



# Eternal PERSPECTIVE *Job*

## BIBLE TEXT | JOB 8:1-22

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**1** Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: **2** "How long will you say these things, and the words of your mouth be a great wind? **3** Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert the right? **4** If your children have sinned against him, he has delivered them into the hand of their transgression. **5** If you will seek God and plead with the Almighty for mercy, **6** if you are pure and upright, surely then he will rouse himself for you and restore your rightful habitation. **7** And though your beginning was small, your latter days will be very great. "For inquire, please, of bygone ages, **8** and consider what the fathers have searched out. **9** For we are but of yesterday and know nothing, for our days on earth are a shadow. **10** Will they not teach you and tell you and utter words out of their understanding? **11** "Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish where there is no water? **12** While yet in flower and not cut down, they wither before any other plant. **13** Such are the paths of all who forget God; the hope of the godless shall perish. **14** His confidence is severed, and his trust is a spider's web. **15** He leans against his house, but it does not stand; he lays hold of it, but it does not endure. **16** He is a lush plant before the sun, and his shoots spread over his garden. **17** His roots entwine the stone heap; he looks upon a house of stones. **18** If he is destroyed from his place, then it will deny him, saying, 'I have never seen you.' **19** Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the soil others will spring. **20** "Behold, God will not reject a blameless man, nor take the hand of evildoers. **21** He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, and your lips with shouting. **22** Those who hate you will be clothed with shame, and the tent of the wicked will be no more."

## DEVOTIONAL FOR JOB 8:1-22

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AUTHOR: CYNTHIA MARQUEZ

Many years ago, a friend sent a verse to me that felt more hurtful than helpful. As I walked through a dark season full of doubt and depression, she sent me James 1:2 that says, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds..." It felt so inconsiderate and inappropriate to push me to rejoice when I was grieving deep in my soul. I needed something different. I needed a friend to sit with me, wait with me, and comfort my soul. Maybe you've heard others say things that are full of truth, but their statements are more "true-ish" in nature, such as these thoughts: God



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helps those who help themselves. God won't give you more than you can handle. God wants you to be happy. Everything happens for a reason. Look on the bright side.

As we consider the words of Bildad, the second friend who speaks with Job, you might notice some inconsistencies in his words and thoughts. In a condescending and blunt way, it seems that Bildad lays shame on his friend, as if Job's suffering is a result of his sin or the sin of his children. His tone is accusatory and abrasive as he assumes that Job's children deserved death. And since Job continued to suffer losses after his children's death, Bildad continues to rail against Job's character and righteousness. He places unfair expectations on Job by seeming to hint that he could change the outcome of the devastating turn of events by seeking God more. As a final blow, Bildad compares Job to a plant without roots, tossed about to wither in the sun. Obviously, Job is living a nightmare of epic proportions. He is searching for answers, seeking clarity, and trying to make sense of what is happening. Life doesn't make sense to Job, and his friends give a whole lot of advice that really isn't helpful.

So where can we go when we are grieving? Who will give us sound counsel? Our fountain of truth comes from the Word of God. Psalm 119:103 tells us that God's Word is sweet to the taste; sweeter than honey. It is the first place we should go, to seek out his wisdom and to test the advice we are given by our friends and family. "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). When others share their thoughts from the "First Book of Opinion", we can say 'thanks, but no thanks'. They usually are well-intentioned, but they do not always have the wisdom or understanding to speak over your life. Friend, we have a treasure in the Word of God. The Lord knows you. His Word brings comfort, peace, guidance, and everlasting hope. He is our answer.

It is true that I have found an incredible Journey Group who is diving deep into God's Word. They are a major source of encouragement and support for my family in this season. Their advice and help is essential for my walk with Christ, and I'm thankful they are not like Bildad! I pray that you find friends who will be an encouragement to you in Christ.

## Questions:

1. What advice are you looking for today? What question are you wanting God to answer?
2. Have you ever received unsolicited advice from a friend or family member? Did their comments create more questions and conflict, or encouragement and solutions?
3. Read Galatians 6:2. Are you a friend who carries other's burdens well through encouragement or do you lay a burden on others through careless comments?