — outside of the Word of God. To play around with a rock and a bone and thereby form a theory on the origin of the universe is not worthy of thoughtful consideration. It is absolutely credible to dismiss those theories at face value. Unfortunately, mankind always assumes much more than he could ever possibly know.

Bildad believes he is waxing scientifically eloquent in verse eleven – but any third grader knows this stuff. What Bildad perceives as profound wisdom is simple, common, everyday knowledge. We have a whole lot of little Bildad's running around religious circles. Of course, they never bother to read what I have to say; because they are too busy thinking about what they are going to say next. Any opposition or correction brings hateful insults. Well, friends, the wise man loveth correction; only a *FOOL* hates correction from the Word of God. Honestly, Bildad hasn't said anything that almost everyone reading this report doesn't already know. Of course, when that is pointed out, Bildad calls Job a hypocrite. And that's something else that wasn't true.

In verse twenty, Bildad says God will not help an evil doer. Friends, I'm here to tell you that God *DID* help an evil doer when He saved Andrew Hunt – and when He saved *Y-O-U*, too. God won't cast away a perfect man but, unfortunately, there are no perfect men around. None are righteous, no, not one. The things Bildad are saying are true, but they aren't true, either. When we place everything Bildad has said in chapter eight into the test tube of experience, and then pour the acid of life on top of it, what we are left with is: nothing! Bildad is saying Job is coming to nothing because he is a great sinner; but Bildad has already come to nothing. Bildad does not know God, he does not know Job, and Bildad does not know himself. Many today are simple traditionalists, too. We aren't going to place a rock under a microscope and figure out how the world began – it just isn't going to

happen. Doing traditionalist things and putting yourself in the place of God isn't smart, friends – it reveals a simpleton and a fool ~

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