**Drama During Difficult Times Series**

**Act Five – The Drama of Bildad”**

**Job 8-10**

**Introduction**

Today we are continuing our series in the book of Job entitled “Drama During Difficult Times.” We are looking at the book of Job is a series of nine acts played out on the stage of life.

Bildad is the second of Job’s three friends, and a forth that will eventually join them, to rise up and make speeches to explain to Job why he is suffering such torment. As you recall Job was a godly and wealthy man that experienced the lost of his wealth through foreign invasions and violent attacks on his employees. Then Job’s ten adult children were killed in a terrible tornado and shortly after his wife left him. Job then is smitten with a devastating disease that threatens his life. (Job 1-2) However, *through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.* (1.22)

Bildad joins two of Job’s other friends in Job’s hometown to supposedly sympathize and comfort him. (2.11) But when they arrived they quickly discovered that Job’s condition was far worst than they had ever imagined. (2.12) The sat in silent mourning for seven days and seven nights until Job speaks up asking why he was ever born, why he didn’t die at childbirth, or why he can’t just die now. (3.1, 11, 20-21a) Job does not curse God but rather he is being honest with his emotions and laments righteously to God.

In the chapters that following Job’s righteous lament (Job 3) each of Job’s friends make a series of speeches sharing their perspective as to why Job is suffering. Job will respond to each speech with honesty and integrity towards God and man. As the drama transitions from one act to the next the speeches will grow in intensity. During this series we are only focusing on the main perspective of each of Job’s “ so-called” friends, learning from Job’s responses, and seeking biblical truth to guide us as we journey through difficult times.

As we saw last week Job’s friend, Eliphaz, insulted Job’s character and accused Job of being a spiritual fake, pretending to walk before God with integrity, while hiding his sin. (Job 4-5) Job responds telling Eliphaz that his words are like a plate of rotten food. (6.7) Job’s friends supposedly came to sympathize and comfort him but there is no sympathy or comfort in their words. Job is feeling despised and rejected by his friends but he finds comfort and joy in the midst of his suffering knowing that he had not *denied the words of the Holy One.”* (6.10) Even though Job was afflicted and needy he was going to look to the Lord to be magnified in his life and trust the Lord to bring help and deliverance. Job was not going to restrain his mouth from lamenting righteously to the Lord saying, *“Therefore I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.”* (7.11)

**Act Five – The Drama of Bildad**

Welcome to Act Five – The Drama of Bildad. Remember that each one of Job’s friends believed that human suffering is directly a result of a person’s sin. If last week you thought the Eliphaz was a self-righteous jerk, let me introduce you to Bildad, a pious tug. Bildad take center stage saying to Job, *“How long will you say such things? Your words are blustering wind.”* (8.1-2) Basically, Bildad considers Job’s response a bunch of hot air.

**Bildad’s Speech**

Bildad doesn’t waste anytime getting to the core of his calloused conclusion as to why Job is suffering saying, “*Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right?* (8.3) Basically Bildad is asking Job, “Would you have God pervert justice by letting your sins go unpunished?” “Job, you are guilty of sin and God punishes sinners!” And then to add injury to insult, Bildad uses the tragic death of Job’s kids to make his point. *When your children sinned against Him, He gave them over to the penalty of their sin.* (8.4) Oh my God! Did he really say that? What an incentive tug!

Bildad will continue for the rest of the chapter but do we need any more evidence as to way he thinks? Bildad shows no compassion for his friend. He ignores Job’s plea for understanding and sympathy and goes straight for the kill! “Your children sinned against God and God gave them over to the penalty of their sin.” “Job, are you really going to sit there in all your pain and tell God to pervert His justice?” “Who do you think you are?” “Are you going to sit there in all your misery and demand the Almighty to pervert what is right?” “Your kids deserved what they got and so are you.” “But *if* *you will seek God earnestly and plead with the Almighty,**if you are pure and upright, even now He will rouse Himself on your behalf and restore you to your prosperous state.”* (8.5-6)

In some ways I grew up in Bildad’s church. The people I grew up with weren’t as bad as Bildad but they had many of the same traits. First, they came across as pious and spiritually superior. By the time I became a teenager I was convinced that there wasn’t anyway I was ever going to meet up with their standards of sanctification so I just quit trying. They weighed people down with burdens too hard to carry. Secondly, if a person continued to struggle spiritually or to be tempted in a particular area without any deliverance they accused the person of not being spiritually sincere or earnest in their desire for godliness. Their rational was if a person were truly earnest towards God in pleading for deliverance God Himself would be aroused and restore that person to a prosperous state. The sad thing is that there is no place for grace in Bildad’s theological system. For Bildad, God is the great parole officer. Blessings are merely rewards for good behavior and punishment is just and appropriate for wrong behavior.

