

## Wrong About 'Now'

*Job, the Prophet of God*

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**Bible Text:** Job 8; Romans 5:6

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Job 8. Please look at verse 1. Okay, folks, you know the deal. We're going to show you just exactly what we've done here. You know chapters 1 and 2, everything was taken from him and Satan proved that he's still a swindler, still a jerk, nothing has changed, right? He's not interested in healing lives or restoring hearts. He's interested in taking things and mocking God, that's it, and he would love to get God's creatures, God's people made in God's image, he'd love to get us to profane the Lord. Isn't that something? I mean, there's your proof text right there: if the devil can't get you, what will he want you to do? He'll want to make life difficult at times to where you will profane your Lord Jesus. So, in chapter 3, Job goes on this rant about how he wishes he was dead. Chapters 4-5, Eliphaz says, "No wonder, you're such a wicked sinner." Chapter 6-7, Job says, "I know you are but what am I?" No, he didn't.

Chapter 8, it's now Bildad's turn. Bildad is the second of three friends that started out pretty good and now we're just not so sure. No so sure. I want us to take a look at verse 1, "Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?" What a kind friend. Yeah. In other words, "Job, I don't think you understand. I can't just sit here and let you go on and on about how rough you have it." Look folks, I know there are 42 chapters in Job and I can't bring it back to you every week and just meander through Job's party of pity. I know that, I've got that so we're going to move through that but I want you to notice, please, that Bildad is absolutely correct. Bildad is right in most of what he says in this chapter and we're going to look at it.

Bildad is right in that Job's words are like the wind. For example, hold your place here and look back two chapters to chapter 6:26. Look what Job says to Eliphaz, "Do you imagine to reprove words and the speeches of one that is desperate which are as wind?" Job said, "Eliphaz, you're taking the time to rebuke me and my words right now just feel like the passing wind." So, Bildad comes back in chapter 8:2, apparently he wasn't listening very well because he accuses Job of having words that are like the passing wind. Well, they agree. They're absolutely right. Job is not focused at all. Yeah, that's the whole idea. We've got it. Alright, we understand Bildad, that his words are like wind.

Now look at verse 3. Remember the last chapter, Job just got done saying, “Lord, I wish that you would quit visiting me every day if all you're going to do is leave me in my turmoil.” Do you remember that from last week? Alright, so in verse 3, here's what Bildad says to Job, “Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?” In other words, he's asking a question that really doesn't have a necessary answer. We might call that a rhetorical. Bildad is asking a question that only a fool would answer in a particular way. Everyone who has a brain would be thought of to answer with, “Well, of course, God doesn't pervert judgment. Of course, the Almighty doesn't pervert justice.” We understand that. What Bildad wants to do is what a lot of people try to do, they've listened to Job talk for two chapters and now they're ready to correct all of Job's theology in one sentence. Have you ever met those people? They want to be the one that says the important thing, the one thing that settles all disputes. Yeah, I'm tempted to do that sometimes, where we want to be the one that says the last thing, the thing that people sit back and go, “Wow.”

Well, Bildad tried it here, “Does God pervert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice? Job, do you really think you have it that bad?” But I do want to come up on base here and say Bildad had it right. The Almighty doesn't pervert justice, does he? Does he? Is he not just? He is absolutely just and he judges and that should give us great confidence because there is coming a day when all those who deserve judgment get it and that is also convicting because it means that if we deserve it, we're going to get it. Yes? Outside of Christ, we all deserve the most heinous condemnation available. We absolutely do. We deserve to be condemned to a Christless eternity without Jesus so God is not perverse in his judgment but he also is such a good judge that he is going to judge sin and he's going to bring justice to those who do evil.

Look at verse 4, “If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression; If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes,” that's an old English word that means “early,” “if you would seek God early and make thy supplication to the Almighty...” Hold on, Bildad. O my goodness, what an insult. “Job, if you would just have your devotions.” Are you kidding me? You're going to tell Job, the man who is just above all those that are upon the earth, the one that fears God and eschews evil, “Job, perhaps...” Did you notice verse 4, “Perhaps your children wouldn't have fallen into sin and God cast them away for their sin if you would've gotten up a little earlier and met God before they met their sin.” What an indictment. As a matter of fact, this is an absolute statement of ignorance based on what chapter? Chapter 1. He was absolutely meeting with God before his children died. Supposedly they died from their sins so this is an absolute statement of ignorance. I told you in week one that I think that Job being royal or rich or both, probably had scribes recording this dialogue. Can you imagine being the scribe that writes down that idiotic word? “Bildad, are you kidding me,” in parenthesis. Today it would be, “Oh no he didn't.”

