

In our last podcast, Job explained that life is nothing but a temporary struggle for there is nothing permanent in this life, nothing of enduring value, and the destiny of one is the destiny of us all. We may have moments of wonder and joy in this life, but it seems everyone is assigned their months, if not years, of futility—long and weary nights of misery. No one escapes this dreadful plight of humanity. And in the midst of intense suffering, it is normal to find yourself on the floor, helpless, desperate, overwhelmed, paralyzed, drowning in wave-after-wave that washes over you, stumbling around like a drunken man, venting with useless words, wondering what is the use of it all and how can you be of any use to God in this life when you are just wasting away on the verge of utter collapse and defeat. However, giving voice to the experience is the often only real release one can find. And that is what Job defends, his right to give voice to his feelings, to his journey.

Let's pick back up in **EP28 Yahweh According to Job, Job 8:1-22** where we finally hear from Job's friend Bildad.

Job 8

Bildad Speaks

The Slap in the Face

Job 8:1-4

Then Bildad the Shuhite replied to Job:

How long will you go on like this? You sound like a blustering wind. Does God twist justice? Does the Almighty twist what is right? Your children must have sinned against him, so their punishment was well deserved.

Just to frame the dialogue, the Spirit makes sure that we know that Bildad is a Shuhite, which comes from the word Shua, which means "wealth." To some this is a clue that Job may have been living during the time of Abraham. For after Sarah died, Abraham married Keturah, and had six more children, and one of their sons was named Shua.¹ Is this a connection? We have no idea, Shua could have been a common name, but it is interesting to ponder.

"How long will you go on like this? You sound like a blustering wind. Does God twist justice? Does the Almighty twist what is right? Your children must have sinned against him, so their punishment was well deserved."

For real? Bildad does not just nudge his way into the conversation, he kicks down the door. Except for one, all the key verbs in these lines are in the Hebrew *Piel*, which carries with it not just a sense of causation but intensification. In effect, when Bildad jumps into the story, he is yelling at Job.

"How long will you go on like this? You sound like a blustering wind. Does God twist justice? Does the Almighty twist what is right? Your children must have sinned against him, so their punishment was well

¹ **Genesis 25:1; 1 Chronicles 1:32**

deserved” {or literally, He caused them to be delivered into the hand of their transgression}.

Just like Eliphaz, Bildad shows no courtesy, no respect, no deference, and no honor; he was not even polite. He shows no consideration for Job’s physical, much less his emotional maladies. And he acts as if he is exhausted at having to listen to Job whine.

It is mind-blowing the level of hostility and downright cruelty, emotional abuse even, that these “boys” exhibit toward their “friend.”

Can you believe the gall to throw Job’s dead kids in front of his face with the tired, you reap-what-you-sow theology? You just don’t do that sort of thing to a friend who is hurting; it is not even human. But Bildad does not even show a modicum of decency; it is simply unfathomable.

The If/Then Ideology

Job 8:5-7

But if you pray to God and seek the mercy of **Shaday** (Almighty,) and if you are pure and upright, he will surely rise up {or “wake up”} and for your abode, to make peace and righteousness. And though your beginning be little, you will end with great increase.

Here is the big “**but**” of the if/then ideology. But if you do it right, then you won’t end up like your dead children. You had better get your act together before it is too late. Bildad tells Job that he needs to pray and seek the mercy of God, or literally to seek for God to bend down or stoop in kindness to him; and **if** (there it is, the conditional if/then ideology) – if he is pure and lives right, if he lives with integrity, then God will literally be caused to stir and, in effect, “restore his happy home.”

Bildad is saying that the buck stops right at Job’s door. It is now up to Job to get his act together and then God will wake up and pay attention to Job. That is quite a big burden he just laid at Job’s doorstep.

Though Bildad and the others have no intention of giving up anything they possess to help Job get back on his feet, Bildad assures Job, with the kind of compassion that only a total jerk can give, that though his beginning will be little (because God has taken everything away from him), in the end he will get great increase, if he (Job) stops all this non-sense, stops all this billowing like a blustering wind, and is careful to live pure and upright, with integrity. But it all must start with an admission of guilt.

