

We come this morning to Bildad's second speech, and I want to consider it a little differently than previous chapters. I want to examine it more topically, around the single theme of "the wicked man." We will see the identity of the wicked man; the description of the wicked man; the application of the wicked man.

But before I do that, I want to briefly say a few words about vv1-4 by way of introduction (most responses begin with stern rebukes): they basically entail three rhetorical questions: (1) V2—"How long till you put an end to words? Gain understanding, and afterward we will speak." He's accusing Job of speaking without understanding; of speaking an endless amount foolish and unwise words. If Job would truly gain wisdom then they would listen.

(2) V3—"Why are we counted as beasts, and regarded as stupid in your sight?" This is what Bildad perceived Job was saying; he viewed them as stupid (foolish and insensitive) beasts.

(3) V4—"You who tear yourself in anger, shall the earth be forsaken for you? Or shall the rock be removed from its place?" That is—"You're causing your own problems and you're tearing yourself to pieces (which wasn't totally untrue). Shall the earth flee before your anger as if you're God?"

- I. The Identity of the Wicked Man
- II. The Description of the Wicked Man
- III. The Application of the Wicked Man

I. The Identity of the Wicked Man

1. There two questions I want to answer this first heading—who does Bildad mean by the wicked man and why does he describe him?
2. (1) Who he meant by "the wicked man"—the Hebrew term rendered "wicked" refers to a moral criminal.
3. Scripture after contrast two types of people—the wicked and righteous—by righteous is meant someone who lives rightly and by the wicked is meant those who live wrongly.
4. Now obviously, this necessitates an objective standard to determine what is right and what is wrong.
5. That objective standard is the law of God (as summarized in the TC); the righteous live in harmony to this law and the wicked don't.
6. (2) Why does he mention the wicked man? Well, I trust the answer is obvious—Bildad was implying Job was wicked.
7. Why else would he spend the bulk of his second speech describing the wicked, if he wasn't implying something?
8. Bildad isn't merely giving a lesson about the wicked—he's suggesting that Job resembles a wicked person.
9. And as we examine Job's response in chapter 19, it's evident that Job was deeply wounded by these words.
10. Joseph Caryl—"His general design and scope is to convince Job that he was a wicked man, because he suffered those things which none but a wicked man (according to his opinion) ever did, or should suffer."

II. The Description of the Wicked Man

1. Here I want to briefly survey vv5-21—simply suggesting four things: his light, steps, terror, and dwelling.

2. (1) His light (vv5-6), vv5-6—"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."
3. The terms "light" "flame" "and "lamp" all refers to the same thing "life" and by "going out" is meant "death."
4. Tus, the question becomes—why does Bildad describe the death of the wicked as their light going out.
5. Well, to answer that question, we have to ask another one—what specifically is meant by "light" or "lamp."
6. Scripture often uses the imagery of light and lamp to describe joy, thus by light is meant joy or happiness.
7. The joy of the wicked will be put out when he dies—all that he found joy and delight in will be gone.
8. Prov.24:19-20—"Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the wicked; for there will be no prospect for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will be put out."
9. We are to envy the wicked, for there will be prospect or future for him—what he now boasts in will be taken—his lamp will be put out.
10. (2) His steps (vv7-10), v7—"The steps of his strength are shortened, and his own counsel casts him down."
11. This means, his strength and purposes will fail—his own plans or purposes will be the cause of his fall.
12. Within vv8-10, Bildad uses several related imageries to underscore the sudden and certain nature of death.
13. V8—"he is cast into a net...he walks into a snare" v9—"the net takes him by the heel, and a snare lays hold of him" v10—"A noose is hidden for him on the ground, and a trap for him in the road."
14. The point is simple—just as an animal is caught unaware by a trap, so the wicked will die unexpectedly.
15. Now, this does not mean, that every wicked person who die in an accident that comes upon them suddenly.
16. It's very possible that a wicked person dies from some disease, over many months or even many years.
17. But because a wicked person is in spiritual darkness, they don't look for death or anticipate it, but it comes upon them (they deceive themselves in thinking they will live long and prosperous lives).
18. (3) His terror (vv11-14), vv11-12—"Terrors frighten him on every side, and drive him to his feet His strength is starved and destruction is ready at his side."
19. It's as if terror surrounds him—it boxes him in—it drives him to his feet (or else, hounds his feet, ESV).
20. His strength is depleted and destruction is ready to overtake him, v13—"It (destruction) devours patches of his skin; the firstborn of death devours his limbs."
21. It's uncertain what Bildad meant by "the firstborn of the dead"—it likely describes death as the firstborn.
22. Scripture oftentimes associates strength with the firstborn, and so, here it may refer to the strength of death.
23. V13—"It (destruction) devours patches of his skin; the firstborn of death devours his limbs"—some have applied to this to some disease (like leprosy).
24. But I think it's best to apply to the decaying process—the passage is describing what happens after death.
25. His skin and then limbs are devoured—regardless of his strength above ground—he is devoured beneath it.