Look at verse 6, “If you were pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.” Listen to what he says: that word “habitation” there is the same word that we would find our word “house.” Listen to what Bildad is saying. He's playing on it and I want you to appreciate the Scripture as literature

as well as Scripture. Listen to what he's saying, "If you were pure and upright, God would raise your house back up. He'd give you your children back. He'd give you your home back." Not necessarily the physical structure but your home, your family unit, your immediate family and your extended family. "If you would just get up and repent, God would rebuild your house." Okay. Folks, he's right about everything except one little thing.

Verse 6, "If you were pure and upright; surely," what's that next word? "Now he would awake for thee." Some of the modern translations are a little weak here. It doesn't say "now," it says "he would then awaken to your cause and make the habitation of righteousness prosperous." Now, that doesn't mean you don't have a Bible in your lap, I'm just saying it is better stated "if you were pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee." But it's just the same. If your Bible says "he would then get up and do it," what Bildad is saying is, "What is very clear is that Job's God is not rebuilding your house and you don't have little ankle-biters running around and your children are dead and it's obvious to me that you are not pure and upright because if you were, God would be working to rebuild you right now." Isn't that strange? Bildad is almost exactly correct in his theology, he's just wrong on the timing. Are you listening?

By the way, what makes him think that God wasn't already doing something? "I mean, just because you don't see it, Bildad, does that mean that it's not happening? I mean, after all, if you're going to rebuild someone's home, doesn't it make sense to rebuild the one to whom it belongs?" Job doesn't know it, but he's being rebuilt. Surely and slowly but he's being rebuilt. God is adding fortification to a man that needs it badly and he doesn't even know it but we remember from last week that God visits him daily. Are you with me?

Look at verse 7, he says, "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase." Can I please say that Bildad has been sniffing paint thinner? "Job, your beginning was small?" Does anyone remember the first chapter? The man had camels, thousands of camels, thousands of donkeys, thousands of oxen, thousands of sheep, ten healthy children with families and at least the sons had homes of their own and this knucklehead is going to say, "Even though you started out small." Now remember, God uses the same thing in 1 Samuel when he talks about Nabal. Remember Nabal? He had a wife named Abigail. Do you remember that? Nabal was considered rich because he had 1,000 head of cattle and Job had many, I think it was 7,000 sheep. Nabal had 1,000 and he was considered very rich. Now think about that: the second richest man in that era was 1/7th as rich as Job from what we can tell. But Bildad, being all wise says, "Even though you started out small, your latter end will greatly increase."

Folks, can I just show you a piece of Scripture here that's really important to this story? I want you to see that Bildad is absolutely right about everything except the timing because you see that in verse 7, "Your beginning was small yet your latter end should greatly increase." Your latter end. That same phrase is used in the last chapter of the book, so hold your place here and look forward 34 chapters to the last chapter of the book. Please, look at chapter 42 and look with me, please, in verse 12. Oh, this is helping someone tonight. I don't even have to hope it is, I am sure this is helping someone tonight.

Sometimes I get up and I'm not sure that I'm making contact with the ball but I am sure that God is doing his work tonight with this lesson. Look at verse 12, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep," that's double, right? "Six thousand camels," double, right? "A thousand yoke of oxen," double, "and a thousand she asses," double, "and he had seven sons and three daughters." Look there: his latter end was greatly increased like Bildad said should happen back when Bildad said it should happen. Job's house is rebuilt just like Bildad thought it should be done back when he said it should be done. Bildad was right on everything except God's not on your time table.

Question: if Job had it his way, would he have sped things up? Who wouldn't? I mean, I don't think there's anything spiritual about, "God, just lay it on me. Lay it on me. I can take it. Make me more like you." There is one prayer you're not going to worry about Bill Sturm ever praying and it's, "God, give me patience. Ever." I will never pray that. That's right next to, "Lord, give me humility." No, you don't want God humbling you. James 4:10, "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he'll lift you up." James 1, "Let patience have her perfect work." Patience is already working in us and we're supposed to humble ourselves. I can't think of anything more exciting than praying for patience because God is certainly going to build that in your life. "Lay it on me. I can take it." Oh, you are ignorant. You do not want that. Patience you want. So, who wouldn't say like Job, "Dear Lord, can you please hurry this thing up?"

