

Title: The Black and White World of Bildad

Number: 0720Job8.1-22(11)

Text: Job 8:1-22

Central Idea: *In a black and white world there is no room for the living color of the Gospel*

Date: July 12, 2020

{Read Passage / Opening Prayer} / NASB95

[i] This is the First Address of Bildad the Shuhite

We met Bildad back in 2:11 (arrival of Job's 3 friends) ==>

2:11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, they came each one from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite; and they made an appointment together to come to sympathize with him and comfort him.

He's called "Bildad the Shuhite" not bc he was very short (!) but bc he came from ancient Shuah, a place we think was named after a man of that name who was a son of Abraham acc. to Gen. 25.

Chapt. 8 records t/1st speech of Bildad. Here is his 1st try in his attempt to correct Job.

[ii] Remember - Most of the book (4:1-26:14) centers on 3 rounds of dialogue Between Job & His Friends: Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar

3 rounds or cycles of conversation whereby ea. "friend" addresses Job who then replies to each in turn. 1 exception is Zophar, t/youngest, who foregoes his 3d speech (perhaps out of exasperation).

[iii] When it's all over we see God is not impressed

42:7 . . . LORD [says] to Eliphaz the Temanite [oldest], "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, [why?] because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has."

[iv] Not that everything they say is wrong

Some things were true at face-value, but were applied incorrectly.

That's what we see here as it relates to Bildad.

His starting point is spot on. Where he goes from there that's t/issue.

[v] The black and white world of Bildad - no room for living color

I have to be careful here. I don't want to be seen as a relativist. Are there things in Script. that are B&W? YES! It's what we do w/those things that's t/issue. Everything isn't as cut & dry as we think. As I've said many times, to be a good theol. you have to be able to handle nuance! Everything isn't binary / either/or. Sometimes it's a both/and.

[vi] When we absolutize the application of certain truths we can get into trouble {examples}

Once heard of a family that was so convinced that G. only loves t/elect that they would not tell their own kids that G. loved them (they didn't know if they were elect or not). Built on a faulty premise: G. *only* loves t/elect. Certainly He loves t/elect w/a peculiar love, but that doesn't mean He has no love for t/world in general.

Problem when you absolutize passages like Psalm 5:5 (Romans 9:13).

We believe in Justif. by faith alone in X alone. What about those w/no capacity to believe/recognize their sin? What about BABIES?

I've known ppl. who think babies go to hell bc "you can only be saved by faith in Jesus." I think to absolutize this is bad theology.

We believe in perseverance of t/saints - that true believers will be kept by G. and will cont. in t/true faith. What about suicide?

{Example of the gal who was counseling my mom}

There are those who believe that suicide is proof that t/person wasn't really a Xn. To absolutize this is bad theology.

Related to perseverance of the saints is t/doctrine of assurance.

I knew a man who was so B&W on persev. that he rejected t/idea that anyone could know that they were really Xns. (Even TAP)! After all, we don't know t/future - if we will cont. in t/faith - so we don't know if we're really converted.

Welcome to (title) ==>

The Black and White World of Bildad

Main idea for us ==>

In a black and white world there is no room for the living color of the Gospel

Bildad starts with a ==>

I. Truism: The Immutable Character of God (1-3)

Our first main point.

A. Hello, I'm Bildad!

B. Here's my Axiom!

Brings us back to Job 8:1

A. Hello, I'm Bildad!

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered, 2 “How long will you say these things, And the words of your mouth be a mighty wind?”

1. It seems to me that Bildad is being sarcastic here

Some commentators actually feel that Bildad is nicer than Eliphaz was in chaps. 4-5.

However, it seems that he is already “loaded for bear,” to so speak.

As 1 observer notes ==>

“We may suppose him to have been younger than Eliphaz and older than Zophar. He does little more than repeat the arguments of Eliphaz, stating them, however, more bluntly, and with less of tact and consideration. The chief novelties of his discourse are an appeal to the teaching of past ages (vers. 8–10), and the employment of new and forcible metaphors (vers. 11–19). [H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Job, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 139.]

2. Bildad asks Job 3 questions (1 in v. 2 & 2 in v. 3)

a. We saw the first question in v. 2

2 “How long will you say these things, And the words of your mouth be a mighty wind? (I take that as 1 ? not 2)

Bildad seems to be playing off t/fact that Job himself admitted that t/words of those in despair “belong to the wind” (6:26).