Ironically, at the end of the story, God does bless Job in amazing ways, but it was His plan all along (**Plan-A**), and not a reaction to Job “doing it right” for God and for others.

The Authority of Yesterday

Job 8:8-10

Just ask the previous generation. You are commanded to set up (or deeply consider) the things searched out by their fathers.

For we of yesterday and know nothing because our days on earth a shadow. Will they not be caused

to teach you, tell you and be caused to bring forth words from their heart.

If Eliphaz derived his truth from prophetic revelations (both from God and from demons), Bildad relies only on the religion of his forefathers as his absolute authority. The so-called “wisdom of old” – “*the things searched out by their fathers.*” “*Will they not be caused to teach you.*”

Do you pick up on the fruit produced by Bildad’s theology? It is cold and cruel. What a person believes really does matter, not just in terms of right standing with God, but also in terms of the practical way they live and deal with others.

The if/then theology reeks of selfishness. It does not demand that you care for anyone, for it is up to the other person to do it right, and then perhaps God will rise-up and care for them. But God forbid that Bildad take any personal responsibility to help or to legitimately comfort his friend.

Once again, this theology implies that if a person is **not** now being “blessed” by God, it must be because they did something “bad,” and they deserve to be hung out to dry until they repent. In fact, it is the responsibility of great men like Bildad and Eliphaz to not interfere with God and what He is doing with a sinner like Job; so, they are free to stand back and throw stones (apparently it is all intended to help Job get in touch with the real issue of his sin). If you think about it, they are just doing Job a service. Oh, gee maybe they are good friends (yes, that was laden with sarcasm).

The if/then theology is our own Christian form of living our karma.

What about love? What about compassion? What about mercy? What about tenderness? What about selflessness? What about helping those in need? What about considering others more important than yourself or loving your neighbor as yourself?

God’s expressions of His love, in-and-through our lives, is never to be dependent upon another person doing it right; rather, it is a choice we make in Him to give of ourselves regardless of the other person’s choices or behavior. This is the type of giving that has been modeled for us by **Yahweh Yasha (Yahweh who Saves)** and is the type of selfless giving we are to emulate. It is how we lay down our lives for a friend, of which there is no greater love.²

If truth be told, there is nothing we deserve. It does not matter how good we think we have been. We have earned only judgment. **Romans 3:10-12** is clear, “*There **now** is none righteous, not even one; there **now** is none who is **now** understanding, there **now** is none who is **now** seeking for God; all have turned aside, together they have been caused to become useless; there **now** is none who is **now** doing good, there **now** is not even one.*” “*All have sinned and are **now** caused to fall short of the glory of God.*”³ This is why we are told that **Only God is Good!**⁴ Any love we have for God and others is not because we are so amazing, but because He loved us first.⁵

In fact, all we have accomplished really comes from Him and not from within ourselves at all; He even gives us the desire and power to do what pleases Him.⁶ And if it all comes from God, who are we to boast

² **John 15:13**

³ **Romans 3:23**

⁴ **Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19**

⁵ **1 John 4:19**

⁶ **Isaiah 26:12; Hosea 14:8; Philippians 2:13**

or to elevate ourselves over anyone else as if we have not received it, especially over someone oozing pus from open sores, whose closest companion is the maggot.⁷

The guys have a lot of nerve; but that is the nature of the if/then religion. Everyone is left to swim or drown on their own, while everyone else watches and shouts out commands from the shore. But true godliness is first, and foremost, others centered. And if God loved us, we ought to love one another.⁸

Isaiah 35:3 says, "Encourage the exhausted (the slack hands) and strengthen the feeble (tottering knees).⁹ It does not say to kick a man when he is down and lay on him a heavy burden to do it right, or else! And **1 Corinthians 12:25-26** talks about our need to care for even the weakest amongst us, for if one suffers all suffer. For men who boast so much in their knowledge of God, the "Boy's proof themselves to be not much more than religious buffoons.

"For we of yesterday and know nothing because our days on earth a shadow. Will they not be caused to teach you, tell you and be caused to bring forth words from their heart."

