

Job Reading Sermon 2 from *The Message**

Bildad and Job.

Bildad

Bildad from Shuhah was next to speak:

“How can you keep on talking like this? You’re talking nonsense, and noisy nonsense at that. Does God mess up? Does God Almighty ever get things backwards? It’s plain that your children sinned against him—otherwise, why would God have punished them? Here’s what you must do—and don’t put it off any longer: get down on your knees before God Almighty.

If you’re as innocent and upright as you say, it’s not too late—he’ll come running; he’ll set everything right again, reestablish your fortunes.

Even though you’re not much right now, you’ll end up better than ever. There’s no way that God will reject a good person, and there is no way he’ll help a bad one. [8:1-7,20] ”

Job

“So how could I ever argue with him, construct a defense that would influence God? Even though I’m innocent I could never prove it; I can only throw myself on the Judge’s mercy. If I called on God and he himself answered me, then, and only then, would I believe that he’d heard me. As it is, he knocks me about from pillar to post, beating me up, black and blue, for no good reason.

He won’t even let me catch my breath, piles bitterness upon bitterness.

If it’s a question of who’s stronger, he wins, hands down!

If it’s a question of justice, who’ll serve him the subpoena?

Even though innocent, anything I say incriminates me; blameless as I am, my defense just makes me sound worse. [9:14-20] ”

Job prayed:

“Here’s what I want to say: Don’t, God, bring in a verdict of guilty without letting me know the charges you’re bringing. How does this fit into what you once called ‘good’—giving me a hard time, spurning me, a life you shaped by your very own hands, and then blessing the plots of the wicked? You don’t look at things the way we mortals do. You’re not taken in by appearances, are you? Unlike us, you’re not working against a deadline. You have all eternity to work things out. So what’s this all about, anyway—this compulsion to dig up some dirt, to find some skeleton in my closet? You know good and well I’m not guilty. You also know no one can help me. [10:2-7] ”

Bildad

“Here’s the rule: The light of the wicked is put out. Their flame dies down and is extinguished. Their house goes dark—every lamp in the place goes out. [18:5] ”

Job

“God threw a barricade across my path—I’m stymied; he turned out all the lights—I’m stuck in the dark. He destroyed my reputation, robbed me of all self-respect. He tore me apart piece by piece—I’m ruined! Then he yanked out hope by the roots.

He’s angry with me—oh, how he’s angry! He treats me like his worst enemy. He has launched a major campaign against me, using every weapon he can think of, coming at me from all sides at

once. God alienated my family from me; everyone who knows me avoids me. My relatives and friends have all left; houseguests forget I ever existed.

Still, I know that God lives—the One who gives me back my life—and eventually he'll take his stand on earth. And I'll see him—even though I get skinned alive!—see God myself, with my very own eyes. Oh, how I long for that day! [19:19-22, 24-27] ””

Bildad

Bildad the Shuhite again attacked Job:

““ God is sovereign, God is fearsome—everything in the cosmos fits and works in his plan. Can anyone count his angel armies? Is there any place where his light doesn't shine? How can a mere mortal presume to stand up to God? How can an ordinary person pretend to be guiltless? Why, even the moon has its flaws, even the stars aren't perfect in God's eyes, so how much less, plain men and women—slugs and maggots by comparison! [25:1-6] ””

Job

Job answered:

““ Well, you've certainly been a great help to a helpless man! You came to the rescue just in the nick of time! What wonderful advice you've given to a mixed-up man! What amazing insights you've provided! Where in the world did you learn all this? How did you become so inspired? [26:1-4] ””

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language (Navpress Publishing Group, 2002)