

Bildad Misunderstands God's Justice

Bible Background: Job 8
Devotional Reading: Job 37:5-7

Background (Page 275):

- Job was a man of great wealth, who had recently lost everything – *Monday (Job 1:8-11,13-22)*
 - Job still worshipped God and while mourning, he sought council from his friends (Not all friends are good friends in times of need)
 - *How do you respond when you don't understand God's Plan? – In Focus (Page 272)*
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The People, Places, and Times (Page 274):

- Why do dreadful things happen to good people and several others are usual questions while experiencing some sort of discomfort
 - We must honestly examine our hearts and minds to determine if we have sinned against God (*Psalm 26:2-3*; 1 Corinthians 11:28-29; *2 Corinthians 13:5*)
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Discuss the Meaning (Page 276):

- When we have the mindset that blessings (being materialistic/wealthy) is from being right with God and being without is sometimes considered punishment related to a specific sin we leave no room for grace as Christ died on the cross for the remission of our sins
 - Even though the wages of sin are death (eternal), grace by faith, through Jesus Christ we can receive the gift of eternal life
 - Grace means He gives us the opportunity to repent (*2 Samuel 12:13*; 2 Corinthians 7:10)
 - *How does your knowledge of His word and your walk with Him affect your attitude toward sin and repentance?*
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In Depth (Page 275-276):

1. God Is Perfectly Just (Job 8:1-3)

- a. Bildad emphasizes that God is just in all that He does
- b. Job didn't have a Bible so apparently; he had been taught that God rewards those who are faithful and obedient with many blessings
 - i. In today's society, favor and blessings are associated with materialism/prosperity
- c. (v. 2) Bildad says that Job is full of hot air for worshipping God during a time like this, when the loss was caused by some sort of sin
- d. During challenging times, it's hard to understand God's justice/reasoning behind what's going on
- e. (v. 3) – Bildad implies that God doesn't allow anyone to suffer who doesn't deserve it
- f. *Where do you turn when you experience challenges or situations you don't understand?*

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2. A Just God Will Punish Sin (Job 8:4)

- a. Job's friends believe in the theology of retribution (punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act)
 - i. This theology is only partially revealed in scripture (*Deuteronomy 30:16-18*; Proverbs 3:3, 13:25; Psalm 35:17)
 - ii. Simply put, obedience brings blessings, sin brings suffering
 - iii. So, the death of his children must have been because of sin against God

3. A Just God Will Bless the Obedient (Job 8:5-10)

- a. (v. 5-6) Job is reminded by Bildad that if he returns to his former state of purity and integrity, everything he had previously would be restored (Psalm 57:8)
 - i. That's only half-truths as Bildad only sees things black and white, which leaves no room for grace
 - ii. (v. 7) Still offers hope (Proverbs 23:18)
- b. (v. 8-10) Bildad and Eliphaz believed that wisdom came from the past
 - i. The past is to be used as learning lessons, not as an anchor to remain stagnant
 - ii. Wickedness inherits its own reward (Job 4:8; Hosea 10:13; *Galatians 6:7-8*)

4. A Just God Will Restore the Repentant (Job 8:20-22)

- a. (v. 20) Bildad believes repentance brings immediate restoration (Job 42:12)
- b. Job does eventually sin against God demanding an explanation, but after his repentance and submission to God's wisdom, he is blessed
- c. Sometimes terrible things do happen to good people; it's not for us to understand, but an opportunity to put more trust and faith in God (Jeremiah 3:25)

Liberating Lesson (Page 276):

- The book of Job does not explain the reason for all suffering
- We want answers and/or someone to blame so we can justify our feelings; however, certain situations are beyond our understanding. This is where faith comes in. Trusting that the Lord will work things out for His glory.
 - *Regardless of the type of suffering you're experiencing, answers/blame are wanted. As a believer, how are your reactions in difficult/challenging times?*

Search the Scriptures (Page 276):

- Read *Job 8:4; John 9:1-3; Romans 6:23*
 - *What singular message do we take away from these verses? The penalty for sin has not changed, but the way God deals with the sinner has.*
- Read *Job 8:20-21; Romans 3:21-26*
 - *How does the promise of Job's Restoration, and the gift of salvation by faith demonstrate God's justice?*