

# JOB

## CHAPTERS 25 & 26

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### Introduction

Let's refresh ourselves regarding Job's miserable plight. He had lost his possessions; he had lost his position; he had lost his posterity. Physically, he was sitting outside of the city of Uz in its garbage dump on an ash heap scraping himself with a piece of broken pottery. He suffered severe itching (2:8), insomnia (2:4), running sores and scabs (2:5), nightmares (2:13-14), loss of appetite (3:24), infestation with worms and maggots (7:5), difficulty breathing (9:18), foul breath (19:17), weight loss (19:20), chills and fever (21:6), diarrhea (30:27), high fever (30:30), and blackened skin (30:30).

It's no wonder that Bildad declared Job, "a maggot... a worm..." in verse six of chapter twenty-five.

Bildad was doing more than identifying Job's miserable plight. He was making a philosophical statement about the plight of the human race on earth in relation to a holy God in heaven. He contended that God's creation was marred and fallen; "even... the stars are not pure in His sight." And, since creation is marred and fallen, so is mankind; therefore Bildad asks, "How can a man be righteous before God?" Job becomes, for Bildad, an illustration, a picture, an object lesson of the plight of the human race. Compared to God, mankind looks like Job: maggots and worms! God must, therefore, hold mankind in contempt.

Job will not deny that creation is marred and fallen. In fact, he will expand upon it and provide additional details about its fall. But he has a very different perspective on God's attitude toward the human race. He will explain that mankind is not the *contempt* of God's creation, but rather God's great concern and the *crown* of God's creation!

We'll see two things in our study:

#1 Though Fallen, You Are Not  
The Contempt Of God's Creation

#2 Though Fallen, You Are  
The Crown Of God's Creation

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#1 Though Fallen, You Are Not  
The Contempt Of God's Creation  
(Chapter 25)

We've come to the last words of Bildad, and the last words of the three friends who came to comfort Job but end up condemning him. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar take turns addressing Job, with Job answering them each time. This occurs in three cycles. The only exception is that Zophar fails to address Job a third time - - thus these words of Bildad finish this section of the book.

The three so-called friends - - Job calls them "miserable comforters" - - grow increasingly cruel and vindictive. This last address of Bildad's is no exception, as he calls Job a wormy maggot of a man!

But it's not just Job that Bildad has in mind. He more or less talks himself into a corner. He observes that God's creation is marred and fallen. He reasons that, if even the glorious creation is marred and fallen, how much more must mankind be marred and fallen! Then he concludes that God must therefore hold mankind in contempt - - seeing a man as no more than a wormy maggot.

Job 25:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:  
Job 25:2 "Dominion and fear belong to Him; He makes peace in His high places.  
Job 25:3 Is there any number to His armies? Upon whom does His light not rise?

"Dominion" is a word that indicates God rules the universe; "fear" is the awe that is inspired as you recognize God ruling the universe. God "makes peace in His high places"; that is, He establishes order and harmony in His universe. He rules over countless forces - His "armies" are anything that He controls in the physical, natural universe. His "light" refers to the sun which He created, which is a symbol of the order of things as it rises and sets according to God's design.

Bildad observes that God's creation is marred and fallen:

Job 25:5 If even the moon does not shine, And the stars are not pure in His sight,

The stellar heavens - - for all their glory - - are “not pure in [God’s] sight.” There is something wrong with creation. It is fallen.

Bildad’s concludes that mankind is therefore contemptible to God:

Job 25:6 How much less man, who is a maggot, And a son of man, who is a worm?"

If man is no more than a wormy maggot, the question of verse four is a condemnation:

Job 25:4 How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?

Bildad asks this in a way that indicates it is impossible to be righteous before God. He has argued himself into a corner.

In a sense, though, *he is right!!* It **is** impossible for a man, on his own, to be righteous before God. The Bible declares that there is none righteous - - not even one; and that all of our very best righteousness is like filthy rags.

So: Are we held in contempt by God? No, because creation is intended as a witness to draw us to God. Far from holding us in contempt, God cares for us.

