

## Analysis of the Book of Job

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Then **Satan answered [YHWH] and said,**

“Skin for skin! **All that a man has he will give for his life.**

But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh,

and **he will curse you to your face.”**

(Job 2:4-5 ESV)

Then **his wife said to him,** “Do you still hold fast your integrity? **Curse God and die.”**

(Job 2:9 ESV)

Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist the devil,** and **he will flee from you.**

(James 4:7 ESV)

But a man dies and is laid low; man breathes his last, and where is he?

**If a man dies, shall he live again?**

All the days of my service I would wait, till my renewal should come.

(Job 14:10, 14 ESV)

For **I know that my Redeemer lives,** and at the last he will stand upon the earth.

And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet [away from] my flesh **I shall see God,**

**whom I shall see for myself,** and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

(Job 19:25-27a ESV)

I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but **now my eye sees you;**

therefore **I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”**

(Job 42:5-6 ESV)

**The Book of Job is perhaps the most difficult book of the Bible to “get into”.** On a casual reading, it does not take long before the reader is just “reading words”. It is tempting to just read the Prologue and the Epilogue and move on. However, **God put the Book of Job in the Bible with purpose.** The author of the Book of Job was inspired by the Holy Spirit just much as the **Prophet Isaiah** or the **Apostle Paul**. It behooves an astute student of the Bible to **search the Book of Job and glean the messages from God that are contained therein.**

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# 1. The Structure of the Book of Job

**The Book of Job is one of the most enigmatic pieces of literature in existence.** The book contains no hint as to who the author might be. There is no way to ascertain for certain when or where it was written. Even the literary genre of the book remains hotly debated. The author nowhere makes clear his purpose in composing the book. Even the theological implications of the book can be considered obscure.

When one reads the Book of Job, **it is impossible NOT to think of a Shakespearian Play.** Shakespeare was a genius at taking a historical situation, using the actual historical characters, and creating dialogue which fit the historical situation, but which was also relevant for his audiences. It would be extremely surprising if William Shakespeare had NOT been intimately familiar with the Book of Job. The Preamble of the Book of Job defines a clear historical situation, a cast of characters, and a theme which drives the whole book. **The genius of the Book of Job is then in the discourses which interplay between the characters.**

The overriding question regarding the Book of Job is “**why is it in the Bible**”? **It is axiomatic that the book was produced under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.** One CANNOT just read the Prologue and the Epilogue and make glib assessments of the book's value. The details of the book must be carefully considered to understand how the Prologue leads to the Epilogue. **The author of the book has produced very detailed argumentation among the characters. It is in this detail that one must search for the meaning of the book** – the dialogue contains the messages from God through the Holy Spirit that God intends True Worshipers to glean from the Book of Job. **The dialogue in the Book of Job is the product of the Holy Spirit.**<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 The Prologue and the Epilogue

**The Prologue and Epilogue are written from the perspective of a disinterested third-party “narrator”.**

The “narrator” clearly places **the setting in the patriarchal period**:

- Like Abraham, Job has a large household with many animals:  
There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job ...  
There were born to him **seven sons** and **three daughters**.  
He possessed **7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen,**  
and **500 female donkeys,** and **very many servants,**  
so that this man was the greatest of all the **people of the east.**<sup>2</sup>  
(Job 1:1a, 2-3 ESV)
- Job offers burnt offerings:  
And when the days of the feast had run their course,  
**Job would send and consecrate them,**  
and he would rise early in the morning **and offer burnt offerings**  
according to the number of them all.  
(Job 1:5a ESV)
- The three friends offer burnt offerings:  
After [YHWH] had spoken these words to Job, [YHWH] said to Eliphaz the Temanite:  
“My anger burns against you and against your two friends,  
for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.  
Now therefore **take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job**  
**and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves.**  
And my servant **Job shall pray for you,**  
for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly.  
For **you have not spoken of me what is right,** as my servant Job has.”  
(Job 42:7-8 ESV)

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<sup>1</sup> See 2 Timothy 3:14-16

<sup>2</sup> This phrase is from בְּנֵי־קֶדֶם - bene qedem, “sons of the east”; it occurs in Genesis 29:1, Judges 6:3,33, 7:12, 8:10, 1 Kings 4:30, Job 1:3, Isaiah 11:14, Jeremiah 49:28, and Ezekiel 25:4,10. It suggests that Job was among the semi-nomadic tribes which lived along western fringes of the desert east of Israel.

- If Job was about 60 when his first family was killed, **his lifespan was about 200 years**, typical of patriarchal times:  
 And [YHWH] restored the fortunes of Job ...  
 And **after this Job lived 140 years**, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations.  
 And Job died, an old man, and full of days.  
 (Job 42:10a, 16-17)

The Prologue is clear and specific that Job was a "righteous" man, a **True Worshipper** of God:

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was **Job**,  
 and that man **was blameless and upright**, one who **feared God** and **turned away from evil**.

And [YHWH] said to Satan,

"Have you considered **my servant Job**, that **there is none like him on the earth**,  
 a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

And he said,

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return.

[YHWH] gave, and [YHWH] has taken away; blessed be the name of [YHWH]."

**In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.**

(Job 1:1, 8, 21-22 ESV)

However, the author does hint at Job's problem – **Job was very sure of his righteousness**,  
 he **"held fast to his integrity"**:

And [YHWH] said to Satan,

"Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth,  
 a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

**He still holds fast his integrity ..."**

Then his wife said to him,

**"Do you still hold fast your integrity?"** Curse God and die."

But he said to her,

"You speak as one of the foolish women would speak.

Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?"

**In all this Job did not sin with his lips.**

(Job 2:3a, 9-10 ESV)

Carefully intertwined with the visible setting on earth is **the back-story in eternity**. Satan presents  
 himself before YHWH, and YHWH challenges him to consider Job. **Satan is sure he can break Job:**

And [YHWH] said to Satan,

**"Have you considered my servant Job**, that there is none like him on the earth,  
 a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

Then Satan answered [YHWH] and said,

**"Does Job fear God for no reason?"**

**Have you not put a hedge around him** and his house and all that he has, on every side?

You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and **he will curse you to your face.**"

(Job 1:8-11 ESV)

Having been given permission, Satan destroys Job's life and renders him perilously ill. Then the "Three  
 Friends" arrive. **The "Three Friends" are NOT True Worshipers of God**. They do NOT have true insight  
 into the Nature of God, the Plan of God, or the Way of God: **they do NOT know God**. However, they all  
 believe that they do have godly insight. God is explicit that they do NOT:

After [YHWH] had spoken these words to Job, **[YHWH] said to Eliphaz the Temanite:**

**"My anger burns against you and against your two friends,**

for **you have not spoken of me what is right**, as my servant Job has.

Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job

and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves.

And my servant Job shall pray for you,

for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly.

For **you have not spoken of me what is right**, as my servant Job has."

So **Eliphaz the Temanite** and **Bildad the Shuhite** and **Zophar the Naamathite**

went and did what [YHWH] had told them, and [YHWH] accepted Job's prayer.

(Job 42:7-9 ESV)

**The implications of the back storey are never made explicit throughout the book.** In many of the dialogues, however, there is conspicuous silence where it is clear that the influence of Satan the Devil should be acknowledged. This is an object lesson for True Worshipers: always have the correct perspective. God is ultimately in charge, but this is Satan's world. Satan's agenda is death for all human beings, ultimately eternal death. He works from the shadows. He hides. He wants no recognition or acknowledgement from human beings. Satan hates all human beings because of the potential that God holds out to human beings to become members of the God Family, while Satan stands rejected, condemned. Satan seeks only to confuse, to influence, and to draw to death.

## 1.2 Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar

At first, **the author of the Book of Job gives us no information about the "Three Friends"**<sup>3</sup> – they just appear:

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place,  
Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.  
They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him.  
And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him.  
And they raised their voices and wept,  
and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven.  
And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights,  
and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.  
(Job 2:11-13 ESV)

Later we learn that they are "older" men. The "Three Friends" are probably contemporaries of Job:  
So these three men ceased to answer Job ...

And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said:  
"I am young in years, and you are aged;  
therefore I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you.  
I said, 'Let days speak, and many years teach wisdom.' ..."   
(Job 32:1a, 6-7 ESV)

After the Prologue, the next part of the book comprises nine speeches by Job interspersed with three speeches from each of Eliphaz and Bildad and two speeches of Zophar. Job's speeches are frequently of two parts: one-part deals directly with the comments of one of the "Three Friends"; the other part is a "soliloquy" where Job explores various concepts. During these speeches we learn a lot about Job and each of the "Three Friends" – this is where the message of the Book of Job is developed.

**It is through the "Three Friends" that Satan attempts to "break" Job.** Each has convincing arguments from a particular "worldly" perspective. Each tries to convince Job to alter his thinking along "worldly" lines. In his misery, Job must see through their false logic and maintain his faith in God and his commitment to the Way of God. Job must remain steadfast.

**As the text stands,** the last speech of Bildad is only five verses, 25:2-6. Hartley suggests that 27:13-23 are actually the completion of Bildad's speech, not part of Job's response.<sup>4</sup> This suggestion is accepted.

The author of the Book of Job is very careful to delineate each individual speech. Job's first speech is most elaborately delineated:

After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth.  
And Job said:  
(Job 3:1-2 ESV)

**In the first section of the book,** after Job's initial speech, each speech is carefully identified at its beginning with "X answered and said:", where X is Job, Eliphaz, Bildad or Zophar. Job's "soliloquies" are NOT explicitly marked. In each soliloquy there is a shift from the interactive style of the back-and-forth dialogue between Job and each of the "Three Friends". The soliloquies are in a philosophical style, as a person pondering, out loud, a difficult concept.

<sup>3</sup> Only "Temanite" is clearly identifiable as a location in northern Edom; "Shuhite" and "Naamathite" are obscure; see Hartly pages 85-86.

<sup>4</sup> See Hartly page 355

### 1.3 Elihu

The next part of the book comprises three speeches of Elihu interspersed with two speeches of Job. The section is difficult because of the order of the text. The commentaries discuss how the text may have become dislocated. However that may be, **the text makes most sense if is read in the following sequence:**

- Elihu's first speech: 32:6-22, 33:1-33
- Elihu's second speech: 34:1-37
- Job's initial response: 27:1-12, 28:1-28
- Elihu's third speech: 35:1-16, 36:1-33, 37:1-24
- Job's final response: 29:1-25, 30:1-31, 31:1-40

The author of the Book of Job gives us **no certain information on who Elihu was or where he came from.**<sup>5</sup> We know only that he was a younger man. Elihu apparently spoke things acceptable to God because **he is NOT included in the castigation of the "Three Friends" in the Epilogue.**

In the second part of the book, the author has changed the method of speech introduction. Elihu's initial speech is unique:

And **Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said:**  
(Job 32:6a ESV)

After that Elihu twice uses the standard formula, "**Elihu answered and said**" (34:1, 35:1). In his longest speech, Elihu has a unique mid-point marker, "**Elihu continued, and said**" (36:1). Job's two speeches are introduced by "**Job again took up his discourse, and said**" (27:1, 29:1). Twice YHWH's speech uses "**YHWH answered Job out of the whirlwind and said**" (38:1, 40:6); on one occasion the marker is simply "**YHWH said to Job**" (40:1).

### 1.4 YHWH

After Job's final response to Elihu, YHWH steps in, 38:1-41, 39:1-30, and 40:1-2. Job makes a timid response, 40:3-5, and YHWH continues 40:6-24, 41:1-34. Job makes his final response, 42:1-6.

**YHWH's words to Job are pointed and specific**, but at the same time somewhat ambiguous. Clearly, YHWH requires Job to figure out his problem and deal with it. The majority of the content of the speeches of YHWH relate to **General Revelation**. This is consistent with God's repeated representations of himself as a "God who acts". **God is known by what he has done**, and **by what he is doing**.

**The Bible is replete with allusions to God's being identified by his actions**, for example:

**O Lord [YHWH]**, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth **who can do such works and mighty acts as yours?**  
(Deuteronomy 3:24 ESV)

From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear,  
no eye has seen a **God** besides you,  
**who acts** for those who wait for him.  
(Isaiah 64:4 ESV)

**You are the God who works wonders**; you have made known your might among the peoples.

... so that they should set their hope in God and **not forget the works of God**,  
but keep his commandments;  
(Psalm 77:14, 78:7 ESV)

Therefore [YHWH] has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us,  
for [YHWH] our God is righteous **in all the works that he has done**, and we have not obeyed his voice.  
(Daniel 9:14 ESV)

The New Testament authors are explicit that **Jesus Christ, as YHWH, performed the creation**; and, **it is he who maintains the stability of the universe**:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**.  
He was in the beginning with God.

<sup>5</sup> See Hartley's comments on: "**son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram**"; Hartley pages 428-429.  
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**All things were made through him**, and without him was not any thing made that was made.  
(John 1:1-3 ESV)

... yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist,  
and one Lord, **Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist**.  
(1 Corinthians 8:6 ESV)

For **by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,  
whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities  
—all things were created through him and for him.  
And he is before all things, and **in him all things hold together**.  
(Colossians 1:16-17 ESV)

... but **in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things,  
**through whom also he created the world**.  
He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,  
and **he upholds the universe by the word of his power**.  
After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,  
(Hebrews 1:2-3 ESV)

Jesus own words describe his earthly life as an expression of his work as Creator and Saviour:

But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John.

For **the works that the Father has given me to accomplish**,  
**the very works that I am doing**, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me.

Jesus answered them,

“I told you, and you do not believe.

**The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me ...”**

Jesus answered them,

“I **have shown you many good works from the Father**;  
for which of them are you going to stone me?”

... If I am not **doing the works of my Father**, then do not believe me;  
but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, **believe the works**,  
that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also **do the works that I do**;  
and **greater works than these will he do**, because I am going to the Father.  
(John 5:36, 10:25, 32, 37-38, 14:12 ESV)

God's own identification of himself with **the creation** and **the ongoing works of God** to accomplish his  
Plan of Salvation, is the justification of YHWH's use of General Revelation to reach Job.

