

## **My Redeemer Lives Job 18-19**

Having just finished looking at Eliphaz's speech in this second round of conversation, we now turn our attention to Bildad. It is his turn to make his second remarks and what we find is much more of the same. Just like Eliphaz, Bildad doubles down on his previous comment. While Eliphaz placed emphasis on personal experience, Bildad focuses in on the importance of tradition, and in his view, the fixed moral order. If you remember, Bildad's previous remarks included a great deal of truth, but he didn't include the whole truth. In this second speech we see similar. Job's friends continue to kick a man that is down. We can learn from Bildad's approach but our emphasis this week will be on Job's faith in God as his redeemer.

Job 18 – Bildad's Second Remarks

### **I. His Own Reputation**

The very first words from Bildad in this second encounter are so far removed from Job 2:11. Instead of attempting to provide comfort, Bildad's uses his words to defend himself and his counterparts. Job's comfort isn't what matters here – what appears to matter is Bildad's reputation.

Verse 2 is a blatant attempt by Bildad to curb Job's speech. What he wants is Job to shut-up and listen. It is clear that Bildad has been offended by Job's previous words and he is not going to let them slide. In verse 3, Bildad refers back to Job's comments in 12:2, 12:7-9, and 17:10. What these three men have offered to Job as "wisdom", Job has recognized as "foolishness." Bildad takes offense to that. Remember, Job let them know that the information they had provided him was widely known – so widely known that the animals are aware. This is why we see the statement by Bildad in verse 3.

I think we have to recognize that Job has not helped himself here. While he has spoken the truth to these three individuals, there are better ways to convey his thoughts. Instead, what we see now is simply a trade of barbs by these four men. Ultimately, nothing is being accomplished.

In verse 4, we see a comment similar to the words of Eliphaz last week. Bildad asks Job, shall the earth be forsaken for you? In other words, "Does the world revolve around you Job? Do you expect God to go out of his way and disrupt the normal order of things for you?" This statement gives us some insight into the way that Bildad is thinking. There is a clear order of things and Job is not beyond them. He is wicked and God punishes the wicked.

What we see by Bildad is a prime example of kicking a man while he is down. This is what Job has alluded to in 6:14, 12:4, 13:4, 16:2. His words have not brought comfort but only additional pain.

### **II. The Fixed Moral Order**

His statement in v.4 gave us some insight into Bildad's thought process but in verses 5-12 we see it on full display. He places a great deal of focus on the external. He has assessed the scene and now is fitting it to the way he sees the world. He tells us the following:

- The light of the wicked goes out
- The light is dark in his tent
- He is weakened due to his own schemes

- He walks into a trap on his own accord
- This trap consumes him
- As a result his household is not blessed
- People forget about this man

If we think about what has happened to Job you can clearly see some comparisons and that is Bildad's point. Job appeared to have it all going on – he was wealthy – he had the perfect family – he had immense possessions – and his name was great. Yet, where does Job find himself now?

Has his light gone out? Yes.

Has his strong position been weakened? Yes.

Has blessing been removed from his household? Yes.

Have people forgotten about this man? Yes.

Bildad mentions several external factors here and they are all the result of a trap. Bildad speaks of a net, a rope, and of terrors, but they all point to this idea of a trap. Here is the thing, Bildad tells Job that he has openly walked into this trap because of his wickedness.

So you can see this fixed moral order that Bildad is clinging to. It is very similar to the worldview that we saw from Eliphaz. Do you see the conclusion that Bildad is drawing?

This is what happened to Job. These are the things that happen to the wicked, and therefore Job is wicked. According to Eliphaz it is crystal clear. There is no debate to be had.

### **III. A Sermon That Misses the Mark**

Verse 21 sums up the thoughts of Bildad. "Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous, such is the place of him who knows not God."

The implication is that Job has played a good game up to this point. He has fooled a lot of people but it has finally caught up with him. He has committed sin – he doesn't really know God – and all of this is easily understood by the external factors that are on display.

As we have mentioned before, there is some truth in what Job's friends and Bildad have argued. The only problem is that what they have said, doesn't apply to Job. This should serve as a reminder to us that we are to avoid applying generalities into specific situations without knowledge of the whole story.

## **Job 19 – Job's Response – "My Redeemer Lives"**

### **I. The Torment of Friends**

In the first six verses of Chapter 19, Job again shares his disdain for the words of his friends. He specifically states that all they have offered him is additional torment. They have poured salt in the wounds that he already received.

In verse 3, Job uses an interesting phrase – "these ten times you have cast reproach on me." We know that Eliphaz has spoken twice, Bildad now twice, and Zophar once. Added up, those amount to five

times. So why ten? I think that Job is simply trying to emphasize that it has been a lot. Quite often we use very large round numbers to exaggerate a situation and I believe Job is doing the same here. Maybe you have only spoken five times, but it feels like ten.

Job goes on to say, “and you are not ashamed to wrong me?” Job is reminding them that they came to help and yet they seem to have no problem wrongfully accusing Job. Job is still holding on to his innocence. He knows his situation and his friends only think they know his situation. With that says, Job even proposes a counter-argument. What if you are right? What if I am in the wrong and don’t even know it. While you place yourself on a higher pedestal than me and make a laughing-stock out of my situation – you fail to recognize that it is God who has done this to me – it’s not your job to make it worse! It’s God’s net that has closed around me, not yours!

While there are many problems with the approach of Job’s friends, one major one consists of the fact that their approach is merely academic. In other words, they are detached from the situation. They are taking what they know of the world (this fixed moral order) and are applying it to Job’s situation. Job on the other hand is intimately involved in the situation – it’s his situation. He is the one hurting and experiencing loss. He is the one confused as to why these things have happened to him. Job is feeling the direct contact of God’s hand while his friends have not. One key lesson from this is that we must be more than academic with our friend in their time of suffering. The world is not a textbook. As we minister, we are called to listen, to hurt, to mourn, and to feel alongside our brothers and sisters. Sure we are to apply biblical principles and Scripture in a loving way but we are not called to shout them down from on high in a detached manner.

