

JOB

Chapter 25

Bildad Speaks: Man Cannot Be Righteous

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: 2 “Dominion and fear are with God; he makes peace in his high heaven. 3 Is there any number to his armies? Upon whom does his light not arise? 4 How then can man be in the right before God? How can he who is born of woman be pure? 5 Behold, even the moon is not bright, and the stars are not pure in his eyes; 6 how much less man, who is a maggot, and the son of man, who is a worm!”

25:1–6 Bildad adds nothing new here, and Zophar, who has already admitted how emotionally disturbed he was (see 20:2), doesn’t even comment. (CSB)

25:2 *Dominion and fear are with God.* God alone is all-powerful. No one succeeds in opposing Him, because His dominion is too great. (TLSB)

makes peace in his high heavens. † Bildad pictures the heavens as a place of warfare, where God must use his celestial troops (see v. 3) to establish order. (CSB)

His reign extends everywhere. Ancient conflict between God and Satan resulted in Satan’s expulsion from heaven (cf Lk 10:18; Rv 12:7–9). Cf 26:13. (TLSB)

25:3 *his armies.* Angels. (CSB)

The angels, the hosts of heaven. (TLSB)

his light. The sun. All that is under God’s dominion pales before him. (CSB)

25:4–6 Bildad echoes Eliphaz’s earlier statements about human depravity (4:17–19; 15:14–16). (CSB)

25:4 *can man be in the right before God?* Bildad realizes that sinful humankind has no way to justify itself. His argument implies that “might makes right.” (TLSB)

he who is born of woman. Any person. (TLSB)

pure? Truly, all people are born impure and sinful and need God’s cleansing. Cf 5:7; Ps 51:5. (TLSB)

25:5 As the sun outshines all other heavenly bodies, so God’s greatness outshines all other things. By contrasting the heavenly bodies with the greatness of God, Bildad casts humankind into an even deeper shadow. (TLSB)

25:6 *man, who is a maggot.* Though the image seems unbecoming, it expresses humility before God. Cf Ps 22:6. Luth: “We have no right to indulge in much bragging and boasting when we step before God. Even if we were members of the highest aristocracy on earth ... before God we would still be nothing but bags of worms or bags of manure, infested with lice, maggots, stinking and foul” (AE 22:133). (TLSB)

Ch 25 The brevity of this last speech by Job's friends shows they have finally run out of arguments. Bildad's speech is a good sermon for Job and for everyone. He calls us to humility and contrition before God. We can offer no defense for ourselves and for our sins; we must throw ourselves entirely on God's mercy. • Praise be to God! "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). Amen. (TLSB)