

## *Job and His Three Friends: The Introduction of Bildad*

### *Job 8*

*Job 8:1–2 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,*

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

**B**ILDAD demonstrates little patience toward Job and voices irritation after hearing his rebuttal to Eliphaz as to the cause of his trouble. Bildad's speech immediately declares not only ignorance on his part but also supreme arrogance. He likens Job's words to being as a strong wind, claiming him full of pride, which is why he cannot be persuaded of any personal guilt. Similar to what we observed in chapter one, when messengers came one by one to inform Job of the loss of all that he owned or cherished,<sup>1</sup> now a similar pattern begins developing when one by one, those who are thought to be Job's friends accuse him of being a sinner. Previously it was Eliphaz, now it's Bildad, and soon it would be Zophar.<sup>2</sup>

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:2) *The words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?*—The Syriac and Arabic (according to Walton) render this, "the spirit of pride fill thy mouth." The Septuagint renders it, "The spirit of thy mouth is profuse of words" —πολυῤῥῆμον *polurrēmon*. But the common rendering is undoubtedly correct, and the expression is a very strong and beautiful one. His language of complaint and murmuring was like a tempest. It swept over all barriers, and disregarded all restraint.

*Job 8:3 Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?*

Bildad's words, though accurate, come not from either the influence or inspiration of God's Holy Spirit. What this teaches us is that just because men may speak a measure of truth, it does not mean they speak for the Lord. Hence, though Bildad's words are accurate, they are spoken generally without any actual measure of the Spirit leading him.

<sup>1</sup> Job 1:14–20 *And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: <sup>15</sup>And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. <sup>16</sup>While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. <sup>17</sup>While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. <sup>18</sup>While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: <sup>19</sup>And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. <sup>20</sup>Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 2 Job 11:1 Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,*

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(Benson Commentary, Job 8:3) *Doth God—* Hebrew, אֱלֹהִים, El, the mighty God, as this word signifies; *pervert judgment?*—Judge unrighteously? No: this is inconsistent with God's nature, which is essentially and necessarily just, and with his office of governor of the world. *Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?*— Hebrew, שַׁדַּי, *Shaddai*, a word that sets forth God's *omnipotence* and *all-sufficiency*. These names are emphatically used to prove that God cannot deal unjustly or falsely with men: because he hath no need so to do, nor temptation to it, being self-sufficient for his own happiness, and being able, by his own invincible power, to do whatsoever pleaseth him.

Though Bildad spoke of God as unable to pervert justice, in truth he should have looked within himself and cast the mote out of his own eye<sup>3</sup> before thinking himself able to cast it out of Job's. The truth is that what he said of Job was actually indicative of himself. The Lord had given him no spiritual right to chastise Job, and it was his own pride and arrogance that prompted him to do so.

***Job 8:4 If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression;***

Bildad's words reveal his complete and total lack of compassion toward Job when speaking of the death of Job's children. The death of one child is unbearably painful, let alone the deaths of all of one's children. If men are not prompted by love or led by God's Holy Spirit, even if their speech contains elements of truth, they do not speak for God. If a man also lacks divine love,<sup>4</sup> any other thoughts he may think he possesses of God or of His rea-

sons for divine judgment cannot be accurate. Perhaps Job's children had reaped as they had sown, but bringing up their deaths reveals immense spiritual insensitivity on Bildad's part. Truth delivers; it does not injure. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law* (Rom. 13:10). Love fulfills divine law and as such can only generate good to those around us.

***Job 8:5–6 If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;***

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

It is amazing how right a man's words can initially seem to be without careful spiritual inspection. Bildad now claims, not simply by insinuation but by accusation, that if Job were actually pure and upright, then God would hear him and rise to answer his pleas, that the sin of hypocrisy on Job's part prohibited the Lord from answering Job's prayers. Bildad's words continue, but with the very shaky premise that if Job were truly pure and upright, the Lord would respond to his pain. The truth is that near the end of the record the Lord actually does respond to his pain, exactly as Bildad accused Him of not doing here.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:6) *If thou wert pure and upright— ... Nothing could be more unjust and severe, however, than to take it for granted that he was a hypocrite, and then proceed to argue as if that were a*

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 7:5 *Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

<sup>4</sup> I John 4:20 *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

I John 3:17 *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

I John 4:12 *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*

John 13:35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

settled point. He does not make it a supposition that possibly Job might have erred—which would not have been improper; but he proceeds to argue as if it were a point about which there could be no hesitation.