### ***Matthew 9:36***

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

## **II. Devastation by God**

In verses 7-12, Job speaks of the devastation he has experienced at the hand of God. He feels violated. Remember, he holds to the fact that he is blameless. He doesn’t rule out that he has unknown sin in his life but he does not believe it warrants the situation he finds himself in. Even in that, it is important for us to notice Job’s major complaint here.

Job is often accused of claiming injustice on behalf of God but that does not appear to be the case. In verse 7, Job cries out but his major complaint is that he is not answered. He declares that:

- He has been walled up and closed in
- His path is dark
- He has been broken down, his glory stripped
- God’s wrath is against him

This is a cumulative process that Job experienced. Everything has built up. Job doesn’t understand, and his major complaint is that he doesn’t have an audience with God and has not heard from Him. (an implication that Job had communed with God regularly prior to his calamity?)

“I call for help, but there is no justice.” – This does not imply injustice on the part of God – that is not what Job is saying. Job simply wants to hear from Him. To say that there is no justice does not

automatically imply that there is injustice – There has been no verdict given yet – Job simply wants to hear from the judge!

### **III. Job's Forsakenness**

In verses 13-22, we read of Job's rejection by those around him. What I believe we have here is another close parallel between the life of Job and the life of Christ. Those that were closest to Job are now far from him – those are his very own words. Even his relatives and his wife have turned their back on him – remember, he is sitting in a trash heap by himself. Job is a stranger to all. People often grow uncomfortable around others in a difficult situation and this is what has happened to those around Job. He has become a spectacle – someone to gawk at instead of comfort. In addition, his very body has rejected him as a result of sickness. Relationships matter. Health matters. We often take them for granted but when they go we hurt and as if things couldn't get any worse, Job also feels rejected and forsaken by God. He calls out but hears no answer.

If we think about the life of Jesus we see stark similarities.

Jesus was rejected by his own followers in John 6

In Matthew 8 an entire city rejected Jesus

His closest followers ran away when confronted in the Garden

Peter denied Him 3 times

The multitudes chose a murderer over Him

Jesus' own words in Matthew 27:46 – "Why have you forsaken me?"

Verse 22 – Why do you have to pile on? Job is telling his friends, all of these relationships in my life have been broken – I am a broken man! God has pursued me, I don't understand why. Why do you pursue me as well? Are you not satisfied with all that I have already suffered?

This is a brutal statement directed at these 3 friends. Job is telling them that enough is enough – God doesn't need their help. I believe there is a lesson in this for us to hear. God doesn't need our help. Multiple times in the New Testament we are called as believers to restore and edify individuals. That is our role as Christ followers. Yes there is a time for discipline but even in those situations the goal is restoration. May we not fall so short of God's standard as these three friends have.

### **IV. The Certainty of Job's Vindication**

In the remaining verses of this chapter we see Job's hope in three distinct ways.

First, Job desires for his words to be written down. I believe there are a few things going on here. He is both seeking comfort and support while also holding firm to his innocence. His friends have displayed quite directly that the support Job seeks will not come from them – it has not to this point and it certainly doesn't seem like they will provide it in future days. However, Job holds firm to the fact that he has done no wrong. So much so, that he wants his words to be recorded. He wants a written record because he believes that one day others may come along who will sympathize with him – and certainly on some level we are doing that right now! He also believes that at some point in the future his case and argument will be proven correct – what we know of Job from chapters 1 & 2 – that he is a blameless and upright man – will be revealed to all.

Second, Job declares his faith in God. There should be no doubt that the redeemer that Job speaks of in verse 25 is God. Job's statement that God lives is a counter to the simple fact that man passes away. In a sense, Job is declaring that even if I pass away in this state of misery, God lives and it is in Him alone that I will trust. Additionally, it is Him alone that will clear my name!

Lastly, in verse 26 Job makes a bold claim – that he will see God. The implication here is post-death. We have seen in previous chapters Job go back and forth about the idea of an afterlife as if he is unsure. This verse points to the fact that his situation and emotions may have gotten the better of him earlier – because in fact he does appear to be fairly settled on the issue of life after death. Job longs to hear from God in his current state. To this point he has not, in fact he feels forsaken. However, even if Job doesn't hear from God in his current physical state he believes firmly that he will see God and receive his vindication post death.

These statements of Job are really fascinating. I believe we have to be very careful not to read too much New Testament theology into the words of Job but they do provide us with nuggets of hope and reaffirmation of life after death in a resurrected body in the presence of the Lord. Although our situation on this Earth may be less than desirable, we can be assured of better days if we have placed our hope in and our allegiance to Christ Jesus.

Job chapter 19 ends with two interesting verses that appear as a threat to these three friends. While some have interpreted this to be a physical threat from Job himself I believe that is a misrepresentation of what is actually being said. Job appears to be implying that judgement is real. These three friends claim to walk with God and to know Him and yet that present false theology and false accusations that misrepresent both God and Job. I believe that what Job is doing is arguing that the reality of God's presence that will bring Job joy and satisfaction will have the opposite effects to those that claim to know God but do not – I would draw a comparison between these verses and what we read in Matthew 7:15-23.

### **PERSONAL IMPLICATIONS**

1. Personal Jobs Often Are Not Productive
2. Effective Counseling Is Not Purely Academic
3. Godly Suffering Is An Honor
4. Our Redeemer Lives
5. Judgment is Real and Our Fruit Matters