God’s creation - - though marred and fallen - - declares His existence and His glory. God has given all men everywhere for all time a witness of Himself in creation as the Creator. Every man everywhere for all time has a capacity to know God. Solomon described it in Ecclesiastes by saying that God "has put eternity in their hearts" (3:11). You were created with an internal capacity to respond to God's revelation of Himself as your Creator through His external creation.

Design demands a Designer; Creation calls for a Creator. In Psalm 19:1-4 you read,

Psalms 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

Psalms 19:2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.

Psalms 19:3 *There is* no speech nor language *Where* their voice is not heard.

Psalms 19:4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world...

You cannot be saved by the witness of God through creation.  
You can only be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.  
Ecclesiastes 3:11 reads in full,

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

In other words, God has revealed Himself to everyone through creation, and He has given them the capacity to respond to that witness, but the witness of creation to your heart is not sufficient for you to "find out the work that God does from beginning to end." You need further revelation from God to be saved.

Evangelicals hold the position that God further reveals Himself to those who respond to His universal witness of creation to their hearts. Theologian Robert Lightner puts it best when he says,

"God has given to all a revelation of Himself in [creation]...In lands where the Gospel has not reached, God holds men responsible to receive the revelation He has given them. When they receive it, He in sovereign grace sees to it that they hear the Good News of salvation in Christ alone so they can believe and be saved. Response to God's message in [creation]...does not bring salvation, but it does reveal a willingness to respond to God. It gives evidence of an open and receptive heart."<sup>1</sup>

Pastor John MacArthur writes,

"Every person, no matter how isolated from God's written Word or the clear proclamation of the Gospel, has enough divine truth evident both within and around him...to enable him to know and be reconciled to God if his desire is genuine."<sup>2</sup>

Is this going too far? Not at all! Paul the Apostle says the same thing himself, in Scripture, in Acts 17:26-27,

Acts 17:26 "And [God] has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,

Acts 17:27 "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

All men everywhere for all time are on God's heart to save.  
When they respond to His limited light in creation, He in Sovereign grace sees to it that they receive more light.

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<sup>1</sup>Lightner, *Heaven for Those Who Can't Believe*, p. 43-44.

<sup>2</sup>MacArthur, *Romans 1-8*, p. 68.

That light is the Gospel of Jesus Christ - - the good news that you can be declared righteous by God by faith in Jesus Christ! “How then can a man be righteous before God?” is the theme of the Book of Romans, and of much of the rest of Scripture, as it describes the person and work of Jesus Christ on your behalf that God might save you.

God cares for fallen human beings; you are *not* held in contempt.

Instead,

#2 Though Fallen, You Are  
The Crown Of God's Creation  
(Chapter 26)

Job had a very different perspective on man's place in creation, and in God's heart. Before he expressed his perspective regarding God's heart, he had some heartfelt words for Bildad, in verses one through four:

Job 26:1 But Job answered and said:

Job 26:2 "How have you helped him who is without power? How have you saved the arm that has no strength?

Job 26:3 How have you counseled one who has no wisdom? And how have you declared sound advice to many?

Job 26:4 To whom have you uttered words? And whose spirit came from you?

Scattered along the path of our studies in Job are words of insight into how we ought to comfort others in their suffering. Here we have a series of questions to ask ourselves regarding our ministry to others.

*“Have you helped him who is without power?”* What are you offering to the sufferer? It ought to be God's sustaining grace, the power of the indwelling Spirit.

*“Have you saved the arm that has no strength?”* “Saved” means *supported*. In the Old Testament Aaron and Hur supported Moses' arms while he prayed and it brought victory. Your ministry to the suffering should be prayerful.

*“How have you counseled one who has no wisdom?”* Is your counsel from Scripture - - with the wisdom of God?

*“How have you declared sound advice to many?”* Do others concur with your words? Are you ministering in accordance with sound, biblical principles?

*“To whom have you uttered words?”* Have you taken the time and spent the energy to really identify with the sufferer?