## 1.5 Summary of Discourse Structure

Discourse Structure of the Book of Job		
3:1-2	After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. And Job said:	
4:1		Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:
6:1	Then Job answered and said:	
8:1		Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
9:1	Then Job answered and said:	
11:1		Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:
12:1	Then Job answered and said:	
15:1		Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:
16:1	Then Job answered and said:	
18:1		Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
19:1	Then Job answered and said:	
20:1		Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:
21:1	Then Job answered and said:	
22:1		Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:
23:1	Then Job answered and said:	

<b>Discourse Structure of the Book of Job</b>		
25:1		Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
26:1	Then Job answered and said:	
32:6		And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said:
34:1		Then Elihu answered and said:
27:1	And Job again took up his discourse, and said:	
35:1		And Elihu answered and said:
36:1		And Elihu continued, and said:
29:1	And Job again took up his discourse, and said:	
38:1		Then [YHWH] answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:
40:1		And [YHWH] said to Job:
40:3	Then Job answered [YHWH] and said:	
40:6		Then [YHWH] answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:
42:1	Then Job answered [YHWH] and said:	

## 2. Initial Discourses

**This is Satan's chosen battle ground.** Jesus knowingly and willingly went into the wilderness to face Satan the Devil:

Then **Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.**

Then **Jesus said to him,**

**"Be gone, Satan!"** For it is written,

'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'

Then **the devil left him,** and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

(Matthew 4:1, 10-11 ESV)

Jesus carried the day on that battle ground. Job does not have the advantage of knowing in advance who is his enemy. He is ambushed by **"Three Friends"** posing as "comforters", but who, in reality, are **proxies for Satan the Devil.**

Job does NOT have to fight an offensive war and defeat Satan as Jesus did. **Job's only requirement is to resist the Devil and remain faithful to his calling:**

Submit yourselves therefore to God.

**Resist the devil,** and he will flee from you.

(James 4:7 ESV)

**But God has a higher purpose for Job.** Job is indeed "blameless", a faithful True Worshipper of God; but, he suffers from a fatal character flaw which he cannot see. Neither can Satan the Devil see it – otherwise he might have altered his plan of attack. **God uses the attack of Satan through the "Three Friends" to help Job to see and overcome his flaw.**

### 2.1 Job Throws Down the Gauntlet

After the "Three Friends" had sat with Job for a week apparently mourning with him, Job begins to speak. **The presence of the "Three Friends" is presumably of some comfort to Job.** But Job's situation is grave:

- Job's animals have been killed or stolen:  
The **oxen** were plowing and the **donkeys** feeding beside them,  
and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them ...  
The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the **sheep** ...



The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them ... (Job 1:14b-15a, 16aβ, 17aβ ESV)

- His servants have been killed:  
the Sabeans ... struck down the servants with the edge of the sword,  
and I alone have escaped to tell you.  
The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up ... the servants and consumed them,  
and I alone have escaped to tell you.  
The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid ... and struck down the servants  
with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.  
(Job 1:15, 16b, 17b ESV)
- His children have died in a natural disaster:  
Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,  
and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house,  
and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead ...  
(Job 1:18b-19a ESV)
- Job, himself, is smitten with a loathsome disease:  
... struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.  
And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.  
(Job 2:7b-8 ESV)
- And, his wife has suggested he would be better off dead:  
Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die."  
(Job 2:9 ESV)

Job's initial speech plaintively expresses the grief of any human being suffering grievously for no apparent reason. In his suffering, he questions whether it would have been better to have never lived.

Ultimately, he cries to God in anguish asking how this could have happened:

Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said,  
'A man is conceived.'

Let that day be darkness!  
May God above not seek it, nor light shine upon it.

Why did I not die at birth, come out from the womb and expire?

Why did the knees receive me?  
Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?

For then I would have lain down and been quiet;  
I would have slept; then I would have been at rest ...

Why is light<sup>6</sup> given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter in [heart] (nephesh),<sup>7</sup>  
who long for death, but it comes not, and dig for it more than for hidden treasures,  
who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they find the grave?

Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, whom God has hedged in?  
(Job 3:3-4, 11-13, 20-23 ESV)

Under similar circumstances, the Prophet Jeremiah expressed the same emotions:

Cursed be the day on which I was born!

The day when my mother bore me, let it not be blessed!

Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father,

"A son is born to you,"  
making him very glad.

Let that man be like the cities that [YHWH] overthrew without pity;  
let him hear a cry in the morning and an alarm at noon,  
because he did not kill me in the womb;  
so my mother would have been my grave, and her womb forever great.

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<sup>6</sup> "Light" is used as a metaphor for the truth of God. Job understands that he is a True Worshipper, and that God has allowed him to understand his truth. He questions why God has done this and then allows his current situation. See the discussion in section [3.4.3.1 The Metaphor of "Light"](#) in the paper ["Third Pillar - The Way of God"](#) located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ - nephesh, is commonly translated by the English word "soul". However "soul" is a corrupted word because of its association with the pagan concept of the "immortal soul"; see the discussion in [Excursus 2 – נֶפֶשׁ and ψυχή](#) in the paper ["The Transfiguration and the Tabernacle"](#) located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca). Wherever *nephesh* is translated by "soul" in a quotation, it is replaced by a more meaningful word; usually "mind", "heart", "life", or "being".

Why did I come out from the womb to see toil and sorrow, and spend my days in shame?  
(Jeremiah 20:14-18 ESV)

At this point, Job has no answer – his grief overwhelms him, and he see no reason why God allows it. Most likely he is expecting some comfort from the “Three Friends”, perhaps some explanation that will help him cope with the situation. Each of the “Three Friends” goes off in a different direction. Each is driven by his own preconceptions and increasingly finds fault with Job.

Through each of the “Three Friends”, Satan subtly tries to undermine Job’s faith and commitment:

Then Satan answered [YHWH] and said,

“Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life.

But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh,  
and he will curse you to your face.”

(Job 2:4-5 ESV)

## 2.2 Eliphaz and Job

Eliphaz is a person who has had some exposure to the knowledge of God. He is a “religious” person. He sees himself as a fountain of understanding. He feels secure in the conventional wisdom which he espouses. But in actual fact he is NOT helpful to Job. He does NOT accurately reflect God’s teaching. His assessment of Job’s situation is incorrect.

Eliphaz starts off his first speech almost condescendingly praising Job’s accomplishments:

“If one ventures a word with you, will you be impatient?

Yet who can keep from speaking?

Behold, you have instructed many, and you have strengthened the weak hands.

Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, and you have made firm the feeble knees. ...”

(Job 4:2-4 ESV)

But his real purpose is to suggest that Job’s problems are in fact somehow caused by his own doings. Eliphaz immediately attempts to demonstrate his superior knowledge of Way of God, implying that Job is somehow in conflict with the will of God:

“... But now it has come to you, and you are impatient; it touches you, and you are dismayed.

Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?

Remember: who that was innocent ever perished?

Or where were the upright cut off?

As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same.

By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed. ...”

(Job 4:5-9 ESV)

Eliphaz subtly attempts to get Job to consider his argument, “you are impatient”, “you are dismayed”. He flatters Job over his faith, “your fear of God”, “the integrity of your ways”. Then he espouses conventional wisdom, has the “innocent ever perished”, “the upright cut off”? The implication being that because Job is suffering, and his faith is an illusion – there must be a problem between God and Job. Job must have some grievous iniquity, “those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same”.

Next is one of the most difficult passages in the Book of Job. Eliphaz recounts an encounter with a “spirit”. The question is what kind of “spirit”. The text is NOT explicit. Eliphaz presents it as though he feels it is indeed a revelation from God, but given the influence of Satan on the “Three Friends” and the concluding word from the “spirit”, it is certain that this is a “satanic” influence:

“Now a word was brought to me stealthily; my ear received the whisper of it.

Amid thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men,  
dread came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones shake.

A spirit glided past my face; the hair of my flesh stood up.

It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance.

A form was before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice:

‘Can mortal man be in the right before God?

Can a man be pure before his Maker?

Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error;  
how much more those who dwell in houses of clay,

whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.  
Between morning and evening they are beaten to pieces;  
**they perish forever** without anyone regarding it.  
Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them,  
**do they not die**, and that **without wisdom**?"

(Job 4:12-21 ESV)

As with everything from Satan, the argumentation is subtle. Indeed, no human being can be truly righteous, "**right before God**", "**pure before his Maker**". But, the next premise is very specious, "**even in his servants he puts no trust**". God does trust the faithful angels. God does trust True Worshipers who prove faithful. The "spirit" then makes another erroneous assertion, "**they perish forever**", implying that human beings, "**those who dwell in houses of clay**", are inherently fated, "**do they not die**", to die "**without wisdom**". The implication of this is that there is no way out for Job, he should "**curse God and die**".

**Eliphaz goes on to try to convince Job of his superior spiritual insight** by prescribing "repentance" and extolling the greatness of God:

"**As for me**, I would **seek God**, and **to God would I commit my cause**,  
who does great things and unsearchable, marvelous things without number:  
he gives rain on the earth and sends waters on the fields; ..."  
(Job 5:8-10 ESV)

Eliphaz finishes his first speech by assuring Job that **his simple solution** will result in healing and restoration of all that is lost:

"Behold, **blessed is the one whom God reproves**;  
therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty.  
For **he wounds**, but **he binds up**; **he shatters**, but **his hands heal**.  
You shall know that your tent is at peace, and **you shall inspect your fold and miss nothing**.  
You shall know also that **your offspring shall be many**, and your descendants as the grass of the earth.  
**You shall come to your grave in ripe old age**, like a sheaf gathered up in its season.  
Behold, this **we have searched out; it is true**.  
Hear, and know it for your good."  
(Job 5:17-18, 24-27 ESV)

Job is somewhat drawn in by Eliphaz's platitudes. **Job acquiesces to the position that God is reproving him**, but he sees this only as **more reason for God to terminate him**. Job is confident that his **death would be ample recognition of his integrity**:

"... For **the arrows of the Almighty are in me**; my spirit drinks their poison;  
the terrors of God are arrayed against me.  
Oh that I might have my request, and that God would fulfill my hope,  
that it would **please God to crush me**, that he would let loose his hand and **cut me off**!  
This would be my comfort; I would even exult in pain unsparing,  
for **I have not denied the words of the Holy One**. ..."  
(Job 6:4, 8-10 ESV)

But Job is troubled by the accusation that he harbours some grievous iniquity. **He expected comfort from his "Three Friends"**. Now Eliphaz has turned on him. **He challenges the "Three Friends" to show him his sin to teach him how he has gone astray**:

"**He who withholds kindness from a friend** forsakes the fear of the Almighty.  
**My brothers are treacherous** as a torrent-bed, as torrential streams that pass away,  
which are dark with ice, and where the snow hides itself.  
**Teach me**, and I will be silent; **make me understand** how I have gone astray.  
How forceful are upright words!  
But **what does reproof from you reprove**? ..."  
(Job 6:14-16, 24-25 ESV)

**Job then goes into his first soliloquy, *First Soliloquy: What is the Purpose of Life?*** Bildad and Zophar have a go at Job, then Eliphaz picks it up again. In his second speech, **Eliphaz directly attacks Job over his presumed iniquity**. Eliphaz's accusations verge on blasphemy:

"... But **you are doing away with the fear of God** and hindering meditation before God.

For **your iniquity teaches your mouth**, and you choose the tongue of the crafty. Your own mouth condemns you, and not I; your own lips testify against you.

Are you the first man who was born?  
Or were you brought forth before the hills?

**Have you listened in the council of God?**

And do you limit wisdom to yourself?

**Are the comforts of God too small for you**, or the word that deals gently with you.

Why does your heart carry you away, and why do your eyes flash,  
that **you turn your spirit against God** and bring such words out of your mouth? ...”

(Job 15:4-8, 11-13 ESV)

Eliphaz accuses Job of putting himself above God, **“you are doing away with the fear of God”**; of gross arrogance, trusting in his own iniquitous teaching, **“your iniquity teaches your mouth”**; and, of misrepresenting God, **“have you listened in the council of God”**. Eliphaz charges Job with gross ingratitude, **“are the comforts of God too small for you”**, and with directly attacking God, **“you turn your spirit against God”**.

In these accusations and charges, Eliphaz indeed shows what is the source of his motivation. **These charges and accusations are the very heart of Satan’s rebellion against God**. Satan would, through his proxies, try to convince Job that his attitude is “satanic”. Eliphaz flies his colours plainly by requoting the “satanic” words of his spirit encounter:

“... **What is man, that he can be pure?**

Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous?

Behold, **God puts no trust in his holy ones**, and the heavens are not pure in his sight;<sup>8</sup>  
how much less **one who is abominable and corrupt**, a man who drinks injustice like water! ...”

(Job 15:14-16 ESV)

Eliphaz goes on to support his contention that Job is **“one who is abominable and corrupt”**, highly deserving of punishment, **“he is marked for the sword”**:

“... **The wicked man writhes in pain** all his days, through all the years that are laid up for the ruthless.

**Dreadful sounds are in his ears**; in prosperity the destroyer will come upon him.

He does not believe that he will return out of darkness, and **he is marked for the sword**.

He wanders abroad for bread, saying, ‘Where is it?’

He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his hand; **distress and anguish terrify him**;  
they prevail against him, like a king ready for battle.

Because **he has stretched out his hand against God** and **defies the Almighty** ...”

(Job 15:20-25 ESV)

**Job** has now abandoned all hope of “comfort” from the “Three Friends”. He still cannot understand why God has afflicted him, but he **holds to his integrity and continues to look to his death**:

“I have heard many such things; **miserable comforters are you all**.

Shall windy words have an end?

Or **what provokes you that you answer?**

**I also could speak as you do**, if you were in my place;

I could join words together against you and shake my head at you.

