

Day 62 - FRIDAY: December 30th

Job 18 & 19

Job 18:1–21 NKJV

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: "How long till you put an end to words? Gain understanding, and afterward we will speak. Why are we counted as beasts, And regarded as stupid in your sight? You who tear yourself in anger, Shall the earth be forsaken for you? Or shall the rock be removed from its place? "The light of the wicked indeed goes out, And the flame of his fire does not shine. The light is dark in his tent, And his lamp beside him is put out. The steps of his strength are shortened, And his own counsel casts him down. For he is cast into a net by his own feet, And he walks into a snare. The net takes him by the heel, And a snare lays hold of him. A noose is hidden for him on the ground, And a trap for him in the road. Terrors frighten him on every side, And drive him to his feet. His strength is starved, And destruction is ready at his side. It devours patches of his skin; The firstborn of death devours his limbs. He is uprooted from the shelter of his tent, And they parade him before the king of terrors. They dwell in his tent

who are none of his; Brimstone is scattered on his dwelling. His roots are dried out below, And his branch withers above. The memory of him perishes from the earth, And he has no name among the renowned. He is driven from light into darkness, And chased out of the world. He has neither son nor posterity among his people, Nor any remaining in his dwellings. Those in the west are astonished at his day, As those in the east are frightened. Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, And this is the place of him who does not know God."

Job 19:1-29 NKJV

Then Job answered and said: "How long will you torment my soul, And break me in pieces with words? These ten times you have reproached me; You are not ashamed that you have wronged me. And if indeed I have erred, My error remains with me. If indeed you exalt yourselves against me, And plead my disgrace against me, Know then that God has wronged me, And has surrounded me with His net. "If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard. If I cry aloud, there is no justice. He has fenced up my way, so that I cannot pass; And He has set darkness in my paths. He has stripped me of my glory, And taken the crown from my head. He breaks me down on every side, And I am gone; My hope He has uprooted like a tree. He has also kindled His wrath against me, And He counts me as one of His enemies. His troops come together And build up their road against me; They

encamp all around my tent. "He has removed my brothers far from me, And my acquaintances are completely estranged from me. My relatives have failed, And my close friends have forgotten me. Those who dwell in my house, and my maidservants, Count me as a stranger; I am an alien in their sight. I call my servant, but he gives no answer; I beg him with my mouth. My breath is offensive to my wife, And I am repulsive to the children of my own body. Even young children despise me; I arise, and they speak against me. All my close friends abhor me, And those whom I love have turned against me. My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh, And I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. "Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, For the hand of God has struck me! Why do you persecute me as God does, And are not satisfied with my flesh? "Oh, that my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book! That they were engraved on a rock With an iron pen and lead, forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me! If you should say, 'How shall we persecute him?'— Since the root of the matter is found in me, Be afraid of the sword for yourselves; For wrath brings the punishment of the sword, That you may know there is a judgment."

Daily Deep Dive:

Bildad now takes his second turn in addressing Job.

Here is the UCG reading plan on chapter 18: “Bildad takes offense at what he believes Job has implied about him and the other two counselors: *So you think we're beasts. So you think we're stupid* (compare verse 3). He then lashes out in a rather vicious diatribe. Bildad paints Job as the wicked punished with disease and loss of family—and whose memory and posterity is to be wiped from the earth.

Why was Bildad really here? Was it to comfort Job? Or was it to feel good about himself—to be able to congratulate himself for doing some good deed? If the former, he should have expected a suffering, grief-stricken person to say some highly emotional things. And he should have been ready to roll with the punches, as it were. Yet Job had *offended* him—this noble man who was here to help. How dare someone put him down?

Furthermore, Job's words were probably causing Bildad to question some deeply ingrained beliefs. Indeed, Job was demanding that these beliefs be questioned—and overturned. Bildad was incensed at the audacity. And rather than face the disturbing questions, he did as Eliphaz had done and reacted emotionally—basically more forcefully

trying to ram the same old argument that the wicked receive total retribution in this life down Job's throat. In all likelihood, Bildad still justified his approach with the notion that he was helping Job in leading him to a proper understanding. Previous arguments hadn't worked—so now it was time to put some fear into Job. Of course, this was ridiculous considering how much Job had already lost and the fact that he had no doubt completely mulled all of this over already for the past several months. Moreover, it was cruel and insensitive considering what Job had gone through and was still experiencing. Did Bildad truly think this was going to fix the problem?