Then Bildad grabs for tradition to buttress his argument. This is the infamous argument of religion. It is how it was done before, so it is how it needs to be done today. It is what was understood before, so it is to be what we now understand as our truth, for all we have access to is yesterday, we do not know anything else but yesterday. Our days are a shadow, meaning the future is so uncertain, that all we can rely on is the so-called truth of yesterday. The light shines on yesterday, but the future not so much.

It is so strange that those who are consumed by yesterday, with the traditions of the forefathers, rarely seem to stop and ask if what was believed in and therefore done in the past was wrong. What if their so-called truths were given to the fathers through, God forbid, demonic revelation? What if, as Jesus told the pharisees, their father, the one whom they rely on for truth, is not the heavenly father, but the devil?

John 8:41-47

"You are **now** doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not caused to be born of fornication; we have one Father: God."

Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have **now** come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

Why do you not **now** understand what I am saying? Because you **now** cannot choose to hear My word. You are **now** of [your] father the devil, and you **now** want to **now** do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there **now** is no truth in him. Whenever he may **now** speak a lie, he **now** speaks from his own for he **now** is a liar and the father of lies.

But because I **now** speak the truth, you do not **now** believe Me. Which one of you **now** convicts Me of sin? If I **now** speak truth, why do you not **now** believe Me? He who is **now** being of God **now** hears the

⁷ **1 Corinthians 4:7**

⁸ **1 John 4:10-11, 19**

⁹ See also **Hebrews 12:12-13**

words of God; for this reason you do not **now** hear because you are not **now** of God."

Traditionalists assume that the truths they derive from yesterday, the truths lived out by their fathers, had to have been right. *"For we of yesterday and know nothing"* but, by inference, that which came from yesterday.

Ironically, the previous generation stood in the exact same spot that we stand. They too looked back assuming those before them must have held truth in their hands and so they built on their yesterday. What we have inherited is a snowball of assumption that keeps rolling and getting bigger with each generation.

And just in case you love the past, and tradition and religion are your best friends, remember that Jesus came and stood in the face of tradition and against the way things were done. When Jesus tore down the marketplace in the temple, He demonstrated they were dead wrong and that their ways of old, their yesterday, needed to be overturned and undone.¹⁰

And even if they had received "truth," the one sad but terribly consistent reliable behavior of mankind is to pervert or twist truth to favor those who seek to rule over others or to be regarded by others as the learned sages, the experts.

There is one other thing we should never forget, it was the religious people that persecuted Jesus, and it will be the religious people who, in the latter days, persecute those who live by faith, all the while thinking they are doing some great service for God. And they do this, as Jesus said, *"... because they have never known the Father or me."*¹¹ So don't be too infatuated with religion and how things have always been done. Tradition in-and-of-itself validates nothing.

We must seek to know the truth as it has been revealed across all 66 books of the Bible. And always understand first and foremost the relational context of everything that God says—the "who, what, where, when, and why" of it all. This will help us from falling prey to the twisted traditions and so-called wisdom of yesterday.

Next Bildad shares with us his wisdom from the mighty sages of the past.

Job 8:11-19

Can papyrus reeds grow tall without a marsh? Can marsh grass flourish without water? While they are still flowering, not ready to be cut, they begin to wither more quickly than grass. The same happens to all who forget God.

The hopes of the godless perish. Their confidence hangs by a thread. They are leaning on a spider's web. They cling to their home for security, but it won't last. They try to hold it tight, but it will not endure.

He thrives before the sun, its branches spreading across the garden. His roots wrap around a heap, he grasps a house of stones. If he is caused to being removed from his place {literally, "swallowed up"}, it

¹⁰ ***John 2:13-22***

¹¹ ***John 16:1-4; Matthew 10:16-22***

will lie to him. I never saw you. This is the joy of his way. From dust, others will be springing up.

This passage is one of those truths that is wrapped in subtle deception. At a first glance, it seems to make sense, and it comports with our sense of justice. And here is the real twist, this statement contains some truth, truth from the standpoint of eternity.¹² Yet, it does not bear true from the standpoint of life on this earth and how God deals with humanity. Therefore, it cannot be applied to a brother who is suffering as proof that they have erred and just need to turn to God, pray, and live pure with integrity. The sages of “*yesterday*” borrow aspects of the truth and then wrap it in the theology of man.