*“Whose spirit came from you?”* Is your ministry marked by a sense of the presence of Jesus?

Turning to Bildad’s comments in particular, Job discusses creation in verses five through thirteen:

Job 26:5 "The dead tremble, Those under the waters and those inhabiting them.

Job 26:6 Sheol is naked before Him, And Destruction has no covering.

Job 26:7 He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

Job 26:8 He binds up the water in His thick clouds, Yet the clouds are not broken under it.

Job 26:9 He covers the face of His throne, And spreads His cloud over it.

Job 26:10 He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, At the boundary of light and darkness.

Job 26:11 The pillars of heaven tremble, And are astonished at His rebuke.

Job 26:12 He stirs up the sea with His power, And by His understanding He breaks up the storm.

Job 26:13 By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.

Job has some amazing observations about God’s creation. Verses seven through twelve are scientifically accurate observations made many centuries before we “discovered” them. Take, for example, the phrase, “He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters.” The curvature of the earth was not agreed upon by scientists till a few hundred years ago! The same can be said of Job’s analysis of the process of evaporation, when he says “He binds up the water in His thick clouds, Yet the clouds are not broken under it.”

Job goes beyond Bildad in his knowledge of creation. In verses five and six he talks about the unseen, but very real, realm of the dead. The word “destruction” in verse six is interesting. It is the word *abaddon*. Abaddon is the name of a demon king over the bottomless pit in Revelation chapter nine. Job is seeing more than Bildad in creation; he is seeing the supernatural as well as the natural.

Likewise notice the phrases “He breaks up the storm... He pierced the fleeing serpent.” The word translated “storm” is *Rahab*. Rahab is a proper name for a great, yet evil, power in God’s creation, that is equated with a serpent. In Isaiah 51:9 you read,

Isaiah 51:9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD! Awake as in the ancient days, In the generations of old. Are You not the arm that cut Rahab apart, And wounded the serpent?

The “serpent” is the Devil, Satan. Job is looking behind the visible creation and noting the reason for its being marred and fallen!

Notice that God “breaks up the storm”; He “pierced the fleeing serpent.” God is at work to restore and redeem creation.

**And He is at work in and among the human race:**

Job 26:14 Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways, And how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?"

Looking at creation in its fullness - - both natural and supernatural - - Job says it is “the edges of His ways... a small whisper we hear of Him.” What might this mean in our context?

“Edges” surround things; creation, therefore, is the edge surrounding something. I suggest to you that creation is surrounding mankind in the sense that mankind is God’s focal point - - the center of God’s creation!

Sound extreme? Not to David, who wrote in Psalm 8:4-6,

Psalms 8:4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?

Psalms 8:5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

Psalms 8:6 You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

Bildad had called mankind “a son of man,” but concluded we were held in contempt by God. David called mankind “the son of man,” but concluded that we were held as the crown of God!

Job sees you at the center, surrounded by creation. Creation is a mere whisper. It tells you that there is a God - - a Creator.

What is “the thunder of His power” of verse fourteen? “Thunder” is being contrasted to the “whisper.” If creation is a mere whisper of God’s existence, then what is the “thunder” that reveals Him? It is the Gospel. You read in Romans 1:16,

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...

We saw earlier how creation is a witness to the heart of all men, but an insufficient one; it does not have the power to save. The Gospel **is** that power!

Job says, “but the thunder of His power who can understand?” He means that the Gospel is beyond our observation; it must be given by revelation. But as you respond to the whisper, God sends His thunder!!

Yes, mankind *is* like Job: without righteousness. But God does not hold you in contempt; He cares, for you are the crown of His creation. He sees all men everywhere with a heart to save them.

### Conclusion

One day God will be through with this present creation. He will fold it up as an old garment, creating a new heaven and a new earth. It is not the thing He cares for the most!

Something in this creation will remain. What will remain from this heaven and earth is you and I - - all those who have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

You are the crown of God’s creation. One day Jesus will “... present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Jude 24