

## What is Man to God? Job 25-26

Tonight we look at the last speech of Bildad. When we left of in chapter 24, Job spoke about his fear and dread of God. He began speaking confidently about his innocence and assumed acquittal but quickly shifted gears. Job recognized that God was all-powerful and ultimately the one that was in control of his situation. Whatever God desired to do was going to happen. Bildad soon speaks up and emphasizes the power of God and the fear is should bring.

### Ch. 25

#### I. The Power of God (v.1-3)

Again, Bildad is quick to speak up after Job's comments about fear and darkness. He states that "Dominion and fear are with God."

The word fear here is very interesting. It is another example of how our English words sometimes don't do Scripture justice. The fear of God is referenced multiple times in Scripture. For example, Proverbs 9:10 states, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. In that context, the fear of the Lord is a great awe and reverence. Does this include a "scared" type of fear? I would argue that to some degree it would as one recognizes the sovereignty and power of God but for the most part this type of fear represents a healthy awe and reverence of the one true God.

In Job however, we have repeatedly seen the word "fear" used in the context of actual fear as a result of action. In the context of verse 2 it is as if Bildad is telling Job, you should be fearful because of God's power. He has taken action because of your sin and you are right to fear him. He is the one that is in complete control – from His high place in heaven all the way down to your lowly place on Earth.

Bildad continues to emphasize God's power and in verse 3 he asks Job if anyone has the ability to number God's armies – in other words, His angels. Throughout Scripture there are references to a large number of angels, but no one really knows how large God's army is – its multitudes of multitudes. The point is it is large and according to Bildad this is one of the ways that God exacts His power. Again, Job should be fearful because of the almighty power of God and his state as a sinner.

Job complains about being in darkness. Eliphaz appeared to put words into Job's mouth last week by making the assumption that Job believed God was too far removed from him – that God didn't see Job's situation. Now, we talked about how this was an assumption on Eliphaz's part and not something that you can actually pin on Job. Sure, Job was confused by his situation – it didn't make sense to him, but yet he never accuses God of not knowing about his situation – in fact, he states the opposite numerous times as he has believed God's hand was on him. It's interesting to see time and time again how the words of Job's friends are used in a way that provide support for their argument – even if it means openly contradicting what Job has just told

them. They are not listening – They are not interested in providing support – They are interested in being right.

Bildad tells Job that his comments about darkness simply are not true. That God's light shines on everyone – He sees all and reveals all. The assumption is that Job's sin isn't hidden – God has brought it out in the open and thus Job is suffering as a result.

Bildad is right that God is all powerful, His armies are uncountable, and that God's light does overcome all darkness. However, he is using these truths in order to continue beating a man down with false accusations.

## II. The Lowliness of Man (v.4-6)

Bildad has argued that God is all powerful and sees all. With that being the case it is ever so clear to him that it would be impossible for any man to be counted as righteous before God. This is another direct assault on Job and his claim of being a blameless man. Bildad is openly telling Job that this is impossible. After all, Job is being judged because of his own sin.

We also must note that this is a repeat of an argument posed by Eliphaz back in chapter 15 – there is no way you are righteous. By the time we have reached this third round of speeches it is clear to see that there is no more independent thought/nothing new. These three friends have previously stated their argument and all they can do is restate it. Have you ever seen someone not get what they are after only to yell for it louder (Parents at the baseball field is a great example). It is as if restating the argument or request at a louder volume will produce the desired result. Job and his friends are in a standoff – they both are entrenched. Job's friends simply restating their arguments is not accomplishing anything except more misery for Job.

Bildad's belief that Job righteousness is impossible is shown in a greater to lesser argument. He begins with the moon and stars – he argues that even those heavenly bodies in all of their majesty are not considered bright to God (almost as if to imply that God does not need their light to see). Bildad then moves on to the lesser – mankind. If the greater (the moon and stars) are not considered great to God (according to Bildad) then man most assuredly is not.

Not only is man lowly but Bildad draws the comparison between man and a maggot or a worm. This is no coincidence. Job has already been described as having flesh incrustated with worms – Job 7:5. Bildad is calling Job the maggot here! It is almost as if he is saying, you consider yourself righteous and blameless but there is nothing further from the truth. As a result of your sin you are nothing more than a maggot to God.