Bildad speaks of men being upright before the Lord as if it were a small thing—as if man in his sinful state could ever be pure in the Lord’s eyes without the Lord making him such. It is not because of uprightness and purity that any are saved but only because of divine acts of mercy and grace.<sup>5</sup> Only religious hypocrites do not know this, and Job surely was not one of these.<sup>6</sup> It should be noted as well that true religion does not make a man pure but rather reveals to him how impure he really is. The truth also is that any prayer heard and answered by God comes from a sinner to some degree. Hence, if God were to hear only those without sin, then none could be actually heard at all, since no prayer answered by the Lord could ever be based solely on the worthiness of man. God’s throne is a throne of mercy and grace, which is what is necessary to assist those in time of need. It is because of mercy and not worth that men are delivered, and it is only when this is truly understood that true confidence in God can be held. *Let us therefore come boldly*

*unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need* (Heb. 4:16).

Bildad speaks of Job as though he were not pure and upright, and to this Job replies, “Who then can be?” Only the self-righteous, like the Pharisee in Jesus’ parable in Luke 18,<sup>7</sup> think themselves worthy to stand in God’s holy presence on their own merits, whose belief system is set in stark contrast to the publican in the very same parable, who, repentant of his sinful condition, pleads for divine mercy.<sup>8</sup> Job was aware, at least to a degree, of the sinner’s unholy state. This is seen in the burnt offerings he presented to the Lord on behalf of his children in chapter one.<sup>9</sup> Job’s sacrifices reveal his consciousness of sin and the need for its atonement. What Job knew concerning atonement for sin was far more than Bildad knew, who assumed he had none.

***Job 8:7 Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.***

Though Bildad’s words would be proven true, they were not because of anything divinely revealed to him by God. It is also common that those who are not led by God’s Holy Spirit and reveal themselves

5 Tit. 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

I Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Eph. 2:4–5 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, <sup>5</sup>Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

7 Luke 18:9–12 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: <sup>10</sup>Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

8 Luke 18:13–14 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. <sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

9 Job 1:5 And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

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as false prophets will often prophesy good, when in fact they have not received nor have been taught anything truly from the Lord. Examples include the 400 false prophets in I Kings 22:1–38,<sup>i</sup> and Haniah the false prophet in Jeremiah's time in Jer. 28:1–17.<sup>ii</sup>

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

Bildad here appeals to Job to consider the past—to search in history for answers concerning the present. The truth is that wisdom is not always found in a former age or in the lives of our forefathers. Elihu addresses this issue in chapter 32 when he speaks of what length of years should accomplish but seldom do.<sup>10</sup>

**Job 32:7–9** *I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. <sup>8</sup>But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.*

**<sup>9</sup>Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.**

It is not merely what a man has seen, either with his own eyes or through the experiences of others, that imparts true wisdom. For this there is needed the inspiration of the Almighty. It is thus only from the Lord and divine revelation that

true understanding can enter the sinner's heart. And though human history does afford some measure of instruction, the truly deep things of both God and life are discovered only through spiritual inspiration.<sup>11</sup>

**Job 8:9–10** *(For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)*

**<sup>10</sup>Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?**

Again, Bildad states that present knowledge is insufficient; consequently, men should inquire in the past if they desire to possess true knowledge. Ultimately, whatever men actually trust in is where they will search for life's answers. Thus, he who trusts in himself<sup>12</sup> will look within himself as a means to guide his path, even as those who look to others as holding the keys to life will place their trust in man. To trust in man, though, is to depart from God.<sup>13</sup> It is not natural wisdom,<sup>14</sup> which is the true source of wisdom; rather, it is that spiritual wisdom that originates from above<sup>15</sup> and is imparted through the Spirit of God.<sup>16</sup>

**Job 8:11–12** *Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?*

**<sup>12</sup>Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.**

<sup>10</sup> Job 32:7–9 *I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. <sup>8</sup>But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. <sup>9</sup>Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.*

<sup>11</sup> I Cor. 2:9–10 *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. <sup>10</sup>But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

<sup>12</sup> Prov. 28:26 *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.*

<sup>13</sup> Jer. 17:5 *Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.*

<sup>14</sup> I Cor. 2:14 *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

<sup>15</sup> Jas. 3:17 *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

<sup>16</sup> I Cor. 2:12 *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*

Here Bildad refers to two marsh plants common in the area to illustrate the short and very limited prosperity of the hypocrite. He points out that hypocrites may flourish for a time, but their time of prosperity will be momentary and will very quickly wither away.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 8:11–12) The word “rush” here רֹמֶשׁ *gôme*’ denotes properly a bulrush, and especially the Egyptian papyrus—*papyrus Nilotica*; see the notes at Isaiah 18:2.<sup>17</sup> It is derived from the verb רָמַא *gâmâ*’, to absorb, to drink up, and is given to this plant because it absorbs or drinks up moisture. ...