It must have been difficult for Job to conceal the emotional pain that Bildad’s words inflicted upon him. Most of us can take injury or insult upon ourselves much better than injury or insult to our children. As you recall Job enjoyed a great relationship with his adult children. They regularly held family gatherings together. (1.4. 13) Throughout their lives, even as adults, Job took extra measures to be the spiritual leader of his family. (1.5) But Bildad’s arrogant, aggressive, elitist theology led him to conclude that Job’s kids died in sin and because of sin. For Bildad the fact that Job’s kids were killed by a violent windstorm only confirms that Job’s children were sinners and got what they deserved. For Bildad it is clear Job’s kids were sinners and God punished them. Job is a sinner and God is punishing him. Wow! What an insensitive jerk!

**Bildad’s Calloused Conclusion**

Bildad appeals to the teachings of his forefathers as basis of his calloused conclusions. (8.8-10) He draws his speech to a close by insulting Job’s character comparing Job’s life to a plant that flourishes quickly but withers away once the heat of the sun scorches it saying, *Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so perishes the hope of the godless.* (8.13) He then compares Job’s faith to a spider web that is easily destroyed with the swipe of the hand saying, “*What they trust in is fragile; what they rely on is a spider’s web.*” (8.14) He concludes his assault by comparing Job’s legacy to a vine with no roots growing on the side of a house that once it is torn down no one remembers it saying, “*But when it is torn from its spot, that place disowns it and says, ‘I never saw you.’”* (8.18) Bildad’s insolent, insensitive, and insulting speech is over. How will Job respond?

**Job’s Response**

*Then Job replied: “Indeed, I know that this is true.* (9.1-2a) What?! Is Job giving in to this assault? Is Job agreeing with Bildad? No! Bascially Job is setting the stage. If Bildad wants to talk like he knows about God then let’s talk about God. If Bildad thinks he knows how to satisfy divine justice then let’s talk about satisfying divine justice. If Bildad thinks that he can stand before the presence of the Almighty in his own righteousness then let’s talk about what it takes for mortals to stand before a holy God.

Job begins his response, *“Indeed, I know that this is true. But how can mere mortals prove their innocence before God?* (9.2b-3)Job’s question becomes that central focus of chapter nine and Job’s words recorded in chapter nine comprises one of the greatest chapters on the Doctrine of God in the Bible.

Job knows that God is the Almighty.

***3****Though they wished to dispute with Him,
     they could not answer Him one time out of a thousand.*

***4****His wisdom is profound, His power is vast.
     Who has resisted Him and come out unscathed?*

***5****He moves mountains without their knowing it
     and overturns them in his anger.*

***6****He shakes the earth from its place
     and makes its pillars tremble.*

***7****He speaks to the sun and it does not shine;
     He seals off the light of the stars.*

***8****He alone stretches out the heavens
     and treads on the waves of the sea.*

Job knows the God is the Creator of the stars in the heavens.

***9****He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion,
     the Pleiades and the constellations of the south.*

(The Great Bear is the glory of the northern hemisphere, Orion of the southern sky, and the Pleiades of the east; the chambers of the north are the unknown and unexplored regions.)

Job knows that God governs all things according to His holy will.

***10****He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed,
     miracles that cannot be counted.*

***11****When He passes me, I cannot see Him;
     when He goes by, I cannot perceive Him.*

***12****If He snatches away, who can stop Him?
     Who can say to him, ‘What are you doing?’*

***13****God does not restrain His anger;
     even the cohorts of Rahab cowered at his feet.*

(Rahab is a mythological figure who symbolized the power of evil.)

Job knows that all of mankind exists in a fallen condition and has no merit to defend them selves before a holy God.

***14****“How then can I dispute with Him?
     How can I find words to argue with Him?*

Since God is the Almighty Creator and Controller of all things how could a person ever argue with God?

***15****Though I were innocent, I could not answer him;
     I could only plead with my Judge for mercy.*

***16****Even if I summoned Him and He responded,
     I do not believe He would give me a hearing.*

***17****He would crush me with a storm
     and multiply my wounds for no reason.*

***18****He would not let me catch my breath
     but would overwhelm me with misery.*

Job explains that he is not saying that God is a divine ogre but that it simply comes down to the fact that God is the Almighty and we all stand guilty before Him.

*“All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”* (Rom.3.23)

***19****If it is a matter of strength, He is mighty!
     And if it is a matter of justice, who can challenge him?*

***20****Even if I were innocent, my mouth would condemn me;
     if I were blameless, it would pronounce me guilty.*

Why would Job’s mouth pronounce him guilty, because Job is guilty and he knows it? (9.21-29) Job is not saying that his guilt towards God was the reason for his sufferings. Job is admitting and acknowledging that in his fallen condition, like the rest of humanity, he justly deserves God’s displeasure if it wasn’t for His sovereign mercy.

