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## Job 18

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Job 18.

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### Topics.

- Why are we counted as cattle? Shall the earth be forsaken for you?
- Light of the wicked is put out, and flame of his fire does not shine.
- The character and plight of the wicked and those who deny God.
- They of the West are appalled, and horror seizes them of the East.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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**INTRODUCTION:** the book of Job is considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece it is an honest discussion of why God allows good people to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, reveals God's sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's four friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone. In the depths of agony, he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion against the truth that He alone is wise (Job chpts. 38-41). Yet he vindicated Job's trust in him (chpt. 42), proving that genuine faith cannot be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 2000 and 500 B.C.

**HELPFUL FACTS:** before reading Job, it is helpful to understand when Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu are speaking they are not speaking, "thus sayeth the LORD", they are simply giving their opinions on how they personally perceive things to be. Amongst their conversations there is truth and wisdom, but it must be kept in mind not everything they are saying is true or even wise, in fact God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and tells them they have spoken foolishness, but Job has spoken what is right (Job 42:7-9). The book of Job is not about doctrinal truth, but human suffering and the questions regarding God that arise during a person's calamity and pain.

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### BILDAD SPEAKS

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#### JOB 18:1-4

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#### Why Are We Counted as Cattle? Shall the Earth Be Forsaken for You.

- **Job 18:1-4:** Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: <sup>2</sup>"How long will you (Job) hunt for words? Consider, and then we will speak. <sup>3</sup>Why are we counted as cattle (beasts in the KJV)? Why are we stupid in your sight (reputed vile in your sight in KJV)? <sup>4</sup>You who tear yourself in your anger, shall the earth be forsaken for you, or the rock be removed out of its place?

In this chapter Bildad uses nothing but rebuke and declares Job's ruin. The "we" in these verses applies to Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar. It is fascinating how Bildad pictures Job as a wild hunter, but hunter who is not hunting for wild animals, but for words to support his case. Bildad tells Job rather than being like a hunter seeking to destroy its prey he should pause for a moment and consider what Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar have been saying.

Why are we counted as beasts, carries the following ideas:

- Why are we treated as worthless, ignorant, contemptible and stupid men, not fit to be conversed with.
- Why are we treated as if we had no sense, and were unworthy of sound argument?
- Why are we treated as being destitute of wisdom and understanding?

Perhaps the fact Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar were counted as beasts is a reference to the following verse, "Ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you" (Job 12:7) with the idea that Job was sending them to the beasts, to get knowledge and instruction; and the idea that he considered them as being on the same level intellectually as the beasts of the field and by doing so made them inferior to him. But the general idea is that Job had not treated their views with the attention which Bildad believed they deserved, but had regarded them as unworthy of notice. Bildad's statement, "why are we counted as beasts" (v3) no-doubt stems from the following words of Job:

- As for you, you whitewash with lies; worthless physicians are you all. (Job 13:4).
- I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all. (Job 16:2).

Bildad's words, "He tears himself in his anger," (v4) most likely stem from the following words of Job, "God has torn me in His wrath and hated me; He has gnashed His teeth at me; my adversary sharpens His eyes against me. (Job 16:9). Bildad is saying, it is neither God nor others that tears him apart, but himself. He pictures Job as a madman, who brought to ruin his own comfort, and health, and happiness by giving vent to his passion, to his anger and jealousy which kills the fool and slays the simple. (Job 5:2). It is not a declaration about Job, but an address directed at him carrying the idea that he was suffering a sudden emotional outburst of rage and acted like a madman and as such is his own tormentor.

**Shall the earth be forsaken for you:** (v4) carries the following idea, are you of so much interests to others and so important that the earth and all God's laws, truth, wisdom, justice and His government on the earth should be made to yield and give way to you rather than that you should be punished?"

**Shall the rock be removed out of his place:** (v4) meaning do you think that the course of the earth will be altered on your account, do you suppose in your presumption, pride, and arrogance that God will change the order of nature and the principles of His laws so that they bend on your account and that He should deal with you differently to how he deals with all mankind in punishing wicked men and rewarding good men?

**NOTE:** Job did not think this way or consider himself to be someone so special, unique and import before God that He should be treated any differently to anyone else. These were not the principles and feelings of Job. Bildad was doing Job a great injustice by his assumptions of Job's character and motives.