Back to chapter 8, look at verse 8, "For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age." By the way, I just wanted to remind you of the many themes and every time we see a theme, I'm not going to preach it because I want you to see progress through the book of Job. Job's wrong thinking is he doesn't deserve this. In chapter 8:2, in other words, Bildad is saying, "Job is not only wrong and he's not only being judged for his sin but he doesn't think he's a sinner. Job has a sin problem that he doesn't see yet." That's consistent.

Now look at verse 8, "For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers." Here, Bildad is referring to the earth before the flood so here's another time reference. We know that when Job was written the flood was history. He says, "Enquire, I pray thee, of the former age in search of their fathers." He's referring to the fathers of the former age all the way from Adam through Enoch all the way to Noah. By the way, if it's true that Job was written in the time of Abraham, then you've got to know that Shem was still alive. Shem outlived Abraham by 30 years. Think about that. Abraham died and Shem, one of the sons of Noah, lived 30 years past that date according to what I can find in Scripture. So when Bildad said, "ask of the fathers," he was able, probably at that time, to go ask of the fathers of the former age. People who had seen before the flood. So Job is getting counsel here from Bildad and by the way, Bildad has pretty good theology for someone who doesn't have a Bible. Yes?

Verse 9, "For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow." Wouldn't that be a great Scripture to put up on a doily or something? I mean, on a painting? No one would ever know that an ignoramus said it. It's good stuff but it's coming from a merciless heart. It's coming from a man who is absolutely wrong

about God. Can I remind you that at the end of the book and I know many of you have read all of Job, can I remind you that at the end of Job, God is not angry with Bildad so far and Eliphaz for what they did say necessarily as much as what they did not say. Let me reverse that: they didn't exactly get in trouble for what they did not say, they got in trouble for what they did say about the Lord. In other words, they were mostly right in everything except the timing, interpretation of their theology, the study of God. But this is a good verse. I mean, it's all good, it's all from God, but Bildad is revealed here as a good stater of facts and that is, "Hey, we are really just a shadow."

Now look how Job discusses man, the book of Job discusses man. We've already seen that we're just basically a moth, a hired man that can be replaced tomorrow, basically is the idea. A weaver's shuttle which kind of rehearses the idea that before you know it, your life is unwound and there's nothing left. Then here, we get from Bildad that really our lives are but shadows. My dad tells me that the older he gets, the faster he thinks time is going by. Boy, I hope that's not true because it's flying by for me. It's flying by. I can't believe I have two high schoolers. What in the world is wrong with me? How did this happen? Wait a minute, I know how this happened, never mind. Thanks John, I guess I walked into that one. John says it's biology. Aren't you glad this isn't performance? I would have failed for sure. They'd be booing me off the stage, John. Everyone should know that's biology.

Look at verse 10, "Shall not they teach thee," the fathers from before the flood, the fathers of the flood era, "won't they teach you and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?" Now look, this is what Bildad is doing. Please, look back at chapter 7:11. Do you remember last week? "Therefore I, Job, will not refrain my mouth. I will speak in the anguish of my spirit. I will complain of the bitterness of my soul." So Bildad is saying in chapter 8:10, "If you want to gush out words from within you so bad, why don't you let someone who knows something do it? Job, you're just talking wind. Do you want to talk out of your spirit and share the anguish of your soul? Aren't you something, Job. Maybe you should talk to the fathers of the former age and let them talk to you out of their hearts and souls." Ruthless. Not much help.

Verse 11, "Can the rush," that is also the papyrus, actually what they made paper out of it back in the early AD times and a lot of the early manuscripts of the New Testament are written upon this kind of paper, "can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?" These things grow 15 feet tall in wet, muddy land. Of course, the answer is no. You're not going to get a rush to grow up. You're not going to get a flag to grow tall in water that's not caked in mud. It's predictable. You're not going to get it and really what he's doing here is he's playing again on Job's words. Remember Job in chapter 6 says, "Who eats an egg white without salt?" Do you remember that? He says, "The white of an egg is without flavor," so he says, "if you don't do that," and so he turns it around here and starts messing with Job and asking ridiculous rhetorical questions.

"Can the rush grow up without mire? Can the flag grow without water? Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish." "Job, you looked pretty good

when the heyday was happening, you had lots of ideal growing conditions. No one would say that you were wrong for what you were doing back then, Job, when you were nice and green and growing but you're not green and growing anymore. Just like all the hypocrites." He's not even suggesting anymore that Job is sinful and not confessing. He's not even suggesting that anymore. He's just saying it, "Job, my friend, I just have to tell you this. It's really on my heart. I have to get this off of my chest. I'm just trying to help. You're a hypocrite."