26. V14—"He is uprooted from the shelter of his tent, and they parade him before the king of terrors"—
"He is torn from the tent in which he trusted and is brought to the king of terrors (ESV)."
27. Her is taken from this world, and all that he trusted in, and brought or escorted to "the king of terrors."
28. Who is this "king of terrors"? It likely refers to death as a terrifying and fearful enemy—the ruler of terror.
29. Albert Barnes—"The wicked man would be conducted, not merely to death, but to that kind of death where a fearful king would preside - a monarch infusing terrors into his soul."
30. (4) His dwellings (vv15-21), v15 returns above ground and to his tent—"They dwell in his tent who are none of his."
31. That is, all of his possessions are owned by others—people who doesn't know—that are "none of his."
32. Deut.28:30—"you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes."
33. This was a part of curses God threatened upon Israel, if they entered the land and then began to forget Him.
34. V15b—"Brimstone is scattered on his dwelling"—that is, it was desolate, deserted, abandoned, and forsaken.
35. Albert Barnes—"Brimstone has been always the image of desolation. Nothing will grow on a field that is covered with sulphur; and the meaning here is, that his house would be utterly desolate and forsaken."
36. V16—"His roots are dried out below, and his branch withers above"—this likely refers to him and his children.
37. "His roots are dried out below (that's himself), and his branch withers above (that refers to his children - v19).
38. V17—"The memory of him perishes from the earth, and he has no name among the renowned"—people forget about him.
39. Regardless how famous he was when alive, the memory of him fades away along with his honor, after he dies.
40. Ps.49:11-12—"Their inner thought is that their houses will last forever, their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man, though in honor (on earth), does not remain; he is like the beasts that perish."
41. V18—"He is driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world"—that is, into the darkness of death.
42. V19—"He has neither son nor posterity among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings"—he would be cut off from having any heirs among his children.
43. This was a sign of God's curse upon him—he would have no one to continue his name upon the earth.
44. V20 refers to how other wicked men respond to his death—"those in the west are astonished at his day, as those in the east are frightened."
45. V21 describes the reason for it all—why does he live and die as a wicked man but because he failed to know God.
46. V21—"Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him who does not know God."
47. Scripture often ties together open wickedness and the absence of any true, heartfelt knowledge of God.
48. Ex.5:2—"And Pharaoh said, 'Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.'"

49. Hos.4:1—"There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint with bloodshed upon bloodshed."
50. 1Thess.4:3-5—"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God."

III. The Application of the Wicked Man

1. I want to suggest two applications in the form of observations, from Bildad's description of the wicked man and his death.
2. Remember, regardless of Bildad's motivation, what he says about the wicked man is true (though wrongly applied to Job).
3. (1) People live wickedly because they don't know God—the wicked lives for himself because he has no higher purpose.
4. A person will always live for whatever they esteem highest—they live for the one they love the most.
5. The reason a wicked man refuses to live for God is because he doesn't know God; he is ignorant of Him.
6. Now before I go any further, under this first observation, let me briefly suggest three things about this ignorance.
7. First, it's partial—that is, all men have a qualified knowledge of God through creation and conscience.
8. Rom.1:19—"because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them (through creation)" v21—"although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful."
9. They know God partially but refuse to glory and serve Him. Why? Because they find nothing lovely in Him.
10. The knowledge man has of God through revelation is only as Creator and Judge, not Savior or Father.
11. Furthermore, the knowledge man has of God through general revelation is always distorted and perverted.
12. Second, it's universal—that is, this ignorance of God is native to man; it's true of all men without exception.
13. Rom.3:11—"There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God"—this is a human disease.
14. Third, it's willful—that is, man fails to know God beyond creation, because he refuses to know God.
15. Job 21:14—"The wicked say to God, 'Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways.'"
16. Prov.1:28-29—"Then they will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently, but they will not find Me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD."
17. Thus, man refuses to live for God because he doesn't know God, and what he knows he terribly distorts.
18. For example, think of a poor servant who lives in a kingdom ruled by a distant king—because of the distance, few if any of the citizens have ever or met the king.
19. All they know about him is what they've heard; the rumor is he's a tyrant who abuses and misuses his subjects.