(1) Bildad adds the adjective “mighty” before the noun “wind”

Not just any wind, but a “mighty” wind // “blustering” // “strong”

(a) Heb. word is rather unusual meaning “strong & abundant”

To Bildad Job’s words, in expressing his misery, were akin to an unrelenting windstorm. HCSB “Your words are a blast of wind.”

(2) Think about that for a moment [^]

What does that remind you of?

What would that have brought to Job’s mind?

1:19 . . . behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died . . .

What if, someone had said to me in my grief over losing my daughter: “Tony, your words are like those of a thoughtless drunk!”

As we’ll see, Bildad becomes even more insensitive . . .

A. Hello, I’m Bildad!

B. Here’s my Axiom!

1. What’s an “axiom?” (foundational proposition; a truism)

2. Bildad actually begins in the right place

It’s where he goes from that right place that’s t/probl.

I. Truism: The Immutable Character of God (1-3)

3. Here are questions 2 and 3

3 “Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?”

a. These are rhetorical questions that go back to the immutable character of God

No doubt here. Rhetorical ? is a lit. device to emphasize a truism.

3 **“Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?”** Nay, nay, 1000x nay!

b. Moses said as much at the end of Deuteronomy:

“The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

[Deuteronomy 32:4]

c. Elihu - the fourth friend who joins the fray later ==>

34:12 “Surely, God will not act wickedly, And the Almighty will not pervert justice.

Note that

. . . GOD will not act wickedly, And the ALMIGHTY will not pervert justice.

d. There as here we have 2 words used for God: Hebrew “EI” & “Shaddai”

(1) “EI” - a generic term meaning God (used of false gods and t/True God YHWH - even of human rulers when it’s in t/plural)

(2) “Shaddai” meaning Almighty

(3) Sometimes these 2 words are brought together resulting in 1 of the most fitting names for God found in the O.T.: “El Shaddai” or “God Almighty”

Could also mean “God the over-powerer” or “God our fortress.”

God’s omnipotence; unlimited power. Common in Job.

(a) First time we see this name for God is in the book of Genesis in connection with Abraham (17:1)

Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty [El Shaddai]; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

(b) We read later in the book of Exodus (6:3) where God speaks to Moses:

. . . I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as [El Shaddai] God Almighty, but by My name, Lord [YHWH], I did not make Myself known to them.

Whether God and Almighty are used together or separated by a few other words, the idea is the same . . .

I. Truism: The Immutable Character of God (1-3)

(4) We see same thing in v. 5 as in v. 3:

5 “If you [Job] would [just] seek GOD [El] And implore the compassion of the ALMIGHTY [Shaddai] ...”

3 “Does God [El] pervert justice? Or does the Almighty [Shaddai] pervert what is right?”

**4. Word “pervert” (Heb. ‘avath’) used twice in v. 3 [^] means
“to bend” / “to distort”**

Transl. “cheat” in Amos 8:5 of t/Israel’s sin in ‘cheating’ t/poor in using inaccurate scales.

a. God is no “cheat”

He doesn’t twist justice. How could He? He’s t/standard, t/plumb line of what’s right/wrong; good/evil; true/false.

(1) Speaking of a Plumb Line (and the book of Amos) . . .

Amos 7:7-8 7 Thus He showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in His hand. 8 The LORD said to me, “What do you see, Amos?” And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said, “Behold I am about to put a plumb line In the midst of My people Israel. I will spare them no longer.

A plumb line was a cord w/a lead weight used by builders to make sure that walls were constructed straight.

When I was in H.S. I took Metal Shop. One of t/projects we did was make a Plumb Bob. Not that I needed it, or ever saw 1 used. But it was a project that brought lots of metal working skills together (cutting metal, using a lathe, drilling, knurling).

A plumb line was an ancient version of the modern plumb bob. I don’t have t/one I made any more, but I do happen to have one . . .

G. is t/STD. We know t/STD bc we have His Word in t/Bible.

This book is a plumb line that reveals G’s mind on what’s right/wrong

I. Truism: The Immutable Character of God (1-3)

In chapters 38-41 G. confronts Job & asks him some hard ?s related to His immutable character of righteousness / omnipotence.

40:8 He asks Job “Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?” IOW . . . (cf. Gen. 18:25).

Bildad affirms the same here in chapter 8 ==>

3 “Does El pervert justice? Or does the Shaddai pervert what is right?”

5. Bildad takes the plumb line and starts building crooked walls

a. Those crooked walls consist of several “if / then” statements - the first of which is in v. 4

4 “If your sons sinned against Him, Then He delivered them into the power of their transgression.

