

Feb 20, 2022



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

A fool's wisdom always leads to a dead end, but God's wisdom always opens up new horizons

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

God, bend my ears and heart toward wisdom. Help me be open to Your truth and push away every kind of foolishness

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

Apply your heart to instruction,
And your ears to words of
knowledge

(Prov 23:12 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 26, 2019)

Series: Justice, Law, History

UNIT 3: Justice and Adversity

NEXT WEEK

Job and the Just God
(Job 42:1-6, 10-17)

Bildad Misspeaks God's Justice **Job 8:1-10, 20-22**

Lesson Background and Introduction

The book of Job is among the oldest biblical texts, and it deals with one of humanity's oldest challenges: maintaining hope in the face of suffering. The text also addresses another shared experience: the desire for justice in the midst of suffering. Being present to someone in the midst of a tragedy presents unique challenges. In an effort to explain the suffering, we may put too much pressure on ourselves to comfort in a wrong way. Platitudes will likely overstep the bounds of what is helpful. At best, our words might be little more than hollow clichés; at worst, they might cause further harm. Bildad's counterproductive interaction with Job reminds us of the best ministry we might offer: the ministry of presence in the midst of difficult seasons. At first, Job's friends approached him in this manner (Job 2:13). But their silent presence changed to unhelpful arguments. They were quick to suppose that wickedness was the primary reason for Job's suffering. However, Bildad's logic did not account for the entire story of how God works. In reality, wicked individuals might experience blessing, while righteous individuals might experience suffering. Unbeknownst to everyone present, Job's suffering was an example of the latter. When others experience suffering, our natural response is to be with them. To draw near, cry, and share in grief is an appropriate course of action to comfort the sufferer. Conjecture on God's behalf is unwise and unnecessary. Sitting silently with a grieving person often provides the best support.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Unexplainable Suffering - After Job lost his animals and servants and a great wind collapsed a house and killed his children, three friends came to comfort him. They started out to bring comfort, but their methods were anything but comforting. The three friends approached Job's suffering with disdain and superiority. Each statement they made centered on sin bringing suffering and that suffering is always evidence of sin. They accused him of bringing this suffering upon himself. They badgered and pleaded with Job to confess, admit the wrong he did—but Job maintained his innocence.

It's Your Fault - Job's friend Bildad heard Job's explanation with his ears, but his heart heard nothing. He insisted that Job got what he deserved. Job's suffering was proof of his disobedience toward God. He blamed Job for his miserable plight. Self-righteous Bildad ended up being super "holy" and was no earthly good to Job as a counselor or a friend. Bildad wanted Job to plead for God's mercy for restoration. He set forth tradition and arguments. Bad men are cursed; good men prosper. But Bildad's counsel of blaming Job for his suffering just made it worse for his friend. Bildad had encouraged Job to return to God and repent, although Job never turned away from Him. Job never claimed to be perfect, but he considered himself blameless. God agreed with Job: "There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil" (Job 1:8).

Lessons about Suffering - Still today, many people approach the suffering of others like Bildad. If things are going well, God is pleased; if things are falling apart, it is the fault of the person suffering. The person then keeps reviewing his or her sins, past and present: "What have I done wrong? What do I need to confess?" We can learn a lesson from Job. We need to speak cautiously with people who are suffering and hurting deeply. They need our comfort, not our accusations

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Condemnation (Job 8:1-4)

Vain words (1-2)

- Vain words lead to vain prayers (Matt 6:7)
- Vain words lead to vain work (Ps 39:6)
- Vain words lead to vain faith (Ps 73:13-14)
- Vain words lead to vain labor (Ps 127:1-2)
- Vain words lead to vain lives (Eccl 6:12)

God's judgment (3)

- God's judgments are perfect and just (Deut 32:4)
- God's judgments aren't wrong, it's man's ways (Ezek 18:25)
- God judges each person according to their actions (Ezek 33:20)
- God's judgments are righteous (Rom 2:5)
- God's judgments are true and just (Rev 16:7)
- God's judgments are promised when we die (Heb 9:27)

Sinful (4)

- Sinfulness is caused by bad choices (Prov 1:29-31)
- Sinfulness proves that people don't know God (Titus 1:16)
- Sinfulness is caused by forsaking God's word (Jer 9:13-14)
- Sinfulness violates God's covenant (Deut 17:2-5)
- Sinfulness dishonors God (Rom 2:23-24)

Exhortation (Job 8:5-7)

Pray (5)

- Pray about everything (Phil 4:6-7)
- Pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17)
- Pray while suffering (James 5:13)
- Pray for others (Rom 12:9-13)
- Pray in the Spirit (Eph 6:17-18)

Repent (6)

- Repent because the final judgment is near (Matt 4:17)
- Repent so that sins may be wiped away (Acts 3:19)
- Repent because God commands it (Acts 17:30-31)
- Repent to be led to the truth (2 Tim 2:25)
- Repent because God does not want anyone to perish (2 Peter 3:9)

Seek reconciliation (7)

- Reconciliation through justification (Rom 5:1-2)
- Reconciliation through Jesus' death (Rom 5:10)
- Reconciliation because Jesus became our peace (Eph 2:14-16)
- Reconciliation through Jesus' blood (Col 1:19-22)
- Reconciliation through forgiveness of sins (Heb 2:17)

Observation (Job 8:8-10)

Remember the past (8)

- Remember the past to know the great things God has done (Deut 4:32)
- Remember the past to gain understanding (Job 12:12)
- Remember the past to become wise (Job 15:18)
- Remember the past from our fathers (Ps 44:1)
- Remember the past to teach us endurance (Rom 15:4)

Life is short (9)

- Life is short because man's days are like grass (Ps 103:15)
- Life is short because man's life is like a breath (Ps 144:4)
- Life is short because man's time is short (1 Cor 7:29)
- Life is short because man's life is like a mist (James 4:14)

Learn from the past (10)

- Learn from the past to pass it on to the next generation (Ps 78:1-6)
- Learn from the past to help us run our race with perseverance (Heb 12:1)
- Learn from the past to teach us patience (James 5:10)
- Learn from the past to heed God's warnings (1 Cor 10:11)

Restoration (Job 8:20-22)

Forgiveness (20)

- God's forgiveness means that He will not remember our sins any more (Heb 8:12)
- God's forgiveness sanctifies (Acts 26:17-18)
- God's forgiveness rescues from a dominion of darkness (Col 1:13-14)
- God's forgiveness is through Jesus' blood (Matt 26:28)
- God's forgiveness is in accordance with His grace (Eph 1:7)

Joy (21)

- Joy because of being called by God's name (Jer 15:16)
- Joy through the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 1:6)
- Joy even in trials (Hab 3:17-19)
- Joy of the righteous (Ps 68:3)
- Joy in hope (Rom 12:10-12)

Vindication (22)

- Vindication because God will repay (Rom 12:19)
- Vindication because God will make atonement (Deut 32:43)
- Vindication because God will provide vengeance (Nah 1:2)
- Vindication because God's judges and will avenge (Heb 10:30)