*Without mire*—Without moisture. It grew in the marshy places along the Nile.

*Can the flag*—Another plant of a similar character. The word רֹחֵל *’âchû*, flag, says Gesenius, is an Egyptian word, signifying marsh-grass, reeds, bulrushes, sedge, everything which grows in wet grounds. ... Jerome says of it, “When I inquired of the learned what this word meant, I heard from the Egyptians, that by this name everything was intended in their language which grew up in a pool.” The word is synonymous with rush, or bulrush, and denotes a plant which absorbs a great quantity of water. What is the exact idea which this figure is designed to convey, is not very clear. I think it probable that the whole description is intended to represent a hypocrite, and that the meaning is, that he had in his growth a strong resemblance to such a rush or reed. There was nothing solid or substantial in his piety. It was like the soft, spongy texture of the water-reed, and would wilt under trial, as the papyrus would when deprived of water. ...

*And is not cut down*—Even when it is not cut down. If suffered to stand by itself, and if undisturbed, it will wither away. The application of this is obvious and beautiful. Such plants have no self sustaining power. They are dependent on moisture for their support. If that is withheld, they droop and die. So with the prosperous sinner and the hypocrite. His piety, compared with that which is genuine, is like the spongy texture of the paper-reed compared with the solid oak. He is sustained in his professed religion by outward prosperity, as the rush is nourished by moisture; and the moment his prosperity is withdrawn, his religion droops and dies like the flag without water.

***Job 8:13 So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:***

Bildad's words accuse Job of possessing only outward religion and that Job was in fact a hypocrite at heart. From Bildad's puerile perspective, Job's life had crashed because of the insincerity of his faith. Job's life, he concludes, was like that of marshy plants, which can endure only in the wet season, when there is sufficient moisture to keep them alive, but in times of drought soon wither away. And though it is true that the hypocrite's hope will perish, this surely would not be Job's end.<sup>18</sup> As for hypocrisy, God's Word teaches us that its roots stretch deeply into man's past, all the way back to his beginning. Hence, even in the time of Job, religious hypocrisy was as present, prevalent, and pervasive as it is today. Yet Job was not such a hypocrite, as Bildad implied. In truth, if there existed religious hypocrisy, it would be found in

<sup>17</sup> Isa. 18:2 *That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled!*

<sup>18</sup> Job 42:12–16 *So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.* <sup>13</sup>*He had also seven sons and three daughters.* <sup>14</sup>*And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.* <sup>15</sup>*And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.* <sup>16</sup>*After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.*

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Bildad long before it could ever be either discovered or proved to be in Job.

*(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:13)* That there were hypocrites even in that early age of the world. They are confined to no period, or country, or religious denomination, or profession. There are hypocrites in religion—and so there are in politics, and in business, and in friendship, and in morals. There are pretended friends, and pretended patriots, and pretended lovers of virtue, whose hearts are false and hollow, just as there are pretended friends of religion. Wherever there is genuine coin, it will be likely to be counterfeited; and the fact of a counterfeit is always a tribute to the intrinsic worth of the coin—for who would be at the pains to counterfeit that which is worthless? The fact that there are hypocrites in the church, is an involuntary tribute to the excellency of religion.

Though what Bildad believed concerning Job was not true, what he spoke of the hypocrite's end surely is. Hypocrisy is that ostentatious behavior in man wherein God is honored but the heart remains estranged from Him.<sup>19</sup> Ultimately the hypocrite's actions are purposed to please men, since it is from them that hypocrites desire to gain their recognition.<sup>20</sup> The hypocrite, blind to the true reality of the Lord, will set about to live his religious life seeking to gain both praise and acclaim for himself. Hypocrites are worshipers of themselves<sup>21</sup> who remain ignorant of any true knowledge

<sup>19</sup> Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

<sup>20</sup> Matt. 6:2, 5 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. . . .<sup>5</sup> And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

<sup>21</sup> Matt. 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

<sup>22</sup> Luke 18:11–12 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