Look at verse 14, "Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure. He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden. His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones." In other words, he's saying, "You might have looked hopeful but you had no hope, Job, because of the secret sin that not only is going to kill you but has already killed your children." Do you see the flow of the context here?

Look at the word "web" in verse 14. Look at the word "house" in verse 15. Look at the word "place" before place of stones in verse 17. All of those are the same Hebrew word and so he's saying in verse 14, "Your hope is like living in a spider's house. It's made of silk and it won't hold. You might even lean on your house and it's not going to stand, it's going to fall. Even if," verse 17, "even if your greenness, even if you as a healthy plant, had wrapped your roots around a house of stones. You're a hypocrite, Job, and so you're destined to be hopeless and fail."

Now, if Bildad was right about Job being a sinner, would Bildad have been right about what he's saying to Job? Help me. It's true, God judges sin. It's true that God allows things to happen sometimes to correct sin in our lives. But Bildad wasn't right about Job and so he was wrong about everything.

Look at verse 18, "If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee." You're here today and gone tomorrow, Job. "Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow." In other words, "Job, there was a day when you were green," and that doesn't mean new. He's comparing him to the healthy plant, remember? I've been called green once or twice in my life and it wasn't because I was healthy and strong. He says, "There was a time when you were flourishing and you were growing just like everyone would expect, Job. Everyone would expect it but now you're going to disappear and someone is going to grow up exactly where you wanted to be and they're going to have the joy that you wanted because they're not going to be a hypocrite like you." Now you say he's not being quite that harsh. Well, why is he saying what he's saying in the order he's saying it then? "Job, someone's going to grow in your spot. You're going to see how feeble and frail you really are and what used to bring you joy is going to be gone tomorrow and someone is going to grow up in your place and it's going to be like your house. If you did go back to it, it's going to say, Who are you again?"

Verse 20, "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers." To that I would say, "Bildad, you're right." Psalm 37:23, "The steps of a good

man are ordered by the Lord and he delights in his way. Though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down for the Lord delighteth him in his way.” Surely it's true, God will not cast away a perfect man. “Bildad, you are right, you're just wrong about Job. And you're not just wrong about Job, you're wrong about the timing of how God will build his house again. You see, Bildad, you think that you're right about the timing but, Bildad, you would have been wrong at Lazarus' tomb because Jesus shows up four days late. You would have been wrong, Bildad, at Jairus' house because Jesus took just enough time to not get there in time and his daughter died. You would have been thinking, Bildad, that Jesus was late when you were sitting by the Sea of Galilee and the storm was washing the disciples right in their boat and it was the fourth watch when Jesus finally went walking to them out on the water. Bildad, you would have been wrong so many times because God didn't do exactly what he should've done when you said he needed to do it.”

Bildad would have gone insane in Egypt. For 400 years, the children of Israel wandered in a foreign land, much of that serving under bondage. “Bildad, you think God's taking too long?” “Oh no, no.” “Yes Bildad, you would've thought God was taking too long.” You would not have been near as self-righteous if you were the one scrapping your pussing scabbing sores in the garbage dump. Your judgmental mouth would have been shut, Bildad. Oh, how unfortunate to be right in your theology and wrong about God. Those are paradoxical statements because theology in itself is the truth of God but when we start telling God how he's supposed to act.

Look at verse 21, “Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.” “Job, if you would just become a perfect man.” Listen to this language. It is so skillfully written. How did God describe Job in chapter 1? A perfect man and here's Bildad, seven chapters later saying, “Job, if you were just the perfect man.” Now, perfect doesn't mean sinless. It means, most of the time in Scripture, it means mature, it means complete, it means flourishing. God would not cast you away, Job. Incidentally, he's mercilessly using, once again, the terminology he used in verse 4, “If your children had sinned against him, he would have cast them away for their transgression. Job, God would not do this to a perfect man but if you will become perfect, he will help you and he will fill your mouth, verse 21, with laughing and your lips with rejoicing.

Verse 22, “They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.” Bildad is absolutely positively correct about everything he says except, “Job, God would right now be doing what I'm saying that he should be doing if you were not a sinner. If you were not a hypocrite.”