This warped theology defames the amazing grace and mercy of God as well as the sovereignty of God and His intentionality with those of which He is obsessed. In addition, this warped theology from “*yesterday*” is shattered by the scriptures which paint a different picture regarding how God deals with mankind.

Matthew 5:45

... for He **now** causes His sun to **now** rise on evil and good, and **now** sends rain on righteous and unrighteous.

Psalms 145:9

Yahweh is good to all and His mercies are over all His works.

Psalms 36:7

How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

Jonah 4:11

Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"

Acts 17:25

... nor is He **now** caused to be served by human hands, as though He chooses to **now** be needing anything, since He Himself is **now** giving to all life and breath and all things.

God provides to all, and He sustains all by His mercy. What Bildad said disparages those who are suffering, even though that is what God, in His mercy, love, and wisdom, has appointed for their lives.

¹² ***Psalms 73:16-20***

This wisdom of “yesterday” is oblivious to the fact that from the perspective of the heavenly realms, it is a privilege to suffer for Him and with Him, for it is the pathway by which we enter the Kingdom of God. Through our suffering, God gives us the opportunity to clear out from our lives that which is dead and dying, the errors and wrapped teaching of “yesterday,” that we might live in Him. Indeed, suffering and persecution is the destiny for all who desire to live godly lives.¹³

Besides, this wrapped theology of “yesterday” fundamentally ignores the fact that everyone is guilty, no one is deserving of “blessing.” All blessing comes as an extension of His mercy and grace.

God’s mercy is so big it even baffled some of our “forefathers” of faith. Jeremiah, Malachi, and Asaph were all thrown off when they saw how God had mercy on the godless.¹⁴ For example, Jeremiah said:

Jeremiah 12:1-2

Righteous are You, O **Yahweh**, that I would plead my case with You; indeed, I would discuss matters of justice with You: why has the way of the wicked prospered? Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease? You have planted them, they have also taken root; they grow, they have even produced fruit. You are near to their lips but far from their mind.

So much for the wisdom of “yesterday.” *“For **Yahweh** is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works.... The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.”*¹⁵

It is not just the righteous who are blessed and cared for by God, but all living things. After all, God declares in no uncertain terms, *“I will in the future have mercy on whom I may **now** have mercy, and I will in the future have compassion on whom I may **now** have compassion. So, then it does not depend on the man who is **now** exercising his will or the man who is **now** running, but on God who is **now** having mercy.”*¹⁶

We must set aside any notion that we are ever more deserving of mercy than the next guy. After all, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.¹⁷ He did not first require us to do it right and get our act together, favoring the more accomplished among us; rather, He chose to show us habitual sinners His phenomenal mercy. Truth be told, we were enemies of God when He chose us, we were never His friend. We were godless and beyond having forgotten Him, we had no desire for Him whatsoever.

Ephesians 2:1-10

And you **now** being dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is **now** working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly were caused to live in the lusts of our

¹³ **Philippians 1:29; Acts 14:22. See also, Mark 10:30; John 15:18-20, 16:33; 1 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 2:21; Revelation 1:9**

¹⁴ **Jeremiah 12:1-2; Malachi 3:15; Psalm 73:1-20**

¹⁵ **Psalm 145:9, 15-16**

¹⁶ **Romans 9:15-16**

¹⁷ **Romans 5:8**

flesh, **now** indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and by choice were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

But God, **now** being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even as we are **now** dying in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you **now** have been caused to being saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that **now** choose to be coming, He might choose to show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have **now** been caused to being saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, the gift of God; not from works, so that no one may choose to boast.

We were dead in our trespasses and sins, we were children of wrath beholden to the devil, but God showed mercy to us. It was His grace, it was His gift, it was His love that drew us to Him, and it had nothing to do with ourselves and our effort. We must never forget that no flesh will boast in His presence.¹⁸

Those of us who have ever thought we deserved anything because we were pure, upright, and filled with integrity, or at least more so than the next guy, have succumbed to a religious delusion based on the wisdom of “*yesterday*,” a lie that is rooted in the demonic if/then theology wrapped around the deep dark insidious lie of personal “goodness.” But it is a fallacy, such an idealization does not even exist.