These are what we might call “if’s of certainty” (kind of a rhetorical statement). Bildad is trying to be gentle in his suggestion!

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II. Crooked Wall #1: Bad Things Happen to Bad People (4)

Always; w/o exception. 4 Bildad this was t/B&W fixed rule of Heavn. Bad things happen to bad people!

This is the other side of the coin which is Eliphaz in chapt 4&5.

For Eliphaz it was Bad Things Don’t Happen to Good People.

For Bildad it’s Bad Things Happen to Bad People!

Applied to Job's children ==>

4 “If your sons sinned against Him, Then He delivered them into the power of their transgression.

1:5 . . . Job would . . . [rise] up early in the morning and [offer] burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did continually.

Now Bildad is suggesting that Job's 10 children died bc of their sin!

A. For Bildad: Sin = Retribution AND Retribution = Sin (4)

Bildad explains the sudden death of Job's children as a divine judgment. He could not have sent a more wounding dart into Job's already broken heart; for is it possible to tell a man anything more heart-rending than that . . . his children have died as the direct punishment of their sins? . . . and least of all to a father already sorely tried and brought almost to the grave with sorrow. Bildad, however, does not rely upon facts. . . . He does not know that Job's children were godless; the only ground of his judgment is the syllogism: Whoever dies a fearful, sudden death must be a great sinner; God has brought Job's children to such a death; ergo . . . [Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 4 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 322.]

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1. What About Grace? What About Sacrifice for Sin?

In a black and white world there is no room for the living color of the Gospel.

Bildad has no room in his theol. for either. For him all suffering is retributive. It's t/direct judgement of G. & cannot be avoided or satisfied by someone or something else.

Bildad & those like him live in a B&W "cause & effect" world.

a. No room for redemptive suffering - No room for mercy

Ultimately no room for the Cross.

(1) As born again believers we are so thankful for those theological truths of expiation and propitiation - all grounded in the Cross

E. =Removal of t/guilt of sin. P. =Satisfaction of G's wrath against sin

How was it removed / satisfied?

By t/innocent suffering of a sin Substitute.

In a black and white world there is no room for the living color of the Gospel.

II. Crooked Wall #1: Bad Things Happen to Bad People (4)

A. For Bildad: Sin = Retribution AND Retribution = Sin (4)

If that sin is bad enough and if the sinner doesn't repent: DEATH.

B. Job Still Has a Chance to Live (5-7)

He's suffering, but he's not dead like his 10 kids. So he must have not been as bad a sinner as they were.

If Bildad were around on June 18th of 2016 he may have said to me:
“If Giana sinned G. merely handed her over to t/power of her own transgression. But you can be restored (you must not have sinned as bad) to just repent already!”

Thankfully, I encountered only 1 or 2 Bildads thru all of this.

1. Two more “If’s” in vv. 5 &6 (another If/Then or conditional statement by Bildad)

5 “If you would seek God And implore the compassion of the Almighty, Again we see El and Shaddai (cf. v. 3)

6 If you are pure and upright, [here’s t/“then”] Surely now He would rouse Himself for you And restore your righteous estate.

a. “Seek” lit. “go early” (comes from the word for “dawn” or “morning”) - Sense of urgency: “First thing in the morning”

First thing, right now, plead your case before G!

(1) Not like Job hadn’t done that

7:21 (Job speaking directly to G.) “Why then do You not pardon my transgression And take away my iniquity?”

b. Then you have Verse 6

6 If you are pure and upright, Surely now [God the Almighty] would rouse Himself for you [word means “wake up”] And restore your righteous estate.

(1) Pure and Upright? That’s ironic (1:1)!

Very first verse in the entire book establishes Job’s righteousness ==>

1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright (*same Heb. word Bildad uses in v.6*), fearing God and turning away from evil.

c. Promise Bildad offers in v. 7 is a little puzzling . . .

7 “Though your beginning was insignificant, Yet your end will increase greatly.”

May be comparative. IOW - your end will be so great that in cf. your former blessings will seem insignificant.

Maybe Bildad was talking about t/beginning of Job’s suffering. That time was “insignificant” but your future will be bright.

Whatever Bildad meant in t/1st part of v. 7, t/2d half ends up being quite prophetic ==>

7b “. . . Yet your end will increase greatly.”

42:12 The LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning . . . (same Heb. words for “end” & “beginning” are used)

It wasn’t that t/blameless & upright Job had to jump thru Bildad’s hoops to get there either.