20. Simply put, this servant doesn't know the king—he knows about the king, but even this is all hearsay.
21. But what if this servant assumes a position within the palace, and becomes a servant to the king Himself.
22. Now he is able to personally know the king—he sees how wisely and graciously he rules his kingdom.
23. He now has what is called an "experiential" knowledge of the king; he has firsthand experience of the king.
24. (a) How can sinners savingly know God? The only way a sinner can truly know God is through Christ.
25. This doesn't deny you can know something about God apart from Christ; you can know Him as the powerful and just Creator.
26. But you can only truly and savingly know God in Christ; only then can we know His grace and mercy.
27. Jn.17:3—"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."
28. The only way to know God, the only true God, is to know Christ, and you must know Christ as Savior.
29. Our Savior says this is what eternal life consists of—it consists of knowing God—this is true and eternal life.
30. True life begins with knowing God, and eternal life consists of knowing God without fault for all eternity.
31. (b) Why should saints increasingly know God? This question obviously presupposes saints know God.
32. 1Chron.28:9—"As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind (that is, know him more intimately and serve him more diligently)."
33. Phil.3:10—"that I may know Him"—this is what Paul desired—he desired to increasingly know Christ.
34. Thus, think of it like this—wicked people live the way they do because they do not savingly know God.
35. If the wicked act the way they do because they don't know God, then the righteous act the way they do because they know God.
36. First, strength, Dan.11:32—"the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits."
37. Second, adoration—knowledge of God leads to proper thoughts of God which leads to adoration of God.
38. I have become increasingly concerned, that precious few professing Christians have a right view of God.
39. Your love and worship of God will rise no higher than your knowledge of God; the one fuels the other.
40. Third, contentment—who cares what else we don't have when we know God; what's more important.
41. Phil.3:8—"I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord"—nothing compares with knowing God in Christ.
42. J.I. Packer—"When a man knows God, losses and crosses cease to matter to him; what he has gained simply banishes these things from his mind."
43. (2) People die differently providing they know God—while all people die, not all people die the same.

44. Num.23:10 (Balaam)—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his!"—there's the death of the righteous and the death of the wicked.
45. Here we have a description of the death of the wicked, and by inference we can describe the death of the righteous (it's simply the very opposite).
46. (a) Their terror is quenched, Heb.2:15 describes all men by nature as "held in slavery to the fear of death."
47. This doesn't deny Christians at times can become fearful at the thought of death, but it means, they shouldn't become fearful at the thought of death.
48. First, fill you heart with the love of God—that is, the sense and knowledge of God's love for you in Christ (1Jn.4:18 – 'perfect love casts out fear'); second, stand often before the empty tomb (1Cor.15:54 – "death is swallowed up in victory").
49. (b) Their joy only begins—though the light of the wicked goes out, the light of the righteous burns brightly.
50. If you remember, by light, flame, and lamp is meant joy and pleasure—the flame of his fire does not shine.
51. At times, you might here people describe hell as a place where the sinner continues in his favorite sin.
52. There are those who think of hell as an eternal drunken party; a place where the greedy man counts his money.
53. Oh no my friend, this is far from the truth—hell is the place where the lamp of the wicked is put out.
54. Any spark of joy or happiness he's known in this life will end—every ray of light will give way to darkness.
55. And what does darkness signify but sadness and sorrow—any spark of joy gives way to eternal darkness.
56. But if the light of the wicked goes out in death, by inference we learn, the light of the righteous only begins.
57. Prov.13:9—"The light of the righteous rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked will be put out" (Job 21:17).
58. "The light of the righteous rejoices" or it keeps shining—that which he rejoiced in continues after death.
59. Oh my dear friends, there's a sense in which the righteous man rejoices and finds joy only after death.
60. Yes, Christians have joy in this world (and they should have more); but they are also full of sorrow (for our sin and the sin of others).
61. But all of this changes when we die—for although the lamp of the wicked goes out, the lamp of the righteous rejoices.
62. Lk.6:21, 25—"Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall weep."
63. Just as the wicked paraded before the king of terrors, the righteous shall stand before the King of kings.
64. Ps.16:11—"You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."
65. (c) Their honor continues, Prov.10:7—"The memory of the righteous is blessed, but the name of the wicked will rot."
66. In the first place, the memory and name of the righteous will remain on this earth in the hearts of the saints.
67. But secondly, the memory and name of the righteous will remain for all eternity in the new heavens and earth.