Bildad has certainly made his point. He has a low view of man. So low, it is almost as if one could ask – why the call to repent? What's the point? It doesn't seem to add up as Bildad's worldview appears to paint a hopeless picture for all of mankind. Praise be to God that mankind is not hopeless and that God views mankind as much more than maggots! (More on this in a minute)

## Ch. 26

### I. The Power of God

Job isn't going to take the words of Bildad sitting down. He has heard enough. Interestingly though, we are going to hear the same argument from both men that God is all powerful – and yet they disagree with each other vehemently. However, the disagreement rests not in the question of God's power, but I believe in the question of how God sees man.

Job begins his rebuttal by rebuking Bildad's attempted counsel.

Job sarcastically praises the excellent work of Bildad. What he really means is:

How have you helped me exactly? If you say I am the one without power (due to his current circumstances), how have you helped me?

You can clearly see that I am struggling here. Physical strength, Mental strength, and Emotional strength are all lacking. Does my situation look easy to you? Its clear that I need rescued and yet how have you saved me?

If I am the one lacking in wisdom, what is the great knowledge you have shared with me and counseled me with? I'm struggling to see it!

Then Job essentially tells Bildad to examine his friends and look in the mirror. Some translations appear to ask Bildad to also examine Job once more.

Who are you providing counsel to and whose breath has come out of you? These are just smooth words used to say examine yourself and examine me. Are you sure about this? Are you really sure?

From there, Job affirms what Bildad has said about the power of God.

- The dead tremble
- Death and Hell have no power over God
- He hangs the Earth on nothing (fascinating)
- Rain in clouds (water vapor) and yet they don't burst open until He says
- He is in control of the clouds
- He marks the boundaries of the waters
- He controls light and darkness
- He is in control of earthquakes, volcanos, and the mountains
- He is in control of the sea and wind

The real remarkable statement by Job here is that “these are but the outskirts of His ways!” In other words, what we know of God's power is only scratching the surface! We cannot even begin to fathom how powerful God is! We can't understand it.

## II. The Crowning of Man (Psalm 8)

While Job does not make a direct statement in Chapter 26 about how God views mankind, I do believe that his previous rebuttals have made it clear. When we compare Job's view with the view of his three friends, what we see is a stark contrast.

Remember, Bildad (and the other 2 friends) have made it clear that not only is Job not righteous, but there is no way for any man to be viewed by God as righteous. All men are sinners and God views them as the lowest of the low. Remember that Bildad used the specific word – maggots!

Remember Bildad's question:

- How then can man be in the right before God?

Another way for us to think about that question is to view it as, What is man that God is mindful of him? We see that question (very similar to Bildad's) from David in Psalm 8:4?

How does God view mankind?

David states in v.5 – you have made him (man) a little lower than the heavenly beings. This seems to be in agreement with what Bildad has told Job – the greater to lesser argument. However, pay attention to what David says next...

And crowned him with glory and honor! What a stark contrast to the worlds of Bildad – there are no maggots here. David declares that God views man highly. He goes on...

You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet.

David's words harken back to creation in which God gave man dominion over the Earth. Man was created as a representative of God – an extension of Him on Earth. David recognizes who he is and what God has called him to. The only appropriate response is worship and that is exactly what we see from David – O Lord, our Lord how majestic is your name in all the Earth. He is worthy to be praised because of His love for us.

Where are the maggots? Bildad's view doesn't stand the test of Scripture.

Both men are correct that God is all powerful. Bildad appears to argue that there is no hope for man while Job does the opposite.

Through our New Testament lens, one could argue that Bildad isn't completely wrong. The sinner outside of Christ is without hope – however, Job has recognized his need for an advocate. That advocate is Christ – who is our only hope. God's love incarnate. He created us to be representatives on his behalf and through Christ He seeks to restore all that was broken as a result of the fall.

It seems reasonable for man to ask, how can man be made right before an all powerful God? The answer is through God's own love and that love has a name – Jesus Christ.

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-6

#### Personal Implications

1. Three important questions we must ask ourselves:
  - a. How have you helped the powerless?
  - b. How have you counseled those without wisdom?
  - c. Whose breath has come out from you?
  
2. God is all powerful and worthy of our reverence and awe!
  - a. These are the outskirts of his ways
  
3. Do you live in accordance with the way that God sees you?