**God gives me up to the ungodly** and casts me into the hands of **the wicked**.

If I speak, my pain is not assuaged, and if I forbear, how much of it leaves me?

Surely now **God has worn me out**; he has made desolate all my company.

**My face is red with weeping**, and on my eyelids is deep darkness,  
although **there is no violence in my hands**, and **my prayer is pure**.

For when a few years have come **I shall go the way from which I shall not return**.”

(Job 16:2-4, 11, 6-7, 16-17, 22 ESV)

Job then presents **another soliloquy**, *Fourth Soliloquy: Where is My Hope?*. Bildad and Zophar speak again. Then Eliphaz presents his third and final speech. **Eliphaz continues his unrelenting assault on Job** accusing him of grievous social and moral sins:

**“Can a man be profitable to God?**

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<sup>8</sup> See Job 4:18

**Surely he who is wise is profitable to himself.**

**Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are in the right,**  
or **is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?**

**Is it for your fear of him that he reproofs you** and enters into judgment with you?

**Is not your evil abundant?** There is **no end to your iniquities.**

For you have **exacted pledges of your brothers** for nothing and **stripped the naked** of their clothing.

You have **given no water to the weary** to drink, and you have **withheld bread from the hungry.**

The man with power **possessed the land,** and the favored man lived in it.

**You have sent widows away empty,** and the arms of the fatherless were crushed. ...”

(Job 22:2-9 ESV)

The silence in this speech is deafening. The subtlety screams. As with all Satan’s lies, he carefully mixes in some elements of truth. The rhetorical question, “**can a man be profitable to God**”, is provisionally answered by the next two questions. Indeed, nothing any human being can do is inherently a “**pleasure to the Almighty**” or a “**gain to him**”. The subtlety is in the intervening assertion, “**he who is wise is profitable to himself**”. Having planted these seeds, Eliphaz takes his best shot to convince Job that he is indeed evil, “**is not your evil abundant**”, and his integrity is an illusion, “**is it for your fear of him that he reproofs you**”. Eliphaz then goes on to try to convince Job to repent of his evil, and then indeed he will be “**profitable to himself**”, and great wealth and power will ensue:

“... **Will you keep to the old way that wicked men have trod?**

Agree with God, and be at peace; thereby **good will come to you.**

Receive instruction from his mouth, and lay up his words in your heart.

If you return to the Almighty you will be built up; if you remove injustice far from your tents,

if you **lay gold** in the dust, and **gold of Ophir** among the stones of the torrent-bed,

then **the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver.**

For then you will delight yourself in the Almighty and lift up your face to God.

You will make your prayer to him, and **he will hear you,** and you will pay your vows.

**You will decide on a matter,** and **it will be established for you,** and light will shine on your ways. ...”

(Job 22:15, 21-28 ESV)

**The subtlety is in the confusion.** True repentance leads to a relationship with God. But “repentance” from supposed evils with a motivation of personal profit and gain is a heinous sin. This subtlety is the ploy of Satan the Devil to break Job, to bring him to a place where he will “**curse God to his face**”. Job does NOT fall for it, but expresses confidence in God take him through the dark times and complete the work he has started in him “**he will complete what he appoints for me**”:

“... But **he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.**

My foot has held fast to his steps; **I have kept his way** and have not turned aside.

**I have not departed from the commandment** of his lips;

**I have treasured the words of his mouth** more than my portion of food.

But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back?

What he desires, that he does.

For **he will complete what he appoints for me,** and many such things are in his mind. ...”

(Job 23:10-14 ESV)

Prompted by Eliphaz’s charges of moral and ethical sin, Job then goes into a soliloquy on the true evils of the world and God’s dealing with evil through retributive justice, ***Sixth Soliloquy: Retributive Justice.***

## **Assessment of Eliphaz**

The author of the Book of Job is very careful to make it clear that **the “Three Friends” do NOT know that they are in fact espousing the agenda of Satan the Devil.** Eliphaz is presented as a person sincerely trying to represent God. His knowledge of God is at best very superficial. He repeatedly resorts to simple solutions and platitudes of conventional wisdom. Eliphaz becomes more and more convinced of his position as his attacks on Job grow stronger. He is blinded by the influence of Satan the Devil. He never steps back to consider another possibility. In the end, his words could have been spoken by Satan the Devil himself.

Eliphaz comes across as a “religious person”. He is someone who feels his “heart is right with God”, but in fact he does not really know God and is NOT known by God. **He is among the “foolish virgins”:**

And **the foolish said to the wise**, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

But the wise answered, saying,

‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you,  
go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’

And while they were going to buy, **the bridegroom came**,  
and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.

Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, **‘Lord, lord, open to us.’**

But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, **I do not know you.**’

(Matthew 25:8-12 ESV)

**Job is greatly distressed** at the attack of someone he regarded as a “friend”; someone from whom he expected comfort. Again the author of the Book of Job is very careful to portray that **Job does NOT see Satan behind Eliphaz**. This is the lesson of individual responsibility.<sup>9</sup> No person can hide behind a claim that “the Devil made me do it”. **A True Worshipper of God must face Satan head-on** in whatever guise Satan chooses to attack:

Put on the whole armor of God,  
that you may be able to **stand against the schemes of the devil**.  
(Ephesians 6:11 ESV)

Submit yourselves therefore to God.

**Resist the devil**, and **he will flee from you**.

(James 4:7 ESV)

**Job knows in his heart that he is striving to live by the Way of God**. He rightly refuses to let Eliphaz convince him that he is somehow deep in moral or ethical sin. Eliphaz is of no help in showing Job what is his real problem. Eliphaz recognizes that Job trusts in his own righteousness, but he does not understand that is what Job has to overcome.

## **2.3 Bildad and Job**

**Bildad is someone who “believes in God”**; he accepts the plain teaching of “General Revelation”<sup>10</sup> that there has to be a Creator; but, **he is NOT a religious person like Eliphaz**. Bildad is well educated – he bases **his arguments on logic and history**. Again, like Eliphaz, he is NOT helpful to Job because he CANNOT see Job’s real problem, let alone, help him solve it.

Bildad obviously understands that Job is deeply religious, and he respects his position. In his first speech, **Bildad approaches Job with a philosophical perspective on God**:

“How long will you say these things, and **the words of your mouth be a great wind**?

**Does God pervert justice?**

Or **does the Almighty pervert the right?**

If your children have sinned against him, he has delivered them into the hand of their transgression.

If you will **seek God and plead** with the Almighty **for mercy**,

if you are pure and upright, surely then **he will rouse himself for you**  
and **restore your rightful habitation**.

And though your beginning was small, **your latter days will be very great**. ...”

(Job 8:2-7 ESV)

To Bildad the solution is simple, **“seek God and plead ... for mercy”**. This will trigger God to act, **“he will rouse himself for you”**, resulting in restoration of former things, **“restore your rightful habitation”**. Bildad’s conclusion then demonstrates his lack of true understanding. He expects physical benefits from God for spiritual service, **“your latter days will be very great”**. This is the hook that Satan hopes Job will grab – a desire for restoration of physical abundance. Bildad concludes his speech with a platitude that Job cannot resist:

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<sup>9</sup> See the discussion in section **3.4.2.2 The Sins of Israel (Individual Responsibility)** in the paper “Third Pillar - The Way of God” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca)

<sup>10</sup> See the discussion in section **3.2 General Revelation** in the paper “Third Pillar - The Way of God” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca)



“Behold, **God will not reject a blameless man**, nor take the hand of evildoers. ...”

Then **Job answered** and said:

“**Truly I know that it is so**: But how can a man be in the right before God?

**If one wished to contend with him**, one could not answer him once in a thousand times.

Though **I am in the right**, I cannot answer him; **I must appeal for mercy to my accuser**. ...”

(Job 8:20, 9:1-3, 15 ESV)

Because **Job trusts in his righteousness**, he accepts Bildad’s proposition, “**God will not reject a blameless man**”. Job then goes on to formulate **the legal case he would like to present to God** to demonstrate his righteousness. However, Job is conflicted. His case is dependant on his “**appeal for mercy to my accuser**”. Job sees God as his legal adversary, but he is also the “judge” and “jury” in the case:

“... For he is not a man, as I am, that I might answer him, that **we should come to trial together**.

**There is no arbiter between us**, who might lay his hand on us both. ...”

(Job 9:32-33 ESV)

In spite of his misgivings, **Job feels his only chance is to press on with his case**:

“... If it is **a matter of justice, who can summon him?**

Though **I am in the right**, my own mouth would condemn me;

though **I am blameless**, he would prove me perverse.

I am blameless; **I regard not myself; I loathe my life**.

If I say, ‘I will forget my complaint, I will put off my sad face, and be of good cheer,’

I become afraid of all my suffering, for **I know you will not hold me innocent**.

**I shall be condemned**; why then do I labor in vain?

Let him take his rod away from me, and let not dread of him terrify me.

**Then I would speak without fear** of him, for I am not so in myself.”

(Job 9:19b-21, 27-29, 34-35 ESV)

Job then sets into his second soliloquy: a heartfelt prayer seeking understanding and mercy, **Second Soliloquy: Prayer for Understanding and Mercy**. After Zophar and Eliphaz speak, **Bildad continues** with his second speech. He catalogues a long list of **misery to which the “wicked” are subjected**. Many of his points directly alluded to Job’s plight:

Indeed, **the light of the wicked is put out**, and the flame of his fire does not shine.

**The light is dark in his tent**, and his lamp above him is put out.

(Job 18:5-6 ESV)

- Why is **light**<sup>11</sup> given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul ...  
Why is **light** given to a man whose way is hidden, whom God has hedged in?  
(Job 3:20, 23 ESV)

**Terrors frighten him on every side**, and chase him at his heels.

(Job 18:11 ESV)

- When I say, ‘My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,’  
then you scare me with dreams and **terrify me** with visions,  
(Job 7:13-14 ESV)

**It consumes the parts of his skin**; the firstborn of death consumes his limbs.

(Job 18:13 ESV)

- My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt; **my skin** hardens, then breaks out afresh.  
(Job 7:5 ESV)

Surely such are the dwellings of **the unrighteous**, such is the place of **him who knows not God**.

(Job 18:21 ESV)

**This is an all-out assault on Job’s conviction of his own integrity** – Bildad asserts the far from being “righteous”, Job is one “**who knows not God**”. The motivator for such an assault remains silent. Satan unrelentingly attempts to get Job to accept the fact that he is indeed wicked, incorrigible, “**stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face**”, so that he will “**curse God and die**.”

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 6

Job continues to be devastated by the grossly inconsiderate attacks of the “Three Friends”, **“how long will you torment me”**. **Job remains confident in his faith and commitment to God**, but **some doubts** begin to creep into his thinking. Again, **he attributes his plight to God**, **“he has set darkness upon my paths”**.

Job remains unaware that Satan is actual perpetrator of his misery:

**“How long will you torment me and break me in pieces with words?**

These ten times you have **cast reproach upon me**; are you not ashamed **to wrong me**?

And even if it be true that I have erred, **my error remains with myself**.

If indeed you magnify yourselves against me and make my disgrace an argument against me, know then that **God has put me in the wrong** and closed his net about me.

Behold, I cry out, ‘Violence!’ but I am not answered; I call for help, but **there is no justice**.

**He has walled up my way**, so that I cannot pass, and **he has set darkness upon my paths**. ...”

(Job 19:2-8 ESV)

**Job goes on to lament his tragic situation** – all the people in his life are now estranged from him. His body is racked with disease, and his comforters, his “Three Friends”, pursue him like vicious animals:

“He has put my **brothers** far from me, and **those who knew me are wholly estranged from me**.

My **relatives** have failed me, my **close friends** have forgotten me.

My bones stick to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.

**Have mercy** on me, **have mercy** on me, O you **my friends**, for the hand of God has touched me!

**Why do you, like God, pursue me?**

Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

(Job 19:13-14, 20-22 ESV)

The actions of the “Three Friends” prompt Job into his shortest soliloquy, but the soliloquy which contains his strongest statement of faith, **Fifth Soliloquy: My Redeemer Lives**. Zophar and Eliphaz each speak once more, then **Bildad presents his third and final speech**. **This speech is difficult due to the state of the text**. Chapter 25 contains only six verses, which taken alone are almost out of character for Bildad. Accepting Hartley’s suggestion makes sense that chapter 28 verses 13-23 should be included with chapter 25. Chapter 25 verse 2-6 are in the same vein as chapter 8 verses 3-6: **Bildad is alluding to Job’s acknowledged religious perspective**, which he follows up with an attack on Job:

**“Dominion and fear are with God**; he makes peace in his high heaven.

Is there any number to his armies?

Upon whom does his light not arise?

**How then can man be in the right before God?**

How can he who is born of woman be pure?

Behold, even the moon is not bright, and the stars are not pure in his eyes;

how **much less** man, who is a maggot, and the son of man, who is a worm!”

(Job 25:2-6 ESV)

Again, the influence of Satan the Devil screams through this speech. Satan subtly starts off with a truth, **“dominion and fear are with God”**. Then the truth is twisted a little, **“how then can man be in the right before God”**, this is almost a quote from Eliphaz’s familiar spirit:

‘Can mortal man be in the **right before God?**

Can a man be **pure before his Maker?** ...’

(Job 4:17 ESV)

Indeed, no human being is truly righteous, truly holy. Only God is holy, but **human beings can become holy through the resurrection of the dead**. This is what Satan hates. Man is now in a state **“much less”** than the true righteousness that will come with the resurrection. **Satan seeks to deprive Job of his conviction in the resurrection**. Man can be **“right before God”** through repentance and faith. In this state God requires man to pursue “righteousness”.<sup>12</sup> The second part of Bildad’s last speech, his attack on Job, chapter 27 verses 13-23, is more or less a rehash from Bildad’s second speech listing **the woes of the wicked implying they apply to Job**.