**The character of the prideful:** though Bildad's assumptions concerning Job were certainly not true of Job, they are a good description of the feelings of many who are full of pride and so arrogant they suppose that God's creation should be made to bend to their plans and purposes, and that God's justice and principles should give way to their corruptions rather than that they should be dealt with as common sinners. Such prideful, arrogant and self-righteous people expect to be treated as a special person and with special favour deserving of salvation they are too proud to think they would be saved and treated as common people are but, should have the eternal laws of God made to bend for them such is the pride of their heart.

## **Light of the Wicked is Put Out, and Flame of His Fire does Not Shine.**

- **Job 18:5-6:** "Indeed, the light of the wicked is put out, and the flame of his fire (the spark of his fire in KJV) does not shine. <sup>6</sup>The light is dark in his tent (tabernacle in KJV), and his lamp (candle in KJV) above him is put out.

The word "indeed" references us back to Eliphaz speech to (Job 15:20-30) in which he said the wicked:

- Wither in pain and all their years are laid up for the ruthlessness. (v20).
- Will prosper, but the destroyer will bring it to ruin. (v21).
- Do not consider that their life could be taken at any moment. (v22).
- Know that a day of darkness and ruin is ready at hand. (v23).
- Will suffer distress and anguish and not prevail. (v24).
- Run stubbornly against God and defy the Almighty. (v25).
- Will not endure nor will their riches wealth and possessions spread over the earth. (v29).
- Do not depart from deception and wrong-doing. (v30).

The word light comes from the Hebrew word (*'owr*) and literally means illumination and brightness (in every sense, including lightning and the light of day). Figuratively it carries the idea of glory, happiness, and zest for life.

**The light of the wicked shall be put out:** (v5) light here is an emblem of prosperity, riches, glory happiness joy. Bildad is saying, the excitement and happiness of the wicked will be taken and the vitality and brightness of their spirit will be put out and all their goals, dreams and plans will all come to nothing.

**The flame of his fire (spark in KJV) does not shine:** (v5) a spark of a fire is very bright, but only for a brief moment likewise though the light of the wicked may shine brightly it will be soon be extinguished.

**The light shall be dark in his tent (tabernacle in KJV):** (v6) the tabernacle can refer to the home or their spiritual condition and carry the following two ideas:

1. Instead of former splendour and glory of the wicked and their family shining brightly it will fall into contempt and misery and their dwelling will be full of troubles.
2. The glory the wicked have amongst God's people will come to shame and ruin, because their hidden and secret hypocrisy and wickedness will be found out.

**His candle shall be put out with him:** (v6) carries the idea that the joy and all that the wicked planned and hoped for and their life will be snuffed out and taken to the darkness of the grave never to see light again

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## **JOB 18:7-19**

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### **The Character and Plight of the Wicked and those who Deny God.**

- **Job 18:7-19:** His (the unrighteous and those who know not God) (v21) strong steps are shortened, and his own schemes (counsel in KJV) throw him down. <sup>8</sup>For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walks on its mesh. <sup>9</sup>A trap seizes him by the heel; a snare lays hold of him. <sup>10</sup>A rope is hidden for him in the ground, a trap for him in the path. <sup>11</sup>Terrors

frighten him on every side, and chase him at his heels. <sup>12</sup>His strength is famished, and calamity is ready for his stumbling. <sup>13</sup>It consumes the parts of his skin; the firstborn of death consumes his limbs. <sup>14</sup>He is torn from the tent in which he trusted and is brought to the king of terrors. <sup>15</sup>In his tent dwells that which is none of his; sulfur is scattered over his habitation. <sup>16</sup>His roots dry up beneath, and his branches wither above. <sup>17</sup>His memory perishes from the earth, and he has no name in the street. <sup>18</sup>He is thrust from light into darkness, and driven out of the world. <sup>19</sup>He has no posterity or progeny among his people, and no survivor where he used to live.

The expression "The strong steps of the wicked are shortened and their own schemes (counsel in KJV) cast them down," (v7) means that the plans and purposes of the wicked and their attempts and actions that arise from their greatest strength and their best wisdom will be thwarted and come to ruin. It carries the idea that the wicked will come to ruin by their own plots and plans for the following reasons:

- The plots and plans they make will be full of error.
- The trust they have will fail and they will turn against each other.
- The civil authorities and police will catch them.
- God will give them up to foolish and destructive mistakes.