For all of us, Job's three friends are a tremendous example of what not to do and how not to react when trying to comfort a suffering, grieving person.” [END]

Chapter 19:

Job now responds to Bildad.

Here again is the UCG reading plan: “The words of Job's friends do not bounce right off him. They wound him deeply—leaving him shattered—on top of what he's already going through. His friends have wronged him with all their accusation and lack of pity and comfort (verses 1–3).

Job's response to their using the disgrace of his disease to plead the case that he is guilty of sin is to say that *God* has wronged him (verses 5–6). Perhaps softening this accusation is the fact that the word translated "wronged" could also be rendered "overthrown," as it is in the earlier King James Version and in Green's Literal Translation. Either way, while it is true that God bears responsibility for what is happening to Job, Job's understanding of what is occurring is gravely mistaken. Furthermore, as has already been stated, people in great suffering often blurt out things they don't fully mean. The great God of perfect compassion understands.

Job goes on to relate more of his unrelenting sufferings—unable to comprehend why God would afflict him with these things. Verse 9 shows him stripped of glory and crown—demonstrating that Job was probably a king (see also Job 29).

In Job 19:20, after Job says, "My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh," we see words that have become an idiom in the English language for a narrow escape: "I have escaped by the skin of my teeth" or, as it is more properly rendered in the earlier King James Version, "with the skin of my teeth." The idea that a narrow escape is meant here is

probably incorrect. In context, perhaps he is simply saying that of all his bones, his teeth alone do not cling to skin—as they have no skin. On the other hand, some see the skin of the teeth as meaning the gums—and that Job is saying that only his gums are unaffected by his illness. *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* offers this intriguing possibility: "Some have thought that Satan, when he smote Job from head to feet with ulcers, spared his mouth, lips, and teeth, the instruments of speech, that he might therewith curse God, which was the thing he aimed at, and proposed to bring him to, by getting a grant from God to afflict him in the manner he did."

Suffering as he does, having described his abandonment by friends and family (verses 13–19) and seemingly by God, he cries out from his isolation to his three visiting friends for pity (verses 21–22).

Then in verses 23–24 Job wishes that his words would be written down, engraved as a permanent record. His thought here was the same as in Job 16:18, where he asked that the earth not cover his blood when he died—that it would remain as a witness. Bildad had warned how death would remove the memory of Job from the earth (Job 18:12). The

amazing fact is that Job's words have remained for all time—preserved through this book of Job we are now reading. Surprisingly, in the midst of his despair, we learn that Job is confident that God will *not* forget him. He looks forward to the far future when his "Redeemer"—the divine Kinsman who would buy him back from suffering and death and ultimately vindicate him—would at last stand on the earth (verse 25).

Job seems immediately to relate this to his own resurrection at that time. The NKJV says: "And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God" (verse 26). The last clause here is disputed. As *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* notes, "The debate centers around whether it is 'in the flesh' or 'apart from the flesh' that Job [will have] this experience. The Hebrew could go either way" (note on verses 25–27). The Holy Scriptures translation by the Jewish Publication Society (JPS), renders it: "Then without my flesh shall I see God." Many insist that the meaning here must be "in my flesh" because Job mentions his eyes then beholding God (verse 27), which is only possible with a body. The truth of the matter, however, is that it is possible to have a body that is not made of flesh. Indeed, 1 Corinthians 15 explains that the

resurrection bodies of the saints will be composed of spirit, as "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (verse 50; compare verses 45, 49).

Yet there is another possible translation of this passage that does allow for "in my flesh"—and fits in context with Job's lamenting. Note it in the new JPS translation: "But I know that my Vindicator lives; in the end He will testify on earth—this, after my skin will have been peeled off. *But I would behold God while still in my flesh*, I myself, not another, would behold Him; would see with my own eyes" (verses 25–27, Tanakh). In other words, this translation sees Job as basically saying, "I know I will see God at the resurrection, but I would really like to face Him right now—to confront Him with my situation."

Job ends in verses 28–29 with a warning to his friends. Rather than be all concerned with trying to establish the fact of his sin, they should be worried about their own wrong in how they are dealing with him. For they are right about one thing—a judgment is coming." [END]