<sup>12</sup> See the discussion of this in section **3.5.2.1 Davidic Psalms (David Explores “Righteousness”)** in the paper “Third Pillar - The Way of God” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).



Job's reply to Bildad is short and to the point. **He questions Bildad's motivation, "how you have helped"**. Job makes a statement that is as close as the author of the Book of Job gets to suggesting that Job may have suspected Satan behind the "Three Friends", **"with whose help have you uttered words", "whose breath has come out from you"**:

**"How you have helped him who has no power!**

How you have saved the arm that has no strength!

How you have counseled him who has no wisdom, and plentifully declared sound knowledge!

**With whose help have you uttered words, and whose breath has come out from you?**

(Job 26:2-4 ESV)

Finally, Job alludes to General Revelation and extolls God's greatness:

[God] stretches out the north over the void and hangs the earth on nothing.

He binds up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not split open under them.

He covers the face of the full moon and spreads over it his cloud.

Behold, **these are but the outskirts of his ways ..."**

(Job 26:7-9, 14a ESV)

## Assessment of Bildad

Bildad is more aloof towards Job than Eliphaz – perhaps he was not such a close "friend". Eliphaz approached Job almost respectfully, **"if one ventures a word with you", "you have instructed many"**. Bildad steps right in and accuses Job, **"the words of your mouth be a great wind"**. Bildad's attack is immediate and unrelenting, **"If you will seek God", "if you are pure and upright"**; of course, implying that Job's righteousness is an illusion. **Bildad tries to establish his position of superior wisdom** by appealing to history:

**"For inquire, please, of bygone ages,** and consider what **the fathers** have searched out.

For we are but of yesterday and know nothing, for our days on earth are a shadow.

**Will they not teach you** and tell you and utter words out of their understanding? ..."

(Job 8:8-10 ESV)

Bildad's second and third speeches are blatant: Job is a sinner, **"the light of the wicked is put out"**; his plight is deserving given his iniquity, **"such are the dwellings of the unrighteous, such is the place of him who knows not God"**; Bildad asserts that there is no hope for Job, **"how then can man be in the right before God"**. This is the message of depression with which Satan tries to afflict all True Worshipers. If Satan can convince a person that he/she is worthless, an incorrigible sinner, devoid of hope; that person is sadly in very vulnerable position from which Satan hopes to induce the person to **"curse God and die."**

The challenge Bildad's accusations presents to Job is to remain steadfast in faith. Bildad's arguments are convincing, **"truly I know that it is so"**, and Job appears to go off the track with his **"legal case"** to present to God, **"if one wished to contend with him", "I must appeal for mercy to my accuser"**. However, as the interplay in the Book of Job progresses, it is **Job's logical thinking with regard to his "legal case"** which enables him to see through the lies of Satan presented by the "Three Friends".

This is **an object lesson** for True Worshipers: **trust the lead of the Holy Spirit to guide in understanding** – don't let the cleverly presented lies of Satan, through his proxies, cause derailment:

... until we all attain to the unity of the **faith** and of the **knowledge** of the Son of God,

to **mature** manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

**so that we may no longer be children,**

**tossed to and fro** by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine,

by human cunning, **by craftiness in deceitful schemes.**

(Ephesians 4:13-14 ESV)

## 2.4 Zophar and Job

**Zophar is a "religious hobbyist"**. He fancies himself to have extensive knowledge of God, but his understanding is incredibly superficial. Having heard Eliphaz and Bildad both speak and considering Job's responses to them, in his first speech, he jumps right into the fray:

"Should a **multitude of words** go unanswered, and **a man full of talk** be judged right?

Should **your babble** silence men, and when you mock, **shall no one shame you?**

For you say, 'My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in God's eyes.'

**But oh, that God would speak** and open his lips to you,  
and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom!  
For he is manifold in understanding.

**Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.** ..."  
(Job 11:2-6 ESV)

Zophar exhibits no respect for Job, "**a man full of talk**", "**your babble**". He attempts to establish that he has superior knowledge of God, "**oh, that God would speak**". Zophar apishly reiterates the contentions of Eliphaz and Bildad, "**God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves**". The rest of Zophar's first speech adds nothing of substance that has not already been said by the other two. He ends with a familiar refrain concerning Job's accused wickedness:

"But the eyes of the wicked will fail;  
**all way of escape will be lost** to them, and **their hope is to breathe their last**."  
(Job 11:20 ESV)

And Satan said:

"... But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and **he will curse you to your face**."  
(Job 2:5 ESV)

And Satan's proxy said, "**Curse God and die**."

**Job is becoming feed-up with the accusations of the "Three Friends"**. Job's reply to Zophar is as much for the others as it is for Zophar. Job strikes back at the supposed wisdom of the "Three Friends". He makes statements, almost sarcastically, to demonstrate their knowledge of God is at best trivial, if not completely erroneous:

**"No doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you.**

But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you.

**Who does not know such things as these?**

Who among all these does not know that **the hand of [YHWH] has done this?**

In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.

**With God are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding.**

If he tears down, none can rebuild; if he shuts a man in, none can open.

If he withholds the waters, they dry up; if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.

With him are strength and sound wisdom; **the deceived and the deceiver are his.** ..."

(Job 12:2-3, 9-10, 13-16 ESV)

"Behold, **my eye has seen all this**, my ear has heard and understood it.

What you know, **I also know**; am not inferior to you.

Your maxims are **proverbs of ashes**; your defenses are **defenses of clay**."

(Job 13:1-2, 12 ESV)

Job takes a direct shot at the "Three Friends", "**the deceived and the deceiver**".<sup>13</sup> Job in his faith continues to insist on his innocence. He knows that he has had a living relationship with God. Job continues to pursue the idea of presenting his case to God:

I am a laughingstock to my friends;

**I, who called to God and he answered me**, a just and blameless man, am a laughingstock.

(Job 12:4 ESV)

But **I would speak to the Almighty**, and **I desire to argue my case with God**.

(Job 13:3 ESV)

Job makes it plain that he recognizes the erroneous nature of the arguments, the lies, of the "Three Friends". However, the author of the Book of Job does NOT state that Job sees Satan the Devil behind the "Three Friends":

"As for you, **you whitewash with lies**; worthless physicians are you all.

**Will you speak falsely for God** and speak deceitfully for him?

Will you show partiality toward him?

Will you plead the case for God?

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<sup>13</sup> This is a clear allusion by the author of the Book of Job to the fact that Satan is behind the accusations of the "Three Friends".

**Will it be well with you when he searches you out?**

Or can you deceive him, as one deceives a man?

**He will surely rebuke you** if in secret you show partiality.

(Job 13:4, 7-10 ESV)

After Zophar's first speech, Job goes into his longest and perhaps most penetrating soliloquy, *Third Soliloquy: If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again?* Eliphaz and Bildad speak again, then Zophar has his second and last speech. Zophar tries to counter Job's rebuttals by demonstrating his "**superior wisdom**":

"Therefore **my thoughts answer me**, because of my haste within me.

**I hear censure that insults me**, and out of my understanding a spirit answers me.

**Do you not know this from of old**, since man was placed on earth,

that **the exulting of the wicked is short**, and the **joy of the godless but for a moment**? ..."

(Job 20:2-5 ESV)

**The rest of Zophar's speech is a castigation of "the wicked" with the implication that Job is among "the wicked"**. Bildad had introduced this theme in chapter 8 verses 13-20. Zophar had already commented briefly in chapter 11 verse 20. The theme was reiterated by Eliphaz in chapter 15 verses 20-35; and, by Bildad in chapter 18 verses 5-21. Eliphaz would continue the theme in chapter 22 verses 15-18; and, Bildad in chapter 27 verses 13-23. Zophar's speech adds little that is NOT in the other speeches. **This is perhaps the reason why Zophar has only two speeches – there is nothing further for him to say.**

Job had briefly responded to Bildad's accusation of "wickedness" in chapter 9 verses 22-24. Job would later go on to contemplate the theme in his *Sixth Soliloquy: Retributive Justice*. Job is feed-up; he now lays bare his feelings toward the attacks by the 'Three Friends'. He contends they are wrong: **in this world the wicked do prosper. There is no relationship between wickedness and calamity.** The righteous are subject to calamity in just the same measure as the wicked. At this time, **God ignores the wicked in this world:**

"... **Why do the wicked live**, reach old age, and grow mighty in power?

Their offspring are established in their presence, and their descendants before their eyes.

Their houses are safe from fear, and **no rod of God is upon them.**

**They say to God,**

**'Depart from us!**

**We do not desire the knowledge of your ways.**

What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?

And what profit do we get if we pray to him?'

Behold, is not their prosperity in their hand?

**The counsel of the wicked is far from me.**

**How often is it** that the lamp of the wicked is put out?

That their **calamity comes upon them**?

That God distributes pains in his anger?

Behold, **I know your thoughts and your schemes to wrong me.**

Have you not asked those who travel the roads, and do you not accept their testimony

that **the evil man is spared in the day of calamity**, that he is rescued in the day of wrath?

How then will you comfort me with empty nothings?

**There is nothing left of your answers but falsehood.**"

(Job 21:7-9, 14-17, 27, 29-30, 34 ESV)

## **Assessment of Zophar**

Zophar is a reflection of the "emptiness" of the way of the world. He really contributes nothing to the attacks by Eliphaz and Bildad, but **he is a reminder that the agents of Satan are manifold.** There is always someone nearby ready to be used as a proxy of Satan to attack a True Worshipper.

**The value of the Zophar cycles is in Job's responses.** Job makes plain the triviality of the "wisdom" of the "Three Friends", "**who does not know such things as these**". The way of the world is bankrupt – Satan tries to make evil look desirable, "**you speak falsely for God**". True Worshipers must see through it avoiding "**the deceived and the deceiver**". Job remains sure of his integrity, "**I would speak to the Almighty**", and considers a most important topic, eternal life, in his *Third Soliloquy: If a Man Dies, Will*

**He Live Again?** Job's final response to Zophar is one of the best discussions in the whole Bible considering the prosperity of the wicked.

Zophar epitomizes the penchant of the "Three Friends" to parrot **conventional wisdom and empty platitudes**. This is **the substance of Satan's world**. This emptiness was again **epitomized by the Pharisees** whom Jesus encountered:

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,  
"The **scribes** and the **Pharisees** sit on Moses' seat,  
so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do.  
For they **preach, but do not practice**.  
**They tie up heavy burdens**, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders,  
but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.  
**They do all their deeds to be seen by others.** ..."

But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!**

Woe to you, **blind guides** ...

(Matthew 23:1-5a, 13a, 16a ESV)

"... How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread?

**Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."**

Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread,  
but of **the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees**.

(Matthew 16:11-12 ESV)

**When "leaven" has acted there is nothing left, emptiness.** The way of the world, the way of Satan the Devil, the way espoused by the "Three Friends", is nothing but emptiness. Job's struggle is to see through the deception and remain faithful and committed to the Way of God.

## 2.5 Job's Soliloquies

The main theme of the first half of the Book of Job is Satan's attack on Job through the "Three Friends". Job's speeches in the first half of the book, make plain his suffering. Throughout his suffering, Job retains his perspective – he knows he is faithful to God and is living by the Way of God. Despite Satan's efforts to convince Job that he is wicked, **Job knows that he is NOT wicked**, and **he rightly clings to his integrity**. **Job's steadfastness is an object lesson for all True Worshippers**: Job refuses to compromise his faith in God and his commitment to living by the Way of God.

**The soliloquies take the first half of the book to a higher level by examining concepts which are outside of the main argumentation.** Job contemplates the basis of his faith and his commitment to God. **The six soliloquies follow a definite progression demonstrating Job's faith and commitment.** In the first soliloquy, Job rises from his pain and suffering to consider the purpose of life. Then he ponders the fact that a relationship with God is only available through God's mercy. The third soliloquy considers the natural outcome of a relationship with God – eternal life. Then Job grapples with the question of the reality of the hope of eternal life. In the fifth soliloquy, Job lays bare his faith in the Plan of God. The last soliloquy comes back to dealing with Satan's world – retributive justice.