III. Crooked Wall #2: Tradition Says . . . (8-10)

Here we see that t/B&W Bildad is also Bildad t/Traditionalist.

8 “Please inquire of past generations, And consider the things searched out by their fathers. 9 “For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, Because our days on earth are as a shadow.

10 **“Will they not teach you and tell you, And bring forth words from their minds?”**

A. Yes - it's true

Should not base truth on what we alone think is right. True for an individ. // group // entire culture. Of course, that's where we are in t/post-Xn west right now. Everyone seems to be jumping on t/virtue signal ship of moral relativism. Like t/Titanic, that ship will sink.

1. To think that we are the measure of all truth is to forget how transient our generation is - Bildad's point in v. 9 ==>

9 “For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, Because our days on earth are as a shadow.

a. However - there doesn't seem to be anything objective here

It's an argument from an unnamed historical source.

How often do we hear: “They say you shouldn't do [fill in t/blank]”

Who are “they?”

(1) Book of Job predates the O.T. canon

Would have been oral traditions w/a mixture of worldviews.

We do know that retributionism (what people today call “bad karma”) was the prevailing thot of Job's day.

Marvin H. Pope, the late ancient documents scholar writes that: “Bildad's assertion that the wisdom of the ancients is in accord with his doctrine and counsel is quite correct, as confirmed by much of Mesopotamian Wisdom Literature.” [Cited in David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17,

Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 206.]

Bildad t/Traditionalist stands on what t/people of t/past say - w/o giving consideration that “they” could be wrong.

Like t/legal doctrine of “precedence” (sta·re de·ci·sis / sterē dāsīsās) - We said this was true in t/past, so it has to be true now. Not necc.

II. Crooked Wall #1: Bad Things Happen to Bad People (4)

III. Crooked Wall #2: Tradition Says . . . (8-10)

IV. Crooked Wall #3: Lessons from Nature (11-19)

**A. Bildad Attempts to Prove His Point with Four Illustrations—
Three from plant life and One from the insect world**

1. The first two are in v. 11

11 “Can the papyrus grow up without a marsh? Can the rushes grow without water?”

a. Two more rhetorical questions assuming a “no” answer

Papyrus grew in swampy areas such as t/shallow waters of the Nile. Used for making an early form of paper (word “paper” comes from papyrus). Both papyrus & t/related “reeds” need water to survive.

b. Both plants were subject to a short often unexpected life

12 “While it is still green and not cut down, Yet it withers before any other plant.”

c. What’s the point?

If you want good results in life, you have meet certain conditions. For Bildad that goes back to his “sin must have caused suffering” mantra.

You want to stop suffering, stop sinning; seek G.; He will restore you.
If you don't, you will die an untimely death, like these water plants do

(1) That's what Bildad is saying to Job in verse 13

13 **“So are the paths of all who forget God; And the hope of the godless will perish,”**

2. Here's his third nature illustration: the web of a spider

14 **Whose [the man of v. 13, hypothetically Job] confidence is fragile, And whose trust a spider's web.**

15 **“He trusts in his house, but it does not stand; He holds fast to it, but it does not endure.”**

a. Why doesn't it stand? Because it is as fragile as a spider's web

Lit. “a spider's house.” Job uses t/simile in 27:18.

(1) This continues to be metaphor used in the near east

Proverbial in Arabic lit. Used in t/Koran ==>

“Those who take for themselves a protector other than God are like the spider that builds a house for himself; surely the spider's house is the weakest of all houses” [29.40]

3. Third illustration is one of a seemingly well-grounded plant

16 **“He thrives before the sun, And his shoots spread out over his garden. 17 “His roots wrap around a rock pile, He grasps a house of stones.”**

a. IOW - the wicked often look like they are being blessed [^]

(1) But look at verse 18==>

18 “If he is removed from his place, Then it will deny him, saying, ‘I never saw you.’”

This seems to be a “certain if.” I like how t/NIV renders this verse==>

18 “But when it is torn from its spot, that place disowns it and says, ‘I never saw you.’”

This is a picture of a man who appears blessed & prosperous (Job in chap. 1 - “The greatest of all the men of the east”). But suddenly destruction comes — that strong, grounded plant (person) is w/o warning torn from t/ground. Bildad applies this to Job.

18b “. . . that place [ground] disowns it [the plant] and says, ‘I never saw you.’”

IOW - T/memory of that person is gone (Could be Job acc. to Bildad).

“I never knew you” -

“Your memory is gone. You might as well have never lived.”