<sup>23</sup> Luke 20:46–47 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; <sup>47</sup>Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

of God as well as the divine judgment awaiting them.<sup>22</sup>

*(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:13)* The hypocrite has a hope of eternal life. This hope is founded on various things. It may be on his own morality; it may be on the expectation that he will be able to practice a deception; it may be on some wholly false and unfounded view of the character and plans of God. Or taking the word "hypocrite" in a larger sense to denote anyone who pretends to religion and who has none, this hope may be founded on some change of feeling which he has had, and which he mistook for religion; on some supposed vision which he had of the cross or of the Redeemer, or on the mere subsiding of the alarm which an awakened sinner experiences, and the comparative peace consequent on that. The mere cessation of fear produces a kind of peace—as the ocean is calm and beautiful after a storm—no matter what may be the cause, whether it be true religion or any other cause. Many a sinner, who has lost his convictions for sin in any way, mistakes the temporary calm which succeeds for true religion, and embraces the hope of the hypocrite.

**Job 8:14–15** *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.*

<sup>15</sup> *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.*

Continuing with the theme of the frailty of the hypocrite and how his life cannot endure trial, Bildad references the spider vainly trying to hold its web together

when other creatures far stronger than it pass through its web. The spider cannot keep its web because of the weak silk it is made of. Such then is the life of the hypocrite, Bildad reasons, who cannot stand up to life's trials because of lack of true spiritual strength and integrity.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:15) *He shall lean upon his house*—This is an allusion to the web or house of the spider. The hope of the hypocrite is called the house which he has built for himself; his home, his refuge, his support. But it shall fail him. In times of trial he will trust to it for support, and it will be found to be as frail as the web of the spider. How little the light and slender thread which a spider spins would avail a man for support in time of danger! So frail and unsubstantial will be the hope of the hypocrite! It is impossible to conceive any figure which would more strongly describe the utter vanity of the hopes of the wicked.... *He shall hold it fast*—Or, he shall lay hold on it to sustain him, denoting the avidity with which the hypocrite seizes upon his hope. The figure is still taken from the spider, and is an instance of a careful observation of the habits of that insect. The idea is, that the spider, when a high wind or a tempest blows, seizes upon its slender web to sustain itself. But it is insufficient. The wind sweeps all away. So the tempest of calamity sweeps away the hypocrite, though he grasps at his hope, and would seek security in that, as a spider does in the light and tenuous thread which it has spun.

All that Bildad states concerning the hypocrite is true—it is just not true of Job. Bildad continues with another comparison, and it is a strong one revealing how even the earth will disown the hypocrite.

**Job 8:16–18** *He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.*

<sup>17</sup> *His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.*

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

Such is the end of the hypocrite. Even the earth, which was the cradle of his birth, will one day disassociate itself from him.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:18) *Then it shall deny him*—That is, the soil, the earth, or the place where it stood. This represents a wicked man under the image of a tree. The figure is beautiful. The earth will be ashamed of it; ashamed that it sustained the tree; ashamed that it ever ministered any nutriment, and will refuse to own it. So with the hypocrite. He shall pass away as if the earth refused to own him, or to retain any recollection of him.

*I have not seen thee*—I never knew thee. It shall utterly deny any acquaintance with it. There is a striking resemblance here to the language which the Savior says he will use respecting the hypocrite in the day of judgment: “and then will I profess to them, I never knew you;” Matthew 7:23.<sup>23</sup> The hypocrite has never been known as a pious man. The earth will refuse to own him as such, and so will the heavens.

Other translations of verse 18 confirm this future reality.

(NIV) *But when it is torn from its spot, that place disowns it and says, ‘I never saw you.’*

(NLT) *But when it is uprooted, it’s as though it never existed!*

(ESV) *If he is destroyed from his place, then it will deny him, saying, ‘I have never seen you.’*

**Job 8:19** *Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 8:19) *Behold, this is the joy of his way*—This is evidently

<sup>23</sup> Matt. 7:23 *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

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sarcastic. “Lo! such is the joy of his course! He boasts of joy, as all hypocrites do, but his joy endures only for a little time. This is the end of it. He is cut down and removed, and the earth and the heavens disown him!”

*And out of the earth shall others grow*—This image is still derived from the tree or plant. The meaning is, that such a plant would be taken away, and that others would spring up in its place which the earth would not be ashamed of. So the hypocrite is removed to make way for others who will be sincere, and who will be useful. Hypocrites and useless people in the church are removed to make way for others who will be active and devoted to the cause of the Redeemer.