**Each soliloquy has some trigger.** In responding to a speech of one of the "Three Friends", in the discourse part of Job's speech, there is a thought or statement upon which the soliloquy builds; for example:

- First soliloquy, Job 7:1-21, "**What is the Purpose of Life?**  
Oh that my vexation were weighed, and all my calamity laid in the balances!  
Is there any injustice on my tongue?  
**Cannot my palate discern the cause of calamity?**  
(Job 6:2, 30 ESV)
- Second soliloquy, Job 10:1-22, "**Prayer for Understanding and Mercy**"  
**He is wise in heart and mighty in strength** ...  
Behold, he snatches away; who can turn him back?  
Who will say to him, '**What are you doing?**'  
I shall be condemned; **why then do I labor in vain?**  
If I wash myself with snow and cleanse my hands with lye,

yet you will plunge me into a pit ...  
(Job 9:4a, 12, 29-31a ESV)

- Third soliloquy, Job 13:13-26, 14:1-22, **“If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again?”**  
But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you;  
or **the bushes of the earth**, and they **will teach you**;  
**He** uncovers the deeps out of darkness and **brings deep darkness to light**.  
(Job 12:7-8a, 22 ESV)
- Fourth soliloquy, Job 17:1-16, **“Where is My Hope?”**  
O earth, **cover not my blood**, and let my cry find no resting place.  
Even now, behold, **my witness is in heaven**, and he who testifies for me is on high.  
My friends scorn me; **my eye pours out tears to God**,  
that **he would argue the case of a man with God** ...  
(Job 16:18-21a ESV)
- Fifth soliloquy, Job 19:23-29, **“My Redeemer Lives”**  
**He has walled up my way**, so that **I cannot pass**, and he has set darkness upon my paths.  
He has stripped from me my glory and **taken the crown from my head**.  
(Job 19:8-9 ESV)
- Sixth soliloquy, Job 24:1-25, **“Retributive Justice”**  
I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.  
**I would know what he would answer me** and understand what he would say to me.  
There **an upright man could argue with him**, and I would be acquitted forever by my judge.  
(Job 23:4-5, 7 ESV)

## First Soliloquy: What is the Purpose of Life?

Job chapter 7 verses 1-21; trigger: Eliphaz’s first speech

Job asserts that **life is hard**, and his current plight makes it **unbearable**:

“Has not **man a hard service on earth**, and are not his days like the days of a hired hand?  
Like a slave who longs for the shadow, and like a hired hand who looks for his wages,  
so I am allotted **months of emptiness**, and **nights of misery** are apportioned to me.  
When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’  
But the night is long, and I am full of tossing till the dawn.  
My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt; my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh.  
**My days** are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle and **come to their end without hope**. ...”  
(Job 7:1-6 ESV)

**Job continues in prayer**. Job acknowledges the shortness of life and asserts that **his plight gives him the right to complain to God**. Job does NOT acknowledge Satan the Devil behind his plight:

**“Remember that my life is a breath**; my eye will never again see good.  
The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more;  
while your eyes are on me, I shall be gone.  
As the cloud fades and vanishes, so **he who goes down to [the grave] (shē’ol)<sup>14</sup> does not come up**;  
he returns no more to his house, nor does his place know him anymore.  
**Therefore I will not restrain my mouth**;  
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;  
I will complain in the bitterness of my [being] (nephesh).<sup>15</sup> ...”  
(Job 7:7-11 ESV)

Job’s musings on the finality of death, **“he who goes down to the grave does not come up”**, are the beginnings of the exploration of the concept of **“the resurrection and eternal life”**. This concept is one of the most important sub-themes of the Book of Job. The concept is clearly on Job’s mind as he continues his prayer **“I would not live forever”**. He explicitly asks God about the purpose of human life, **“what is man, that you make so much of him”**? Having been accused of iniquity, Job asks God about it, **“if I sin, what do I do to you”**, and prays for forgiveness. Job ends the soliloquy on the theme of **“the resurrection and eternal”**:

<sup>14</sup> The Hebrew word שְׁאוֹל - shē’ol means “the grave”. Using it as proper noun is a corruption passed on the pagan notion of “hell” – a place where the dead continue living in some form.

<sup>15</sup> See footnote 7

**"... I loathe my life; I would not live forever.**

Leave me alone, for my days are a breath.

**What is man,** that **you make so much of him,** and that **you set your heart on him,** visit him every morning and test him every moment?

How long will you not look away from me, nor leave me alone till I swallow my spit?

**If I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher of mankind?**

Why have you made me your mark?

Why have I become a burden to you?

Why do you not **pardon my transgression** and **take away my iniquity?**

For now I shall lie in the earth; **you will seek me,** but I shall not be."

(Job 7:16-21 ESV)

This soliloquy sets the themes for all the soliloquies. Job's striving for understanding, "**what is man, that you make so much of him**"; the need for God's mercy, "**pardon my transgression**"; the resurrection of the dead, "**I would not live forever**", "**you will seek me**"; hope "**you set your heart on him**", "**remember that my life is a breath**"; retributive justice, "**if I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher of mankind**".

## Second Soliloquy: Prayer for Understanding and Mercy

Job chapter 10 verses 1-22; trigger: Bildad's first speech

This soliloquy brings out **the depths of Job's depression:**

**"I loathe my life;** I will give free utterance to my complaint;

I will speak in **the bitterness of my [being] (nephesh).**<sup>16</sup>

I will say to God, **Do not condemn me;** let me know **why you contend against me.**

**Does it seem good to you to oppress,** to despise the work of your hands and favor the designs of the wicked?

**Have you eyes of flesh?**<sup>17</sup>

Do you see as man sees?

Are your days as the days of man, or your years as a man's years,

that **you seek out my iniquity and search for my sin,**

although **you know that I am not guilty,** and **there is none to deliver out of your hand?** ..."

(Job 10:1-7 ESV)

Ultimately God is responsible, "**you seek out my iniquity and search for my sin**". Job as yet cannot see what is his sin, "**know that I am not guilty**", so he does NOT see God's actual role, "**why you contend against me**". Job goes on to acknowledge that God must have a purpose, "**I know that this was your purpose**", but he does NOT understand, "**why did you bring me out from the womb**". Even if he is "**in the right**", it is worthless. In his present plight he would rather just die, "**leave me alone ... before I go**":

**"... You have granted me life and [hesed],**<sup>18</sup> and your care has preserved my spirit.

Yet these things you hid in your heart; **I know that this was your purpose.**

If I sin, you watch me and do not acquit me of my iniquity.

If I am guilty, woe to me!

**If I am in the right,**

I cannot lift up my head, for I am filled with disgrace and **look on my affliction.**

**Why did you bring me out from the womb?**

Would that I had died before any eye had seen me and were as though I had not been, carried from the womb to the grave.

Are not my days few?

Then cease, and **leave me alone,** that I may find a little cheer **before I go**—and I shall not return—to the land of darkness and deep shadow, the land of gloom like thick darkness, like deep shadow without any order, where light is as thick darkness."

(Job 10:12-15, 18-22 ESV)

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<sup>16</sup> See footnote 7

<sup>17</sup> This plaintive cry of Job foreshadows one of the reasons YHWH became incarnate as a flesh and blood human being, Jesus of Nazareth; see Hebrews 2:17-18, 4:15, 5:7-8, Philippians 2:5-7.

<sup>18</sup> The Hebrew word חֶסֶד - hesed, has no equivalent English word. It encompasses God's love for human beings as expressed by the various covenants God has entered into with human beings; hence, the best translation would be "covenant love".



Job is confused by his situation. He believes that God is behind his plight, **“does it seem good to you to oppress”**; but, he has faith that God has a purpose and that he will come to understand it, **“you have granted me life and hesed”**. Job continues to contemplate the understanding in subsequent soliloquies.

### Third Soliloquy: If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again?

Job chapter 13 verses 13-28, chapter 14 verses 1-22; trigger: Zophar’s first speech

In this soliloquy **Job goes through a whole range of emotions**. His plight is grievous. His “comforters” have attacked him. He has been accused of gross iniquity, but **he is sure of his integrity**. He feels he must present a “legal case” before God to demonstrate his “righteousness”:

**“Let me have silence, and I will speak, and let come on me what may.**

Why should I take my flesh in my teeth and put my life in my hand?

Though he slay me, **I will hope in him**; yet **I will argue my ways to his face.**

**This will be my salvation**, that **the godless shall not come before him.**

**Keep listening to my words**, and let my declaration be in your ears.

Behold, **I have prepared my case; I know that I shall be in the right.**

Who is there who will contend with me? ...”

(Job 13:13-19a ESV)

Job is confident that he can come before God with his case, **“I will hope in him”**, **“this will be my salvation”**. Job is sure that his “righteousness” will gain him audience, **“the godless shall not come before him”**. Job goes in prayer before God, **“keep listening to my words”**, and opens his presentation, **“I know that I shall be in the right”**. Next Job prays for relief from his plight and asks God to reveal any sins of which he may not be aware:

“... Only grant me two things, then I will not hide myself from your face:

**withdraw your hand far from me, and let not dread of you terrify me.**

Then call, and I will answer; or let me speak, and you reply to me.

How many are my iniquities and my sins?

**Make me know my transgression** and my sin.

(Job 13:20-23 ESV)

Job continues by asking God to consider the frailty of human life:

**“Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble.**

He comes out like a flower and withers; he flees like a shadow and continues not.

And do you open your eyes on such a one and bring me into judgment with you?

**Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?**

There is not one.

Since his days are determined, and **the number of his months is with you**,

and you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass,

look away from him and leave him alone, that he may enjoy, like a hired hand, his day.

(Job 14:1-6 ESV)

Job is beginning to comprehend the necessity of transformation, **“bring a clean thing out of an unclean”**.

Job acknowledges the finite nature of human existence, **“the number of his months is with you”**. **This leads him to consider “a tree”**, which though apparently dead, will suddenly spring back to life:

“For **there is hope for a tree**, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease.

Though its root grow old in the earth, and **its stump die in the soil**,

yet **at the scent of water** it **will bud** and **put out branches** like a young plant. ...”

(Job 14:7-9 ESV)

**Job considers conventional wisdom, “death is final”**:

“... But **a man dies** and is laid low; man **breathes his last**, and where is he?

As waters fail from a lake and a river wastes away and dries up,

so **a man lies down and rises not again**;

till the heavens are no more **he will not awake** or **be roused out of his sleep**. ...”

(Job 14:10-12 ESV)

There is a glimmer of hope: **Job recognizes death is like “sleep”**, **“he will not awake”**, **“be roused out of his sleep”**. Job expands this into the full concept of **the resurrection from the dead**:

“... Oh that you would **hide me in [a grave] (shē’ol)**,<sup>19</sup> that you would conceal me until your wrath be past, that you would **appoint me a set time**, and **remember me!**

**If a man dies, shall he live again?**

All the days of my service **I would wait, till my renewal should come.**

**You would call**, and **I would answer you**; you would long for the work of your hands.

For then you would number my steps; you would not keep watch over my sin;

my **transgression would be sealed up** in a bag, and **you would cover over my iniquity.** ...”

(Job 14:13-17 ESV)

Job understands that death is temporary, “**I would wait**”, and that the resurrection is restoration to new life, “**till my renewal should come**”. Job recognizes that forgiveness of sin, “**transgression would be sealed up**”, and atonement, “**you would cover over my iniquity**”, are prerequisites for a resurrection. Having reached this pinnacle of understanding, Job is overcome with his current grief and ends his soliloquy on a down note:

“But the mountain falls and crumbles away, and the rock is removed from its place; the waters wear away the stones; the torrents wash away the soil of the earth;

**so you destroy the hope of man.**

You prevail forever against him, and he passes; you change his countenance, and send him away.

His sons come to honor, and he does not know it; they are brought low, and he perceives it not.

**He feels only the pain of his own body**, and he mourns only for himself.”

(Job 14:18-22 ESV)

Job returns to this topic in his *Fifth Soliloquy: My Redeemer Lives*, where he ends on a more positive note! Job’s emotions are in turmoil. The “Three Friends” continue to harass him. God is NOT yet helping him. But, **his understanding is progressing through the soliloquies.**

## Fourth Soliloquy: Where is My Hope?

Job chapter 17 verses 1-16; trigger: Eliphaz’s second speech

**At this point Job is very depressed.** He is mocked by those who see him. God is apparently against him. He cannot see any light at the end of the tunnel. Job can only plaintively gasp, “**where then is my hope**”, and look to death, “**the graveyard is ready for me**”:

**“My spirit is broken**; my days are extinct; **the graveyard is ready for me.**

Surely **there are mockers about me**, and my eye dwells on their provocation.

But **you, come on again, all of you**, and I shall not find a wise man among you.

My days are past; **my plans are broken off**, the desires of my heart.

They make night into day: **‘The light,’** they say, **‘is near to the darkness.’**

**He has made me a byword of the peoples**, and I am one before whom men spit.

**My eye has grown dim from vexation**, and all my members are like a shadow.

**If I hope for [the grave] (shē’ol)**<sup>20</sup> as my house, if I make my bed in darkness,

if I say to the pit, ‘You are my father,’

and to the worm, ‘My mother,’ or ‘My sister,’

**where then is my hope? Who will see my hope?**

Will it go down to the bars of [the grave]? Shall we descend together into the dust?”

(Job 17:1-2, 10-12, 6-7, 13-16 ESV)

Job had expressed his hope in the Third Soliloquy, “**if a man dies, shall he live again**”. Now his circumstances have come crashing in on him, and he wonders if there is any way out. He is striving to understand how there can be any realization of hope.

## Fifth Soliloquy: My Redeemer Lives

Job chapter 19 verses 23-29; trigger: Bildad’s second speech

This soliloquy contains one of the most famous passages in the Book of Job. It is also one of the most controversial because there is a serious translational problem in verse 26. Nevertheless, **Job’s**

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<sup>19</sup> See footnote 14

<sup>20</sup> See footnote 14



**expression of faith** in the face of all that he is going through **remains an object lesson for all True Worshipper** everywhere at all times:

- (23) **"Oh that my words were written!** Oh that they were inscribed in a book!  
(24) Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever!  
(25) For **I know that my Redeemer lives**, and **at the last he will stand upon the earth.**  
(26) And **after my skin has been thus destroyed**, yet [away from] my flesh **I shall see God**,  
(27a) whom **I shall see for myself**, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.  
(27b) **My heart faints within me!**  
(28) If you say,  
    'How we will pursue him!'  
    and, **'The root of the matter is found in him,'**  
(29) be afraid of the sword,  
    for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, **that you may know there is a judgment."**  
(Job 19:23-29 ESV)

The **theological issue** is how much did Job understand about the **"resurrection of the dead"**? This topic is considered above in the **Third Soliloquy: If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again?**; it is also discussed in some detail in section **3.3.4.2 Job Explores the Concept of the Resurrection** in the paper **"Third Pillar - The Way of God"** located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca). Clearly, it is safe to say that **Job did anticipate a resurrection from the dead.**

The **translational problem** relates to the Hebrew text of verse 26:

אֵלֹהִים	אֶחְזֶה	וּמִבְּשָׁרִי	זֹאת	נִיֻּקָּפְהוּ	עוֹרִי	וְאַחֵר
'eloah	'ehezeh	umib <sup>e</sup> bsari	zo'th	niqq <sup>e</sup> phu	'ori	w <sup>e</sup> 'ahar
God	I shall see	yet away from my flesh	thus	has been destroyed	my skin	and after

**The problem is the preposition *min*** in *umib<sup>e</sup>bsari*, represented as, מִן - *mi*. **In a "locational sense" *min* can mean "in" or "from". In a partitive sense, *min* means "away from".** Ignoring the fact of the resurrection of the dead, some translations insist on the locational sense, **"from my flesh I will see God"**. This not only contradicts the fact that after the resurrection, persons will have "spirit body", NOT a body of flesh; but also it creates an internal contradiction. The first part of the verse clearly states that the Job's skin has been destroyed prior to the perception of God – by rot in the grave. **The partitive sense is clearly to be preferred.**

Job's request in verse 23 and 24 has been more than fulfilled! **His words are forever written the Bible for all people everywhere to read forever!** Verse 25 expresses an understanding that God, YHWH, Jesus Christ, is **the Redeemer**, and he **will take up his position on earth as King of kings**. Verse 27a reiterates Job's faith that he will see his Redeemer, he will participate in the resurrection of the dead. **Verse 27b expresses Job's overflowing joy at the understanding of this beautiful truth!**

**Verses 28 and 29 are probably intended immediately for the "Three Friends"; but their implication is far more general.** Job is never represented as seeing Satan behind his grief, but Satan is at the heart of Job's grief as he is at the heart of all the world's problems. **The "you" of verse 28 can be taken to represent Satan and all his proxies.** The **"pursuit of Job"** is representative of Satan pursuit to destroy all True Worshipers, even all human beings. Job's refusal to be taken in by the schemes of the Devil is indeed **"the root of the matter". Job's steadfastness is an object lesson for all True Worshipers.** **"The sword"** is symbolic of **retributive justice**, God's unequivocal punishment of Satan and all his proxies. Indeed, they will know **"know there is a judgment"**! This is a segue into the final soliloquy.

