



The Sunday called Septuagesima, or the
third Sunday before Lent.

The Collect.

O LORD, we beseech thee favourably to hear the prayers of thy people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness, for the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, 2 Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places. 3 Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise? 4 How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? 5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. 6 How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm? (Job 25:1-6)

Bildad, like many who are not fervent in knowing God, has little to add to the discussion except for repetition of the same old themes and charges (though less offensive in tone and demeanor than the other two `friends'). He repeats the worn old themes of the great power of God (never in doubt to begin with) and the sinfulness of men (never in doubt to begin with). This reminds me of the trite little church kindergarten song of the last century; "God is so Good." Modern charismatic churches seem to never tire of singing, mantra-like, the repetitive verses of this kindergarten song. It seems somehow inappropriate that they could not go beyond and sing the great old, classic hymns of the faith so rich in scriptural truth and reverence to God.

As we have shared earlier, the claims about God and sinners advanced by all participants of the dialogue are true and genuine, but words spoken out of season, or

misapplied, carry the weight of error. **2 Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places.** Of course, God is Almighty both in Heaven and earth. Did He not cast out the Great Dragon (Satan) along with his angels (demons) from Heaven? Having conquered all, there remains only one Dominion and Seat of Power, and that Sovereign is God. *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* (Col 1:20) *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.* (Eph 1:10) To continually argue and repeat these points in argument with Job has the effect of questioning Job's faith in these truths. But it is not so. **3 Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?** Surely, His Armies cover the skies from horizons east, west, south and north.

4 How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Excellent question, Mr. Bildad, but it is far easier to ask than to answer, isn't it? Had you known the answer, the asking would not have been necessary. Abraham, by faith, knew the answer; but it is clear that your faith falls short of that of Abraham. God is a God of perfect justice, and all have sinned and fallen short of His righteousness. So how can we be justified (found guiltless and acquitted) before the Bar of God's Justice? We can only be justified through the imputed righteousness of Christ (do we ever tire of writing or hearing this?). A man can be justified with God through Jesus Christ, Mr. Bildad.

Does the moon shine? (excuse the elementary question) No, it does not shine. The Sun shines and that brilliant shine is reflected (in lesser degrees) by the Moon. **5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.** As they say in southern Alabama, "Even a blind hog finds an acorn occasionally." Mr. Bildad is perfectly correct in these two statements, but he does not relate at all to the accusations leveled against Job. Since Bildad knows nothing else to say, he simply expresses whatever truths he can relate without contradiction. The stars represent, symbolically, angels. Remember the stars that fell from heaven with their 'temporary' master, Satan? *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth* (Rev 12:3-4) *".... the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."* (Rev 12:9) There remains no moral perfection apart from God Almighty.

It is true that man and worms bear striking resemblance. The Hebrew word used here differs from the word 'worm' which Christ used to describe Himself in Psalms 22:6. The word 'worm' (Towla) used by Bildad is the common species of worm that is low and groveling. This worm is bred in putrid substance and lives off putrefying carcasses. It reeks of the odor of the tomb to which men go who know not the God of Abraham in the Promised Seed (Christ). **6 How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?** The Son of Man, and the Son of God, for which the term 'worm' (Towla -ath) is used relates to a specific grub that is referred to as a worm (**towla**), but with the added descriptive adjective of **-ath** (red); therefore Christ (in Ps 22:6) is like the '*coccus ilicis*' or Crimson grub that is used to dye garments red throughout the Middle East. Jesus was like that Crimson Worm. The mother of the species (when ready to bear her young) attaches herself to a tree or post so intricately that she cannot be removed without tearing her body apart. When the young are

hatched, they feed on her still living body. When they can exist apart from the mother, she begins to die. As she dies, she emits a crimson fluid that colors her young so that, like her, they will be crimson for the rest of their lives. Christ shed His blood for us on such a tree. His blood has covered (and justified) us so that we must forever be like Him if we have been covered by that immaculate blood. So, it seems that Bildad hits upon truths at random of which he has little knowledge. This is much like the unwitting prophecy uttered by the enemy of Christ, Caiaphas, High Priest, before the Sanhedrin: *And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.* (John 11:49-52) The Gospel, even when spoken by an unbeliever, is still the Gospel. It matters not the quality of tray upon which it is served, be it silver, or stone, truth is forever truth and infallible. I believe that Bildad and his friends will come to realize this further down in time of this Book.