Here’s how one commentator puts it ==>

“The godless man’s fate is to be exterminated; not only will what is dear and meaningful to him ... forget him, it will forget that it has forgotten him.” [David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 209.]

b. Verse 19?

19 “Behold, this is the joy of His way; And out of the dust others will spring.”

(1) The second half of the verse is easy enough: Other people take the place of the one who is forgotten

When I was in college I sold women's shoes part-time. I once set a store record for a single sale: over \$1200 in shoes to 1 gal. But I wasn't the best salesman there. That honor went to an older, Indonesian man named "Harry Hum." Harry could sell shoes to a snake. He knew it. But at times the manager would get frustrated with Harry & once told him that he was replaceable. According to Harry, the manager used an illustration of putting your hand in a tub of water. You pull your hand out & the empty space is instantly replaced. No more memory of it having ever been there

19b " . . . out of the dust others will spring."

(2) But the first part of the verse doesn't seem to fit

We're talking about the misery of someone who has lost everything.

19a "Behold, this is the joy of His way . . ."

Doesn't seem to make sense in the context.

(a) Some think this can be solved contextually

They change the entire meaning of the metaphor to refer to a blessed man, rather than one who is cursed. That doesn't work for me.

(b) Some think that this can be solved textually

That is, you can drop off 1 consonant from the Hebrew word & you get the word "rotting" or "withering".

NEB seems to follow this proposal as well and translates ==>

19b "That is how its life withers away."

(c) Others think it can be solved by looking at what is called in literature “tone”

Tone is what makes communication by Email tricky.

We tend to see sarcasm & accusation when it’s not there.

I can say, “I really love it when that happens!” OR
“I really love it when that happens.” (sarcastically)

19a **“Behold, this is the joy of His way . . .”**

TEV ==>

19a **“that’s all the joy evil men have . . .”**

(3) The more astute among you may be wondering, “How does the LXX translate it?”

They see t/problem as well and render it w/the Gk. noun καταστροφή!

V. Crooked Wall #4: A Faulty Conclusion (20-22)

A. God will Not Reject a Blameless Man (20) NAS has “integrity”

20 **“Lo, God will not reject a man of integrity, Nor will He support the evildoers.”**

1. Lit. a “blameless” man - same adj. God used of Job in 1:8; 2:3

While it’s true that G. will not reject t/blameless (those who are His own) Bildad means that G. will not allow calamity to touch his own.

B. God will Bless the Blameless Man (21)

21 **“He will yet fill your mouth with laughter And your lips with shouting.”** Implied idea: If you repent of your sinfulness Job.

C. God will Curse the Blameless Man's Enemies (22)

22 “Those who hate you will be clothed with shame, And the tent of the wicked will be no longer.”

1. Common in antiquity to rejoice over the downfall of one's enemies - what the Germans call *schadenfreuden*

Prov. 24:17 admonishes, “Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice.”

Luke 6:27–28 27 “. . . love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

a. “Pray for those who mistreat you”

(1) Look at Job 42:7-8

Job 42:7–8 7 It came about after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has. 8 “Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you according to your folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.”

T/very sacrifices that Bildad had no room for in his theology are later offered on his behalf.

In a black and white world there is no room for the living color of the Gospel.

VI. A Straight Wall: Our Closing Application

A. Understand the difference between retribution and discipline

1. Believers NEVER get retributive justice

Retribution is judicial punishment. Logical result of God's justice. For those who die o/s of X that means the judicial punishment of Hell.

2. Believers ALWAYS get discipline

BTIM - every child of G. is disciplined by Him (Heb. 12).

Discipline = training. Sometimes that training takes t/form of suffering. G. weaves those trials into our lives to make us more useful for Him & to hone us into the image of X.

A. Understand the difference between retribution and discipline

B. There is no necessary correlation between personal sin and suffering

Key word is "necessary" Just bc someone suffers doesn't mean they are getting what they deserve as a penalty for some sin.

We've touched on this b4 & we'll come across it again since it colors so much of t/bad theology of Job's friends.

B. There is no necessary correlation between personal sin and suffering

1. Look no further than the life of Jesus in that regard

1 Peter 2:21–22 21 . . . Christ also suffered for you . . . 22 [He] WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;

C. If there is no undeserved suffering then there is no redemptive suffering

It took t/undeserved suffering of t/sinless 2d Person of t/Trinity to expiate & propitiate our sin. He had to be perfect // suffer.

In a black and white world there is no room for the living color of the Gospel.

Thankful that t/palette of heaven has more than 2 colors on it.