## **Sixth Soliloquy: Retributive Justice**

Job chapter 24 verses 1-25; trigger: Eliphaz's third speech

Verse one of chapter 24 is difficult, but J.E. Hartley seems to capture the essential meaning:

Since times are not hidden from Shaddai,  
why do **those who know him** never see his days?  
(Job 24:1 Hartley page 343)

God is aware of all that happens. True Worshipers, **“those who know him”**, must wait in patience for God to act in his own time. Job then goes on to catalogue many sins of those who do NOT know God, piling into insignificance the trivial list that Eliphaz had thrown at him in chapter 22 verses 15-18. **Job’s point is that God is NOT dealing with these people at this time.** Their sins are grievous, but God will deal with them in his time. **Job’s current plight cannot be attributed to common sins of the wicked:**

“... **Yet God prolongs the life of the mighty by his power;** they rise up when they despair of life. He gives them security, and they are supported, and his eyes are upon their ways.

**They are exalted a little while, and then are gone;**  
they are brought low and gathered up like all others;  
they are cut off like the heads of grain.

**If it is not so, who will prove me a liar and show that there is nothing in what I say?”**  
(Job 24:22-25 ESV)

Job realizes that God’s handling of the wicked is the ultimate expression of God’s sovereignty. God acts according to his Plan. In Satan’s world, the wicked are free to pursue the way of Satan, **“they are exalted a little while”**. In the end, God will deal with them, **“then are gone”**.

## 2.6 Job’s Integrity

The first half of the Book of Job is about Satan’s attack on Job through the “Three Friends”. They are relentless in trying to convince Job of his great iniquity, his deep transgression, for which his “righteousness” is just a façade to cover up the sin. **This is a trial God allows on Job to test his faith and commitment.** Job is sure that he is living by the Way of God. Job is sure that in fact he has NOT committed any grievous trespasses. **Job endures the trial and remains confident in his relationship with God.**

**Job’s plight is an object lesson for True Worshipers of God.** The suffering of this world is caused by Satan the Devil. Satan is NOT visible in this world. Satan hides. Satan attacks from the shadows through unexpected means. But, **Satan’s attacks on True Worshipers are relentless.** Satan wants nothing more than to corrupt a True Worshiper and bring that person to the sad state that they **“curse God to his face”**. The Christian life is one of building relationships with God the Father and Jesus Christ. A Christian must remain humbly aware of the magnitude of the calling of God.

**Job was sure of his righteousness.** It served him well to ward off the attack of Satan, but he still had a lot to learn about his relationship with God. In his soliloquies, Job has explored higher concepts. He has pondered the purpose of life and prayed for understanding. He acknowledges the need for God’s mercy. In this life, it is difficult to retain hope, but Job came to some understanding of the need for transformation in a resurrection to transition to a better state in eternal life. **These higher thoughts do Job well as God reveals to him what he must do to become a candidate for the gift of eternal life.**

## 3. Closing Discourses

The author of the Book of Job inserts a comment by the “narrator” at the beginning of chapter 32. This comment sets the stage for the closing discourses:

So **these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.**

Then **Elihu** the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, **burned with anger.**

He burned with anger **at Job because he justified himself rather than God.**

He burned with anger also **at Job’s three friends because they had found no answer,**  
although they had declared Job to be in the wrong.

Now **Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were older than he.**

And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, **he burned with anger.**  
(Job 32:1-5 ESV)

This comment highlights the beauty of the Book of Job. It succinctly summarizes the first part of the book. Indeed, Job is clearly **“righteous in his own eyes”**. Job’s “self-righteousness” is the sin from which he must ultimately repent. Elihu recognizes that Job’s problem is that he does not see himself in true

perspective to God, **“he justified himself rather than God”**. Although the “Three Friends” recognized Job’s self-righteousness, **“they had found no answer”**, no way to help Job.

Elihu sets out to provide Job with an answer. But in the end, it is **only the direct intervention of God** which brings Job to the point where **the Holy Spirit can provide the understanding Job requires**. Satan is conspicuously absent from the closing discourses. Job has faced Satan’s onslaught and succeeded:

Submit yourselves therefore to God.

**Resist the devil**, and **he will flee from you**.

(James 4:7 ESV)

### **3.1 Elihu and Job**

**Elihu is a younger man. He shows respect** both to the “Three Friends” and to Job, but **he believes they are all in error**:

**[Directed to the “Three Friends”:]**

**“I am young in years**, and you are aged;

therefore I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you.

I said, **‘Let days speak**, and **many years teach wisdom**.’

Therefore I say, ‘Listen to me; **let me also declare my opinion**.’

Behold, I waited for your words,

I listened for your wise sayings, while you searched out what to say.

**I gave you my attention**,

and, behold, **there was none among you who refuted Job or who answered his words**.

Beware lest you say, ‘We have found wisdom; God may vanquish him, not a man.’

He has not directed his words against me, and **I will not answer him with your speeches**. ...”

(Job 32:6b-7, 10-14 ESV)

**[Directed to Job:]**

**“They are dismayed; they answer no more**; they have not a word to say.

And shall I wait, because they do not speak, because they stand there, and answer no more?

**I also will answer with my share**; I also will declare my opinion. ...”

(Job 32:15-17 ESV)

It is nowhere made explicit, but based on his speeches, **one may infer that Elihu is indeed a True Worshipper of God**. Elihu makes statements which indicate **a true understanding of the Nature of God and the nature of man**:

“... But it is **the spirit in man, the breath of the Almighty**, that **makes him understand**.

It is not the old who are wise, nor the aged who understand what is right.

For I am full of words; **the spirit within me** constrains me.

**I will not show partiality** to any man **or use flattery** toward any person.

For I do not know how to flatter, else **my Maker would soon take me away**. ...”

(Job 32:8-9, 18, 21-22 ESV)

“... **The Spirit of God has made me**, and **the breath of the Almighty gives me life**.

Behold, I am toward God as you are; **I too was pinched off from a piece of clay**. ...”

(Job 33:4, 6 ESV)

“... Of a truth, **God will not do wickedly**, and the Almighty will not pervert justice.

**Who gave him charge over the earth**, and who laid on him the whole world?

If he should set his heart to it and **gather to himself his spirit and his breath**,

**all flesh would perish together**, and man would return to dust. ...”

(Job 34:12-15 ESV)

“... I will get my knowledge from afar and **ascribe righteousness to my Maker**.

For truly my words are not false; **one who is perfect in knowledge** is with you.

Behold, **God is mighty**, and does not despise any; he is mighty in strength of understanding. ...”

(Job 36:3-5 ESV)

**A true perspective on the Nature of God is at the heart of Job’s problem**. Job is convinced that his integrity is of itself of value to God – God must be “impressed” with Job. Elihu’s speeches are aimed at deflating this notion of Job’s. **Job must to come to see himself in true perspective with relation to God**.

### 3.1.1 Elihu's First Speech

Elihu directs his first speech specifically to Job. He is explicit that he has heard Job's arguments, "**I have heard the sound of your words**", but he contends that "**in this you are not right**":

"But now, **hear my speech, O Job**, and listen to all my words.

Behold, I open my mouth; the tongue in my mouth speaks.

My words declare the uprightness of my heart, and what **my lips know they speak sincerely**.

**Answer me**, if you can; set your words in order before me; **take your stand**.

Behold, no fear of me need terrify you; my pressure will not be heavy upon you.

Surely you have spoken in my ears, and **I have heard the sound of your words**.

**You say**,

'**I am pure**, without transgression; **I am clean**,<sup>21</sup> and there is no iniquity in me.

Behold, he finds occasions against me, **he counts me as his enemy**,

he puts my feet in the stocks and watches all my paths.'

Behold, **in this you are not right**.

I will answer you, for **God is greater than man**.

**Why do you contend against him**, saying, 'He will answer none of man's words'?

(Job 33:1-3, 5, 7-13 ESV)

Elihu's logic is compelling: Job is reputed to have claimed to be without sin, "**I am pure**", "**I am clean**".

Yet Job feels God is the cause of his grief, "**he counts me as his enemy**". Elihu simply concludes that

"**God is greater than man**", so it is futile take a stand before him, "**why do you contend against him**".

Elihu then goes on to identify two ways that God communicates with a person:

"... For **God speaks in one way, and in two**, though man does not perceive it.

**In a dream, in a vision** of the night,

when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds ...

**Man is also rebuked with pain** on his bed and with continual strife in his bones,

so that his life loathes bread, and his appetite the choicest food.

His flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out. ..."

(Job 33:14-15, 19-21 ESV)

The purpose of God's communication is to bring the person to repentance:

"... that **he may turn man aside from his deed** and conceal pride from a man;

he keeps back his [life] (nephesh)<sup>22</sup> from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword.

... and **he is merciful** to him, and says,

'Deliver him from going down into the pit;

**I have found a ransom**;<sup>23</sup>

let his flesh become fresh with youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor';

then **man prays to God**, and he accepts him;

he sees his face with a shout of joy, and he restores to man his righteousness.

(Job 33:17-18, 24-26 ESV)

Elihu concludes by explicitly stating God's purpose:

"... Behold, **God does all these things**, twice, three times, with a man,

**to bring back his [life] (nephesh)**<sup>24</sup> from the pit, that he may be **lighted with the light of life**.<sup>25</sup>

(Job 33:29-30 ESV)

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<sup>21</sup> Note that it is the "Three Friends" who apply these words to Job:

**if you are pure** and upright, surely then he will rouse himself for you and restore your rightful habitation. (Job 8:6 ESV)

For you say, '**My doctrine is pure**, and **I am clean** in God's eyes.' (Job 11:4 ESV)

Job asserts that he is "blameless" and his prayer is "pure":

Though **I am in the right**, my own mouth would condemn me; though **I am blameless**, he would prove me perverse.

(Job 9:20 ESV)

**I am blameless**; I regard not myself; I loathe my life. (Job 9:21 ESV)

I am a laughingstock to my friends; I, who called to God and he answered me,

**a just and blameless man**, am a laughingstock. (Job 12:4 ESV)

... although there is no violence in my hands, and **my prayer is pure**. (Job 16:17 ESV)

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 7

<sup>23</sup> This foreshadows the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

<sup>24</sup> See footnote 7

<sup>25</sup> This foreshadows the resurrection.

### **Analysis of Elihu's speech:**

- Job's contention that he is without sin, "I am pure", "I am clean", is inconsistent with contending that God is the cause of his plight, "he counts me as his enemy", "in this you are not right", "why do you contend against him"
- There is a vast gulf between God and man, "God is greater than man"
- God does communicate with man, "God speaks", "in a dream, in a vision", "man is also rebuked with pain"
- God's purpose in communication is to induce repentance, "he may turn man aside from his deed", "man prays to God", "he is merciful"
- God's objective is to bring the person to eternal life, "I have found a ransom", "to bring back his life", "lighted with the light of life"

**The conundrum for Job is that he still does NOT recognize what it is that requires repentance.**

### **3.1.2 Elihu's Second Speech**

Chapter 34 starts with "Elihu answered and said", but there is no obvious speech to which he is answering. **The chapter is primarily aimed at the "Three Friends"**, so symmetrically it seems best to read it after chapter 33, aimed at Job, before Job's response in chapters 27 and 28. Chapter 35 follows Job's response of chapters 27 and 28. **It is possible that chapter 34 is intended to be Elihu's speaking to the "Three Friends" in Job's absence.**

A possible argument against this order is verse 5b, "God has taken away my right", which seems to be an allusion to chapter 27 verse 2, "As God lives, who has taken away my right". However, some of the other allusions of Elihu are also somewhat ambiguous:

- ... in spite of my right I am counted a liar;  
my wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.  
(Job 34:6 ESV)  
**This verse alludes to Elihu's own speech:**  
**You say,**  
    'I am pure, without transgression;  
    I am clean, and there is no iniquity in me. ...'  
(Job 33:9 ESV)
- **Whereas Job has, perhaps rhetorically, admitted his "transgression":**  
Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?  
(Job 7:21 ESV)  
How many are my iniquities and my sins? Make me know my transgression and my sin.  
(Job 13:23 ESV)  
... my transgression would be sealed up in a bag, and you would cover over my iniquity.  
(Job 14:17 ESV)
- For he has said, 'It profits a man nothing that he should take delight in God.'  
(Job 34:9 ESV)  
There is nothing similar to this in any of Job's prior speeches.  
**The closest allusion is Job's assertion that he is "blameless":**  
Though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn me;  
though I am blameless, he would prove me perverse.  
**I am blameless:** I regard not myself; I loathe my life.  
It is all one; therefore I say,  
    'He destroys both the blameless and the wicked.'  
(Job 9:20-22 ESV)

Clearly, **Elihu is addressing the "Three Friends"** in chapter 34. Almost sarcastically he addresses them as "wise men" and "men of understanding":

Hear my words, you wise men, and give ear to me, you who know;

Therefore, hear me, you men of understanding:

**If you have understanding**, hear this; listen to what I say.

**Men of understanding** will say to me, and the wise man who hears me will say: ...  
(Job 34:2, 10a, 16, 34 ESV)

However, it not immediately obvious **how this chapter contributes to the advancement of the plot**.