Bildad says, of the wicked and those who do not know God (v21) that they not only bring worry, distress, and anxiety upon themselves because of guilt and the fear of being caught, but also bring misfortune, difficulty, conflict into their lives and their families' lives. Their joy and peace will be taken and they will not find contentment or peace no matter how many physiologists they visit. Their reputation will be ruined and no one will care that they have been taken from the earth.

They cannot blame others for the calamity troubles and hardships that come their way because they bring them all upon themselves by their own wicked deeds and actions such is the way of the wicked and those who deny God (v21).

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## **JOB 18:20-21**

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### **They of the West are Appalled, and Horror Seizes them of the East.**

- **Job 18:20-21:** They of the west are appalled at his day, and horror seizes them of the east. <sup>21</sup>Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous, such is the place of him who knows not God."

The King James Bible says:

- They that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were afflicted. <sup>21</sup>Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

**They of the west are appalled at his day, and horror seizes them of the east:** (v20) the East and the West maybe rendered, western and eastern and taken to embrace all people in the regions of the east and the regions of the west embracing the whole world. The idea is that all who dwell in all the regions of the West and the East will be astonished, amazed and panic-struck at the suddenness of the calamities and doom which will come upon the wicked as Job's friends were at the suddenness of the calamities that came upon Job.

- When they saw Job from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. <sup>13</sup>And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great. (Job 2:12-13).

All the world will be astonished at the doom of the wicked their punishment will be so sudden that the entire world will be stunned with mute amazement. The beginning of mankind's end is wilful ignorance of God and disobedience to Him. To choose the way of sin is to choose the way of confusion chaos and fear all who choose such a path will be humbled and judged accordingly. Those who do know the love and grace of God in Christ should stand in awe with a heart of gratitude and live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

**They that come after him and they that went before:** (v20) means all the wicked who have gone before Job have been astonished at the judgment of God that fell upon the wicked (i.e., the flood of Noah, Egypt's ten plagues, Sodom and Gomorrah, Babylon's destruction of Jerusalem etc.), and all the future generations of the wicked that come after Job will be astonished at the judgment of God that falls upon the world. It will be awesomely and shockingly stunning to the inhabitants of the earth how such sudden calamity should come upon the world and not only bring mankind who was once flourishing and prospering to ruin and poverty and to such chaos, distress, but also to a hopelessly desperate miserable condition across the face of the globe. In the book of Psalms, it is written:

- The Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming. (Psalm 37:13).

**NOTICE:** nearly all of the above things that Bildad has listed regarding the unrighteous could be applied to the way Bildad Eliphaz and Zophar viewed Job. They mistakenly believed that only good things happen to the righteous and only bad things happen to the unrighteous, based on this principal they reasoned Job must be a wicked and unrighteous man because no godly person (according to their reasoning) would be inflicted with such sorrow and grief. We know that this is a grossly mistaken view of Job's character because at the beginning of the story God Himself said Job was His servant a blameless and upright man who feared God and turned away from evil and that there was not a man like him on the earth who holds fast his integrity even though Satan had incited Him against Job to destroy him without reason. (Job 1:1) (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3).

Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar belief that only good things happen to the righteous and only bad things only happen to the unrighteous, will certainly be true at the judgment seat of God, but anyone with a little common sense only has to read the book of Job and many of the Psalms and look with open eyes at the world to know that this theory cannot be taught as an absolute while we are living in the sinful, immoral kingdom of man. In the fallen corrupted world of sin we live in today many who deny God live at ease and prosper while there are many innocent men and women who suffer. Remember Jobs three so called friends don't know that God considered Job a righteous man; we only know it because the author of the book of Job has told us at the very beginning (Job 1:1) (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3). Perhaps God inspired the writers of the Bible to put the book of Job in the Cannon of the Bible so that those whose life is charmed and are at ease (like Bildad Eliphaz and Zophar) and are full of self-righteousness cannot make those who are suffering calamities and afflictions feel that it is because they are greater sinners or condemn them because of such afflictions.

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## FOOTNOTE

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Always keep in mind that Bildad is not speaking, "Thus saith the LORD," but giving his own personal opinion concerning Job and his suffering and because it is his own viewpoint it should be remembered that even though much of what he says maybe true it does not always mean that his reasoning and suppositions are always according to the word of the LORD or right for Job's particular situation.

(Job 32:6) (Job 32:10) (Job 32:17).

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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