So, he says a lot of truth and we are people full of truth. I am glad, by the way, that Jesus Christ found laughter and joy because he was perfect in every way. Do you see that in verses 20-21? Do you see that? I'm not sure. I'm not sure so I need to show you. I need to show you. You see it here in Job in chapter 8:20-21, God says he will preserve, he will not cast away a perfect man and he will fill his mouth with laughing and his lips with rejoicing. The question is: did that happen to Jesus after he suffered for us? I say to you, let's turn to Psalm 16. Look at Psalm 16:7. It's the next book. Psalm 16:7, “I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have

set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Do you see that? Who is this talking about? I hear a few of you timid souls out there saying the “J” word. Help me. It's about Jesus. When Peter is preaching at Pentecost he says David was talking about Jesus here and you see in verse 9, “My heart is glad.” Jesus says, “My heart is glad.” Jesus says, “My glory rejoices.” Jesus says, “My flesh shall rest in hope.” Why? “Because I’m going to be resurrected.” Then, post-resurrection, later on in verse 11, “You will show me the path of life and in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Jesus Christ looked forward to a time when after his suffering, he would be filled with joy. Hebrews 1:8 says that God “anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows.” It says in chapter 12 of Hebrews, “Looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.” Everything that Job went through, everything that Bildad says about what happens to righteous people is exactly what happened to Christ but it happened in God's time. The latter end of chapter 42:12 happens when God says so. When God says so. Look forward to Proverbs. Look forward to Ecclesiastes. Go there, please, I need you to see this. I need you to circle it in your Bible. I need you to see this and get hope that if you are in a cave right now that you're latter end is coming but just not right now.

Look at chapter 3:11 of Ecclesiastes. Look at this. Look at this. Now, you know verse 1-10 some of you old rock fans out there. You thought that that was – what was it, Beatles? Monkees? Bananas? Who sang that song? The Byrds. I'm so uncultured, aren't I. Bless the Lord, there are some things that I just haven't.... So, this actually came from the Bible. Look at verse 11, “He hath made every thing beautiful,” when? “In his time: also he hath set the world in their heart,” he puts eternity in your heart. He gives you a hope beyond the grave when you know that if not before then, he will certainly make everything beautiful in his time.

I don't know if it's an ailment, I don't know if it's a relationship problem, I don't know if it's a money problem. I'm not saying you've got to wait until you're dead for God to give you a good latter. Not at all, I'm saying that if it's not happening now, don't just think it's because, “I must be a hypocrite. Somewhere in me.” Don't think if the latter end is not showing up on someone right now that it must mean they're in some deep unconfessed sin because that's just not necessarily the case.

God is always on time. He's a great time manager. He's never been late. And, oh by the way, look at Romans 5. Look, you're already there because I asked you to turn there before the offering so look at chapter 5 and look at verse 6 of Romans. “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Folks, if I was planning the crucifixion, which is just a ridiculous scenario, if I was planning it, I would have done it right after the Garden. I would have done it maybe at Noah's flood. I would



have done it maybe at the Tower of Babel. I would have done it maybe when Abraham slept with that Egyptian woman and they had a son out of wedlock. I might have done it at all the chaoses in human history but it says here that he did it, in verse 6, "in due time." Right on time. Right on time. God's never been late. He wasn't late with the death of Christ and by the way, look at Galatians. It's three books ahead. Look at Galatians 4. This is all through the Scripture. Galatians 4:1, "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the," what? Look at that. You'd almost think one author wrote this entire book, "until the appointed time of the father." So what are we talking about here? Verse 3, "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." So folks, the conception wasn't late. The death wasn't late and your latter end will not be late.

Bildad was right about everything except the "now." He was wrong about saying that God would now be rebuilding your house if you were right with God, Job. He was wrong about the "now."

Last place I want you to look is 1 Peter 5 and then we'll close. Parting word of encouragement to those of you who are struggling in the "now," that might be thinking that God has given up hope. I could quote Romans 8:28 but you already know it. I could give you lots of Scriptures to give you lots of hope and we could just turn this into one fantastic smorgasbord of encouraging Scriptures but I wanted you to see Job 8, Bildad was wrong about "now." The latter end he was hoping for came in chapter 42, came for Job and Bildad did not like it. Remember what happened to Bildad? We'll get to it. We'll get to it. We'll be there in like a week and a half, right? Chapter 42, right? Okay, probably not. We probably won't be there quite that soon.

1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Look here. Look here: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." When the time is right, if we will submit to God's timing and just like Job, be somewhat patient under his heavy hand, his mighty hand, God will use that same hand that is bearing down to bring the best out of his people. He's going to turn that hand around and he's going to lift that person up to a place of exaltation but it's going to happen when the time is right, when the Father says the time is right.

Let's stand for prayer.