Job's position is outlined in verses 5 through 9. Then Elihu briefly outlines God's perspective:

**"... far be it from God that he should do wickedness,**  
and from the Almighty that he should do wrong.  
For **according to the work of a man he will repay him,**  
and according to his ways he will make it befall him. ..."  
(Job 34:10b-11 ESV)

Then Elihu provides a brief summary of the **"way of the world"**, and its futility under the hand of God:

**"... Shall one who hates justice govern?**  
**Will you condemn him who is righteous** and mighty,  
who says to **a king**, 'Worthless one,' and to **nobles**, 'Wicked man,'  
who **shows no partiality** to princes, nor regards the rich more than the poor,  
for they are all the work of his hands?  
**In a moment they die;**  
at midnight the people are shaken and pass away,<sup>26</sup>  
and the mighty are taken away by no human hand. ..."  
(Job 34:17-20 ESV)

In this world, those who **"govern"** all too often do **"hate justice"**. A **"righteous"** man who would dare to **castigate those who govern**, **"a king"** and his **"nobles"**, is surely **"condemned"**. This world is based on **"partiality"**, bribery, nepotism, and oppression of the poor. When God is ready this will end, **"in a moment they die"**. Throughout their speeches, the "Three Friends" were, perhaps unwittingly, the mouth pieces of Satan the Devil, the originator and propagator, of the **"way of the world"**.

Somewhat philosophically, almost in a soliloquy, **Elihu then returns to the perspective of God:**

**"For his eyes are on the ways of a man,** and he sees all his steps.  
There is no gloom or deep darkness where **evildoers** may hide themselves.  
For **God has no need to consider a man further**, that he should go before God in judgment.  
**He shatters the mighty without investigation** and sets others in their place.  
Thus, **knowing their works**, he overturns them in the night, and they are crushed.  
He strikes them for their wickedness in a place for all to see,  
because they turned aside from following him and had **no regard for any of his ways**,  
so that they caused the cry of the poor to come to him, and he heard the cry of the afflicted ..."  
(Job 34:21-28 ESV)

Elihu first makes a very general, axiomatic, statement, **"his eyes are on the ways of a man"**. Elihu couches his logic in non-specific terminology, **"evildoers"**, with the clear implication that he applies this to the "Three Friends". What God decides is always final and correct, **"God has no need to consider a man further"** – this subtly speaks to **Job's "legal case"**, **"he shatters the mighty without investigation"**. When God is ready, "retributive justice" will be applied to all "the wicked", **"knowing their works"**, that they have **"no regard for any of his ways"**.

**Elihu ends with a summary of Job's problem:**

**"... 'Job speaks without knowledge; his words are without insight.'**  
Would that Job were tried to the end,<sup>27</sup> because **he answers like wicked men.**  
For **he adds rebellion to his sin;**  
he claps his hands among us and **multiplies his words against God."**  
(Job 34:35-37 ESV)

Elihu foreshadows **the opening assertion of YHWH** when he speaks with Job:

**Then [YHWH] answered Job** out of the whirlwind and said:  
"Who is this that darkens counsel by **words without knowledge?** ..."  
(Job 38:1-2 ESV)

<sup>26</sup> This is an allusion to the death of the "firstborn" in Egypt; see Exodus 12:29.

<sup>27</sup> This is an allusion to Job's "legal case" against God.



**The knowledge Job lacks is the true perspective of himself**, a human being, **in relation to the Great Creator, God**. Because of this Job **“was righteous in his own eyes”**. Job had lived a “good” life. Like the **“rich young man”** whom Jesus encountered:

And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him,  
“Good Teacher, **what must I do to inherit eternal life?**”

And Jesus said to him,

“Why do you call me good? **No one is good except God alone.**

**You know the commandments:**

‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness,  
Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’”

And he said to him, “Teacher, **all these I have kept from my youth.**”

And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him,

**“You lack one thing:**

go, sell all that you have and give to the poor,  
and you will have treasure in heaven; and **come, follow me.**”

(Mark 10:17-21 ESV // Matthew 19:16-21, Luke 18:18-22)

The **“rich young man”**, like Job, had a problem which he could NOT see, **“you lack one thing”**. The **“rich young man”** had lived a “good” life, **“you know the commandments”**, **“all these I have kept from my youth”**, but he did NOT truly know God, **“no one is good except God alone”**. The **“rich young man”** trusted in his wealth. **Job trusted in his righteousness**. Neither could see past his problem, which God required **“to inherit eternal life”**, **“come, follow me”**.

Elihu asserts that Job is wondering off into dangerous territory as a result of his sin, **“his words are without insight”**. Because Job does NOT see himself in true perspective to God, he blames God for his plight, **“multiplies his words against God”**. This in itself can become sin, **“he answers like wicked men”**, **“he adds rebellion to his sin”**.

### 3.1.3 Job’s Initial Response

Job’s initial reaction to Elihu is guarded. At first, he is not sure how to take Elihu’s statements. **Job states his position in very clear terms:**

“As **God** lives, who **has taken away my right**,  
[even]<sup>28</sup> **the Almighty**, who **has made my [life] (nephesh)**<sup>29</sup> **bitter**,  
as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils,  
**my lips will not speak falsehood**, and my tongue will not utter deceit.

**Far be it from me to say that you are right**; till I die **I will not put away my integrity** from me.

**I hold fast my righteousness** and will not let it go;

**my heart does not reproach me** for any of my days. ...”

(Job 27:2-6 ESV)

Job remains certain that God is responsible for his plight, **“taken away my right”**, **“made my life bitter”**. Job is confident that his words are true, **“my lips will not speak falsehood”**. He refuses to accept the assessment of Elihu, as much as that of the “Three Friends”, **“far be it from me to say that you are right”**. Job remains steadfast, **“my heart does not reproach me”**, and trusts in his past way of life, **“my integrity”**, **“my righteousness”**.

Job goes on to suggest that Elihu and the “Three Friends” might really be his godless enemies. **Who are they to lecture Job about God?** Job asserts that they should listen to him to learn about God, **“I will teach you concerning the hand of God”**:

“Let **my enemy be as the wicked**, and let him who rises up against me be as the unrighteous.

For **what is the hope of the godless** when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life?

Will God hear his cry when distress comes upon him?

Will he take delight in the Almighty?

Will he call upon God at all times?

**I will teach you concerning the hand of God**; what is with the Almighty I will not conceal.

<sup>28</sup> The conjunction, *waw*, is best taken as appositional here.

<sup>29</sup> See footnote 7

Behold, **all of you** have seen it yourselves; why then have you **become altogether vain**? ...”  
(Job 27:7-12 ESV)

**In contrast to Elihu’s summary of the “way of the world”**, Job then, in chapter 28 verses 1-11, outlines some of the accomplishments of human beings. Job’s purpose would appear to be, to demonstrate that he, Job, understands that true wisdom, wisdom from God, is far above human understanding. Elihu had challenged Job that he could teach Job wisdom:

“... **Pay attention, O Job, listen to me**; be silent, and I will speak.  
If you have any words, answer me; speak, for I desire to justify you.  
If not, listen to me; be silent, and **I will teach you wisdom.**”  
(Job 33:31-33 ESV)

**Job alludes to human accomplishments** in mining, road building, and water management:

“Surely there is **a mine for silver**, and a place for gold that they refine.  
Iron is taken out of the earth, and copper is smelted from the ore.  
**He opens shafts** in a valley away from where anyone lives;  
Man puts his hand to the flinty rock and **overturns mountains** by the roots.  
He **cuts out channels** in the rocks, and his eye sees every precious thing.  
He **dams up the streams** so that they do not trickle,  
and the thing that is hidden he brings out to light. ...”  
(Job 28:1-2, 4a, 9-11 ESV)

Job then directly addresses the concept of “wisdom”.<sup>30</sup> He clearly show that **the source of “wisdom” is God** – this, no doubt, is to counter Elihu’s offer, “**I will teach you wisdom**”:

“But **where shall wisdom be found**?  
And **where is the place of understanding**?  
Man does not know its worth, and it is not found in the land of the living.  
It cannot be bought for gold, and silver cannot be weighed as its price.  
From **where, then, does wisdom come**?  
And **where is the place of understanding**?  
It is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the air.  
**God understands the way to it**, and he knows its place.  
For he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.  
When he gave to the wind its weight and apportioned the waters by measure,  
when he made a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder,  
then **he saw it and declared it; he established it, and searched it out.**  
And **he said to man**,  
‘Behold, **the fear of the Lord**, that **is wisdom**,  
and **to turn away from evil is understanding.**’”  
(Job 28:12–13, 15, 20-21, 23-28 ESV)

**Job ends almost indignantly at the gall of Elihu**, a young wiper-snapper, thinking he can be Job’s instructor. **As in all things, Job is right**. His assessment of “wisdom” is right-on. Therein lies Job’s problem: he continues to trust in his “rightness”.

### 3.1.4 Elihu’s Third Speech

After Job’s rebuke, **Elihu** cuts-to-the-chase and **tells Job directly what is his problem**:

“**Do you think this to be just?**  
Do you say, ‘It is my right before God,’  
that you ask,  
‘What advantage have I?  
**How am I better off than if I had sinned?**’  
I will answer you and your friends with you.  
Look at the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds, which are higher than you.  
**If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him?**  
And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to him?  
**If you are righteous, what do you give to him?**  
Or what does he receive from your hand?”

<sup>30</sup> Job had briefly addressed “wisdom” in chapter 12 verses 12-13.



**Your wickedness** concerns a man like yourself, and **your righteousness** a son of man.  
(Job 35:2-8 ESV)

Analysis of Elihu's statement:

- Job is right in his assessment of his integrity:  
**Far be it from me to say that you are right;**  
till I die **I will not put away my integrity** from me.  
**I hold fast my righteousness** and will not let it go;  
**my heart does not reproach me** for any of my days.  
(Job 27:5-6 ESV)  
But, Elihu challenges Job's position, "**do you think this to be just**".
- Elihu makes a deduction from Job's statements:  
**Job had rhetorically asked God to show him his sin:**  
**I will say to God,** Do not condemn me;  
let me know **why you contend against me.**  
Are your days as the days of man, or your years as a man's years,  
that **you seek out my iniquity** and **search for my sin,**  
although you know that I am not guilty ...  
(Job 10:2, 5-7a ESV)  
**How many are my iniquities and my sins?**  
**Make me know my transgression and my sin.**  
(Job 13:23 ESV)  
From this, Elihu deduces Job's motivation, "**how am I better off than if I had sinned**".
- God cannot be affected by any action of man:  
**Job had hinted at some understanding of this:**  
**If I sin, what do I do to you,** you watcher of mankind?  
Why have you made me your mark?  
Why have I become a burden to you?  
(Job 7:20 ESV)  
**Eliphaz also began to explore this avenue of reasoning:**  
Can a man be profitable to God?  
**Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are in the right,**  
or **is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?**  
(Job 22:2a, 3 ESV)  
**But only Elihu sees the situation clearly:**  
**If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him?**  
And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to him?  
**If you are righteous, what do you give to him?**  
Or what does he receive from your hand?  
(Job 35:6-7 ESV)  
Nothing any human being can do in any way materially affects God. Neither the iniquity nor righteousness of any human being in itself means anything to God. **Job's righteousness is worthless to God** as long as he is trusting in it.
- **Job's wickedness is his self-righteousness:**  
**Your wickedness** concerns a man like yourself, and **your righteousness** a son of man.  
(Job 35:8 ESV)  
**As long as Job trusts in his righteousness it is sin to him.**

Almost anticlimactically, Elihu continues – he comes back to the "**way of the world**". People cry to God, but they do NOT know God, and God does not respond because of **human pride**:

"... **Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out;**  
they call for help because of the arm of the mighty.

But **none says,**

**'Where is God my Maker,** who gives songs in the night,  
who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth  
and makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens?'

There they cry out, but he does not answer, **because of the pride of evil men.**  
Surely God does not hear an empty cry, nor does the Almighty regard it. ..."  
(Job 35:9-13 ESV)

Elihu then brings this **back on Job**, pointing out the ridiculousness of his “**legal case**”. Is Job, in his self-righteousness, any better than the people who do not know God? It is only because of **God’s mercy** that he continues to work with Job:

“... How much less when **you say that you do not see him**, that **the case is before him**, and you are waiting for him!

And now, **because his anger does not punish**, and he does not take much note of transgression, Job opens his mouth in empty talk; **he multiplies words without knowledge.**”  
(Job 35:14-16 ESV)

Elihu returns to his offer, “**I will teach you concerning the hand of God**”:

“Bear with me a little, and I will show you, for **I have yet something to say on God’s behalf.**

**I will get my knowledge from afar** and ascribe righteousness to **my Maker.**

For truly my words are not false; **one who is perfect in knowledge** is with you.

Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise any; he is mighty in strength of understanding. ...”  
(Job 36:2-5 ESV)

**Elihu demonstrates a true knowledge of the Nature of God.** He extolls his greatness. Then he goes onto consider “the wicked” and “retributive justice” in verses 6 through 14. He contrasts this with “**the afflicted**”, **True Worshipers**, and Job in particular whom **he warns of the danger of “self-righteousness”**:

“... **He delivers the afflicted** by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.

**He also allured you** out of distress into a broad place where there was no cramping, and what was set on your table was full of fatness.

