

# Job 18:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?

## Analysis

**Wherefore are we counted as beasts** (maddûa' neḥšabnû kaḇḥēmāh, מַדְדֻא' נְחָשָׁבְנוּ כַבְּחֵמָה)—Bildad protests Job's alleged contempt for the friends' counsel. The verb ḥāšab (to count, reckon, regard) combined with bēhēmāh (beast, animal, cattle) accuses Job of treating them as intellectually inferior, lacking rational capacity. This charge references Job 12:7-12, where Job sarcastically told them to learn from beasts and birds. Bildad misses Job's point—creation testifies to divine sovereignty while the friends parrot empty platitudes.

**And reputed vile in your sight** (niṭmînû bē'ênêkem, נִטְמִינוּ בְּעֵינֵיכֶם)—The verb ṭāmē' means to be unclean, defiled, or vile. Bildad feels insulted and despised. The phrase 'in your sight' (literally 'in your eyes') indicates perceived contempt. Ironically, the friends are 'vile' not because Job devalues them but because their theology pollutes truth with falsehood (Job 42:7-8). They represent religious authorities whose orthodoxy fails under trial's pressure. Their wounded pride blinds them to Job's legitimate complaints against their inadequate counsel.

## Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern honor-shame culture made accusations of intellectual inferiority deeply offensive. Wisdom teachers commanded respect; to call them 'beasts' attacked their professional credibility and social status. Bildad's defensive posture reveals that Job's criticism struck home—the friends' traditional answers

fail to explain innocent suffering, exposing limitations of retribution theology. Pride prevents them from admitting inadequacy.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does pride prevent you from admitting when your theological explanations fail to address real suffering?
2. In what ways do religious leaders sometimes prioritize defending their authority over listening to legitimate pain?
3. How can you distinguish between Job's righteous protest against inadequate answers and sinful contempt for godly counsel?

## Interlinear Text

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מִדָּוַע	נְחֹשׁ בְּנוֹ	כְּבֵהֶמָּה	וְנִטְמָ יָנוּ	בְּעֵינֶיכֶם:
H4069	Wherefore are we counted	as beasts	and reputed vile	in your sight
	H2803	H929	H2933	H5869

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 73:22** (Parallel theme): So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

**Job 17:10** (Parallel theme): But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you.

**Job 17:4** (Parallel theme): For thou hast hid their heart from understanding:  
therefore shalt thou not exalt them.

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