The Lord’s promise is that all false religion will one day be replaced by true religion,<sup>24</sup> that all false worshipers shall be supplanted by true worshipers: *out of the earth shall others grow*. Though hypocrites may have a temporary influence, in the end only those with genuine faith and uprightness of heart will inherit the earth.<sup>25</sup> This was God’s promise to Israel,<sup>26</sup> and it will be fulfilled. There is no lasting and substantial hope for any who do not love, obey, and keep the Lord’s commandments out of a sincere and pure heart but instead feign obedience to God despite the fact that their hearts are actually far from Him.<sup>27</sup>

**Job 8:20** Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

Bildad’s words now shift to a very general reality, and though the words spoken again contain some truth, they are once more in error concerning Job. It is amazing, as it will always be with the merely religious, that they can hold the truth but the truth does not hold them: that though they have had exposure to God, they have no idea how their limited spiritual knowledge should be properly applied to either their own lives or the lives of others.

*(Pulpit Commentary, Job 8:20) Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man. . . .* If Job is, as he says, true to God, upright, and (humanly speaking) “perfect,” then he has only to go on trusting God; God will not leave him “till he fill his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoicing” (ver. 21); then “they that irate him shall be clothed with shame, and their dwelling-place shall come to nought” (ver. 22); but if, as we feel instinctively that Bildad believes, Job is not “perfect,” but “an evil-doer,” then he must expect no relief, no lull in his sufferings; he is obnoxious to all the threatenings which have formed the bulk of Bildad’s discourse (vers. 8–20)—he may look to being cut off, like the rush and the flag (vers. 11, 12), crushed like the spider’s web (ver. 14), destroyed, and forgotten, like the rapidly growing gourd (vers. 16–19); he must look for no help from God (ver. 20); but must be contented to pass away and make room for men of a better stamp (ver. 19).

**Job 8:21–22** Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.

24 II Pet. 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

25 Ps. 37:29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

Prov. 2:21 For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

Matt. 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

26 Ps. 37:9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

Ps. 37:22 For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

Ps. 37:34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

Isa. 57:13 When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

27 Matt. 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

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

Bildad concludes that if Job is truly penitent and righteous, this will be his end. Bildad's words are not nearly as harsh as the judgments he uttered concerning hypocrites, but they are not based on any known wisdom on his part. God has not revealed to Bildad Job's end, and it was presumptuous for him to think he knew

it. In the end, Bildad could (at least he thought) identify Job's sin, but he could not (as his words prove) help deliver Job from it. Sadly, it takes very little wisdom to perceive sin in others—it is abundant and can be observed quite easily. What is difficult, and will require divine assistance, is to find an escape from sin and not simply utter words of condemnation, which in the end will result only in bringing condemnation upon ourselves.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Matt. 12:36–37 *But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* <sup>37</sup>*For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

## The Introduction of Bildad

### Endnotes

i I Kgs. 11:1-38 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites:<sup>2</sup>Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.<sup>3</sup>And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. <sup>4</sup>For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. <sup>5</sup>For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup>And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. <sup>7</sup>Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. <sup>8</sup>And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. <sup>9</sup>And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, <sup>10</sup>And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. <sup>11</sup>Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. <sup>12</sup>Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. <sup>13</sup>Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen. <sup>14</sup>And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom. <sup>15</sup>For it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom; <sup>16</sup>(For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom:.) <sup>17</sup>That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child. <sup>18</sup>And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land. <sup>19</sup>And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. <sup>20</sup>And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the

sons of Pharaoh. <sup>21</sup>And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country. <sup>22</sup>Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise. <sup>23</sup>And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah: <sup>24</sup>And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. <sup>25</sup>And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria. <sup>26</sup>And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up his hand against the king. <sup>27</sup>And this was the cause that he lifted up his hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the city of David his father. <sup>28</sup>And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph. <sup>29</sup>And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field: <sup>30</sup>And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: <sup>31</sup>And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: <sup>32</sup>(But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:.) <sup>33</sup>Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. <sup>34</sup>Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: <sup>35</sup>But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. <sup>36</sup>And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. <sup>37</sup>And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. <sup>38</sup>And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.

ii Jer. 28:1–17 *And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, <sup>2</sup>Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. <sup>3</sup>Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon: <sup>4</sup>And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. <sup>5</sup>Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD, <sup>6</sup>Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place. <sup>7</sup>Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people; <sup>8</sup>The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and*

*of pestilence. <sup>9</sup>The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him. <sup>10</sup>Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. <sup>11</sup>And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way. <sup>12</sup>Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the prophet, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, <sup>13</sup>Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. <sup>14</sup>For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also. <sup>15</sup>Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. <sup>16</sup>Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD. <sup>17</sup>So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.*