***33****If only there were someone to mediate between us,
     someone to bring us together,*

***34****someone to remove God’s rod from me,
     so that his terror would frighten me no more.*

***35****Then I would speak up without fear of him,*

*but as it now stands with me, I cannot.*

**Job’s Answer**

Remember Job’s initial question back in verse three, “*But how can mere mortals prove their innocence before God?”* (9.2b-3) Well, Job has an answer to his question. Job has come to the conclusion that the only way mere mortals can stand before a holy God is for a mediator to stand between him and God’s justice. Job comes to the conclusion that his only hope to find innocence before a holy God is that a mediator would stand in for him – someone who could remove the rod of God’s justice – someone who would restore his confidence so that he could draw near to the throne of grace in the time of need. (Heb.4.16)

At this point in chapter nine Job cannot clearly see this mediator by as time goes on the Lord will give him a better vision of the divine mediator. You remember that each of the speeches from Job’s friend grow in intensity as one act leads to the next. Well, Job’s faith grows in intensity as well. We see in his second response to Eliphaz in chapter sixteen Job says, “*Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as one pleads for a friend.* (Job.16.19-21)

The Lord has penetrated Job’s heart and mind to understand the mediator he wished for in chapter nine saying, “*If only there were someone to mediate between us,*

*someone to bring us together,* (9.33) is his witness in heaven and his friend, Now, Job understands that his advocate reigns on high and pleads with God on his behalf as Job’s eyes pour out with tears to God.

But Job’s strongest declaration of faith in his divine mediator happen as he issues his second response to Bildad in chapter nineteen saying, *“Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll,**that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever!”* (19.23-24)

Job wants his words of faith written in a book. No! Having them written in a book is not good enough. Job wants his words of faith engraved on lead. No, No, even better than having his words written on paper or scribed on lead Job wants his words of faith memorialized by etching them into a stone monument. And what does Job want the world to know? He wants to the world to know for centuries to come that after months of misery he knows for certain that he has a Mediator in Heaven who lives.

Job continues his declaration of faith in chapter nineteen right in front of Bildad’s face saying, *I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God;**I myself will see Him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”* (19.25-27) Job wants the world to know that his faith rests in his Redeemer (Hebrew *go’el*). The Bible identifies a redeemer as a close relative that comes to the rescue to protect his family from physical and economic harm. (Lev.25.25) While most of the time the redeemer is an individual (like Boaz with Ruth), the Lord declares through the Prophet Isaiah that He is our Redeemer. *“Do not fear, . . . I will help you,” declares the Lord, “and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.* (Is.41.14) *“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:* *‘I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me.”* (Is.44.6) Notice that Job has a personal relationship with his Redeemer. Job says, “*My Redeemer*,” not some abstract deity that is aloof and far off. No! He is my Redeemer! My Redeemer cares for me and knows me personally. He walks with me and talks with me and tells me that I am His own. Brother and sisters, our elder brother, Jesus Christ, is our Redeemer sent by the Father to care for us spiritually, physically, and to carry us through any calamity that comes upon us. Our Redeemer desires to have a personal relationship with us. He desires for you to say, *I know that my Redeemer lives!*

Job’s faith rests in his Redeemer that sovereignly rules above all the misery on earth. Job’s faith resides in his Redeemer who on the last day will take His stand above the earth putting all things in subjection under His feet. Job’s faith moves him beyond his present circumstances to see a future beyond the grave. Job knows that eventually his skin will be destroyed but he also knows that he will eventually receive a resurrected and glorified body. Job knows that he will see God with his own eyes. And God will not be an angry judge but a loving Redeemer. Job’s faith caused him to rise above his current misery of death and darkness to yearn for a resurrected body to enjoy eternal life and light with his blessed Redeemer.

Job’s confession of faith reminds me of God’s inspired words to the Apostle Paul saying, “*Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.**For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* (2Cor.4.16-18)

The full revelation of God’s Word tells us that Jesus Christ is only mediator between God and man, and that Jesus Christ gave Himself as a ransom for all. (I Tim.2.5-6) Jesus Christ removed God’s rod from us by being stricken with our pain and afflicted with our suffering. Jesus Christ was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him. (Is.53.4-5) His suffering satisfied God’s justice and justified many. (Is.53.11) Jesus the Son of God passed through the heavens so that we can draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Jesus not only stands as mediator on behalf of the guilt of our sin but He also comes able to the aid of those who are being tempted and sympathizes with our weaknesses.

**Closing Thoughts**

And the Lord desires to work faith in your heart as He did for Job. The Lord desires for your faith to rest your Redeemer that sovereignly rules above all the misery on earth. Do you believe that? The Lord desires that your faith would reside in your Redeemer who on the last day will take His stand above the earth. Do you believe that? The Lord desires that your faith would move beyond the present circumstances to see a future beyond the miseries of this world. Do you believe that?

Job wanted his words recorded in a book and they were! Job’s words were recorded in the greatest book of all history – God’s Word – the Bible. And what did Job want us to know? He wants us to know even though we might be experiencing months of misery never lose faith in the reality that our meditator, Jesus Christ, reigns in heaven as our witness making intercession for us to God as our friend. This morning I want you to know that your heavenly advocate, Jesus Christ, is pleading to God for you and He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him. (Heb.7.25)

**Call to Prayer**

*He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*

**Benediction**

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.* (2Thes.2.16-17)

**Gospel Doxology**