Everything we receive, whether good or bad, is according to God’s mercy and His grace, even His judgment that results in times of great suffering. “*For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.*”¹⁹ Yes, all things! Nothing is excepted from this radical truth, a truth which few have the stomach to accept.

Job 8:20-22

But look, God will not reject integrity, nor will he be caused to support the evil doers. He will again be filling your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy. Those who hate you will be clothing themselves with shame, and the tent of the evil will be nothing.

Bildad is stuck in the wisdom of “*yesterday*,” and so he does not see clearly, he does not see the “reason,” and he bases his exhortation on their being a “cause.” The implication of his instruction is that if Job once again becomes a man of integrity, then all his dreams will come true, “*He [Yahweh] will again be filling your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy.*”

Ironically, at the end of this story, God does just that and blesses Job even greater than before. But Bildad never imagined that in relying on the wisdom of “*yesterday*,” he inverted truth and that he and Eliphaz and Zophar were the evil doers who would be clothed in shame. But that too is the outcome of this story. This is a huge warning for us.

¹⁸ **Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16**

¹⁹ **Romans 11:36**

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When we rely on the wisdom of “yesterday,” when we rely on our religious traditions to judge others, we risk inverting the truth, and in our judgment of others we might find that we are the ones who occupy the tent of the evil.

The Blessing of God

At the end of this story, Job is blessed even greater than before and his household is once again filled with children and prosperity. Job’s mouth was indeed filled with laughter and his lips with shouts of joy. But can we rely on this tale from “yesterday” to conclude that if we too suffer greatly and share this deep fellowship with God, like Job, we will come out the other end of our travails in this world blessed beyond our imagination where our mouth is filled with laughter and our lips with shouts of joy. Is that the message of “yesterday” we are to take from this narrative and serve it up on a platter for those who are suffering in judgment? Is this the hope that we are to give others? Let’s consider the letter Jesus wrote to the church in Smyrna.

Revelation 2:8-11

And to the angel of the church in Smyrna you are commanded to write:

The first and the last, who was by choice dead, and lives, **now** says this: “I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you **now** are rich), and the blasphemy by those who are **now** saying they are Jews and **now** are not, but a synagogue of Satan.

You are commanded to not **now** choose to fear what you are **now** about to suffer. Behold, the devil is **now** about to **now** cast some of you into prison, so that you may be caused to be tested, and you will in the future have tribulation for ten days.

You are commanded to choose to **now** be faithful until death, and I will in the future give you the crown of life. He who is **now** having an ear, is commanded to hear what the Spirit **now** says to the churches. He who is **now** overcoming may not be caused to be hurt by the second death.”

Jesus did not promise this church any relief from their tribulation and poverty, nor did He say He would protect them from the great affliction which the devil was about to cast upon them. Yet, Smyrna is one of only two out of seven churches for which God had no correction or admonishment.

Can you imagine? They were doing it right, so to speak because they were depending upon **Yahweh** for all things, all the time. God has no chastisement or correction for this church body. But that did not change God’s plans. He only told them to be faithful until death, for they would receive their rich reward, not in this life, but in the life to come. Our reward is always found in Him.

The point is that not every tale of great suffering will end in all our dreams coming true. We must remember that we do not belong to this world, we are aliens and strangers here.²⁰ We belong to another

²⁰ **1 Peter 2:11; Hebrews 11:13-16; Psalm 39:12; John 17:13-17**

Kingdom entirely. Some who share in the sufferings of Christ may come out the other end of their travails in this world blessed beyond their imagination where their mouth is filled with laughter and their lips with shouts of joy. But there will be many who will be told to simply endure and be faithful until death.

As much as we want to rely on the wisdom of “yesterday,” this system of belief does not account for the reality that God is no formulaic. And we love formulaic approaches to life; it helps us feel more in control. But that is not our God, and that is why religious systems always fail us. **Yahweh** desires us to desire Him regardless of the path He has established for us to walk in this world, whether that path is one of suffering or blessing.

Let’s stop here and we will pick up in **Job 9** where Job addresses Bildad’s comments.

I am glad you tuned in and have been ready to listen