But **you are full of the judgment on the wicked**; judgment and justice seize you.

**Beware lest wrath entice you into scoffing**, and let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside.

Will your cry for help avail to keep you from distress, or all the force of your strength?

Do not long for the night, when peoples vanish in their place.

Take care; **do not turn to iniquity**, for this you have chosen rather than affliction.

Behold, **God is exalted** in his power; **who is a teacher like him?**

Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, ‘You have done wrong’?

(Job 36:15-23 ESV)

Elihu warns Job to avoid falling into the trap of letting “self-righteousness” make him think he is better than others, “**judgment on the wicked**”. This can lead to sin, “**entice you into scoffing**”, “**turn to iniquity**”. “Self-righteousness” can lead to “self satisfaction”, which can lead to “arrogance”, which can lead to “idolatry”, the mother of all sin. **Elihu exhorts a true perspective on God, “God is exalted”**; only through his teaching can a person, like Job, be delivered from sin, “**who is a teacher like him**”. Elihu goes on to extoll the greatness of God in verses 24 through 33. Elihu finishes his speech with a discussion of General Revelation in chapter 37 verses 1 through 22 – this foreshadows the approach YHWH, himself, will take in dealing with Job. **Elihu’s point is that God is so vastly superior to man that a man, such as Job, has no basis for trusting in his own righteousness.** All human beings need to bow down in awe of the greatness and power of God:

“... Hear this, **O Job; stop and consider the wondrous works of God.**

**Do you know** how God lays his command upon them and causes the lightning of his cloud to shine?

**Do you know** the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge ...

The Almighty—we cannot find him; **he is great in power**;

[justness] (mish<sup>a</sup>pat)<sup>31</sup> and abundant righteousness he will not violate.

**Therefore men fear him; he does not regard any who are wise in their own conceit.**”

(Job 37:14-16, 23-24 ESV)

<sup>31</sup> The Hebrew word מִשְׁפָּט - mish<sup>a</sup>pat, in the singular, has two most common meanings: if it is used for a “character attribute” or a “personal attitude”, it means “justness”; if it is used in a more general sense, “justice” is usually the best translation.

### 3.1.6 Job's Final Response

**Job does NOT respond well to the admonitions of Elihu.** He clearly has heard Elihu, but Job's response starts off as a lament over his plight and develops into one last defense of his integrity. **Job looks back to former days when he felt close to God:**

"Oh, that I were as in the months of old, as in **the days when God watched over me**, when his lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness, as I was in my prime, when **the friendship of God was upon my tent**, when **the Almighty was yet with me**, when my children were all around me ..."  
(Job 29:2-5 ESV)

Job recounts some of his "righteous acts" – **the basis of his integrity:**

"... because **I delivered the poor** who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to help him. The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me, and **I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy**.  
**I put on righteousness**, and it clothed me;  
my [justness] (mish'pat)<sup>32</sup> was like a robe and a turban.  
**I was eyes to the blind** and **feet to the lame**.  
I was **a father to the needy**,  
and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know. ..."  
(Job 29:12-16 ESV)

**Job enjoyed "status" and "position":**

"**Men listened** to me and waited and kept silence **for my counsel**.  
After I spoke they did not speak again, and my word dropped upon them.  
I chose their way and **sat as chief**, and I **lived like a king** among his troops ..."  
(Job 29:21-22, 25a ESV)

Job goes on in chapter 30 verses 1 through 15 lamenting how all the good things are now gone. **Job remains convinced that God is the cause of his plight:**

"... Because **God has loosed my cord and humbled me**, they have cast off restraint in my presence. **God has cast me into the mire**, and I have become like dust and ashes.  
**[Job prays]**  
**I cry to you for help** and **you do not answer me**; I stand, and you only look at me.  
**You have turned cruel to me**; with the might of your hand you persecute me.  
You lift me up on the wind; you make me ride on it, and **you toss me about** in the roar of the storm.  
For **I know that you will bring me to death** and to the house appointed for all living."  
(Job 30:11, 20-23 ESV)

**Job is at his lowest point of despair.** His misery echoes the suffering of the human race crying out to God in ignorance of the human condition. Suffering and misery are in the world because the human race has chosen the way of sin and death, the way of Satan the Devil. **On behalf of all humanity, Job expresses his deepest turmoil:**

"Yet **does not one in a heap of ruins stretch out his hand**, and in his disaster cry for help?  
Did not I weep for him whose day was hard?  
Was not my [being] (nephesh)<sup>33</sup> grieved for the needy?  
But **when I hoped for good, evil came**, and when I waited for light, darkness came.  
**My inward parts are in turmoil** and never still; days of affliction come to meet me.  
I go about darkened, but not by the sun;  
**I stand up in the assembly and cry for help**. ..."  
(Job 30:24-28 ESV)

**Despite his despair, Job does still NOT get it.** In his mind he recounts his integrity, his "righteous acts", his rejection of the ways of the world. **Given his "righteous life", how can God do this to him:**

If I have walked with **falsehood** and my foot has hastened to **deceit** ...  
if my step has **turned aside from the way** and my heart has gone after my eyes,  
and if any spot has stuck to my hands ...  
If my heart has been **enticed toward a woman**, and I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door ...

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<sup>32</sup> See previous footnote

<sup>33</sup> See footnote 7

If I have **rejected the cause** of my manservant or my maidservant,  
when they brought a complaint against me ...  
If I have withheld anything that **the poor** desired, or have caused the eyes of **the widow** to fail ...  
if I have seen anyone perish for **lack of clothing**, or the needy without covering ...  
if I have raised my hand against **the fatherless**, because I saw my help in the gate ...  
If I have **made gold my trust** or called fine gold my confidence,  
if I have rejoiced because my wealth was abundant or because my hand had found much,  
if I have **looked at the sun** when it shone, **or the moon** moving in splendor,  
and my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand ...  
If I have **rejoiced at the ruin** of him who hated me, or exulted when evil overtook him ...  
if I have **concealed my transgressions** as others do by hiding my iniquity in my heart ...  
(Job 31:5, 7, 9, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24-27, 29, 33 ESV)

### **Job makes on last appeal to God, still clinging to his “legal case”:**

**“Oh, that I had one to hear me!**  
(Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!)  
Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary!  
Surely I would carry it on my shoulder; I would bind it on me as a crown;  
**I would give him an account of all my steps;** like a prince I would approach him.  
(Job 31:35-37 ESV)

When a person is as “righteous” as Job, it is very difficult to step aside and look at oneself objectively.  
**Humility is always in order. God is very careful to put Job into a position of humility** so that he can  
attain a true perspective of himself in relation to God.

## **3.2 YHWH and Job**

**God chooses to reveal himself personally to Job. This is the calling of God.** YHWH has acknowledged Job as a “blameless and upright man”, “my servant”, a True Worshipper. Job had lived a “perfect” life.  
**Job required “one thing”.** God personally communicated with him to bring him to understand the  
“one thing”. **Each and every True Worshipper of God must face God in this way** and relinquish any  
“one thing” that stands between that person and God.

### **And [YHWH] said to Job:**

“Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?  
**He who argues with God, let him answer it.**”  
(Job 40:1-2 ESV)

The word “faultfinder” is from יֹסֵר - yissor, “one who reproves”, a derivative noun, a hapax  
legomenon, from the verbal root יָסַר - yasar, “discipline”, “chasten”, “instruct”.<sup>34</sup> The verb is frequently  
used of God’s disciplining his people, for example:

And if in spite of this you will not listen to me,  
then **I will discipline (yasar) you** again sevenfold for your sins ...  
And if **by this discipline (yasar)** you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me,  
then I also will walk contrary to you, and I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins.  
But if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me,  
then I will walk contrary to you in fury,  
and **I myself will discipline (yasar)** you sevenfold for your sins.  
(Leviticus 26:18, 23-24, 27-28 ESV)

God is almost sarcastically challenging Job: if Job is so sure of himself, **“he who argues with God”**, that he  
dares to reprove God, God is now listening, **“let him answer”**. Discipline, “yasar”, is God’s prerogative.  
Job has exhibited some nerve to challenge God, **to find fault with God**, “yissor”.

<sup>34</sup> See TWOT article 877 pages 386-387  
Tuesday, January 14, 2025

### 3.2.1 YHWH Speaks to Job

Then **[YHWH] answered Job out of the whirlwind** and said:

“Who is this that darkens counsel by **words without knowledge**?

Dress for action like a man;

**I will question you**, and you make it known to me. ...”

(Job 38:1-3 ESV)

Twice Elihu had asserted that Job spoke without knowledge:

**Job speaks without knowledge**; his words are without insight.

Job opens his mouth in empty talk; **he multiplies words without knowledge.**”

(Job 34:35, 35:16 ESV)

YHWH confirms Elihu’s assertion, “**who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge**”.

Perhaps this is the trigger that prompts Job to consider the things said to him by Elihu. **YHWH continues to question Job regarding his relationship with God and his ability to do what God has done:**

**Where were you** when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

**Have you commanded** the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place ....

**Have you entered** into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep?

Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?

**Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?**

**Declare, if you know all this.**

Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war?

**Can you bind** the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion?

Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season, or can you guide the Bear with its children?

**Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?**

Can you establish their rule on the earth?

**Can you lift up your voice to the clouds**, that a flood of waters may cover you?

**Can you send forth lightnings**, that they may go and say to you, ‘Here we are’?

**Who has** put **wisdom** in the inward parts or given **understanding** to the mind?

(Job 38:4, 12, 16-18, 22-23, 31-36 ESV)

**Do you know** when the mountain goats give birth?

Do you observe the calving of the does?

Can you number the months that they fulfill, and do you know the time when they give birth ...

**Do you give** the horse his might?

Do you clothe his neck with a mane?

Do you make him leap like the locust?

His majestic snorting is terrifying.

**Is it by your understanding** that the hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south?

**Is it at your command** that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high?

(Job 39:1-2, 19-20, 26-27 ESV)

YHWH focuses on himself as the Creator, General Revelation. **These are the same themes Elihu had used.** Again, **is YHWH’s purpose to make Job think?** The greatness of the creation should put any human being into awe-struck humility before the Creator. This is the beginning of the relationship God requires.

### 3.2.2 The Theophany

**Job is naturally overawed by the presence of God.** Consider the impact of a theophany on the **Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel:**

In the year that King Uzziah died **I saw the Lord** sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.

And **the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him** who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

And I said:

**“Woe is me!**

For I am lost; for **I am a man of unclean lips**, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, [YHWH] of hosts!”

(Isaiah 6:1, 4-5 ESV)

**Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of [YHWH].**

And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and **I heard the voice of one speaking.**

And he said to me,

“Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you.”

And as he spoke to me, **the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet**, and I heard him speaking to me.

And I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who were dwelling by the Chebar canal, and I sat where they were dwelling.

And **I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.**

(Ezekiel 1:28b, 2:1-2, 3:15 ESV)

**Job reacts in a similar manner.** Job is beginning to feel humble:

Then Job answered [YHWH] and said:

“Behold, **I am of small account; what shall I answer you?**

I lay my hand on my mouth.

**I have spoken once**, and I will not answer;

twice, **but I will proceed no further.**”

**Then [YHWH] answered Job out of the whirlwind** and said: ...

(Job 40:3-6 ESV)

**Job is rightly feeling very small.** He is in the presence of the Great Creator God. When he was NOT in God’s presence, he was very sure of himself. **His integrity was his confidence.** He had withstood the attacks of the “Three Friends”. He had listened to Elihu, but felt confident Elihu’s words were empty, and that, in fact, Job, himself, remained in the right. **Now he is NOT so sure ...**

**YHWH continues to challenge Job:**

Then **[YHWH] answered Job out of the whirlwind** and said:

“Dress for action like a man;

**I will question you**, and **you make it known to me.**

**Will you even put me in the wrong?**

Will you condemn me that you may be in the right?

**Have you an arm like God**, and can you thunder with a voice like his? ...”

(Job 40:6-9 ESV)

YHWH does NOT acknowledge Job’s “legal challenge”, but he does set him straight regarding Job’s complaints, **“will you even put me in the wrong”**. Since Job has questioned God, God returns the favour, **“I will question you”**. God shatters Job’s trusting in his integrity, **“you make it known to me”**, by further contrast, **“have you an arm like God”**. YHWH goes on to outline his ability to control human events questioning Job if he can do the same:

“Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity; clothe yourself with glory and splendor.

Pour out the overflowings of your anger, and **look on everyone who is proud and abase him.**

Look on everyone who is proud and bring him low and **tread down the wicked where they stand.**

Hide them all in the dust together; bind their faces in the [grave].<sup>35</sup>

**Then will I also acknowledge to you that your own right hand can save you.**”

(Job 40:10-14 ESV)

**Job’s trust in his own righteousness is shattered** by YHWH’s challenge to provide his own salvation, **“your own right hand can save you”**. YHWH finishes his speech by two more appeals to General Revelation – creation of “Behemoth”, chapter 40 verses 15-24, and “Leviathan”, chapter 41 verses 1-34. There is no consensus as to exactly what animals these represent.

<sup>35</sup> ESV has “world below”, clearly thinking of “sheol”; ESV footnote has “hidden place”: Hebrew בְּטִמְנוֹן - battam’un, “in the one being concealed”; “verb, qal, passive participle” from verbal root טָמַן - tamen, “hide” “conceal”, “bury”; see TWOT article 811 page351.

**At this point Job is left to contemplate.** YHWH has clearly vindicated the words of Elihu. Job is left to ponder “why?” God has unequivocally demonstrated his vast superiority to Job – the vast gulf between God and man. **What brings Job to the point where he can truly repent?**

### 3.2.3 Job’s Repentance

**Job’s period of contemplation is reminiscent of Peter’s walk from Joppa to Caesarea.** Peter was in Joppa where he received a vision:

... **Peter** went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.  
And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it,  
he fell into a trance and **saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending,**  
being let down by its four corners upon the earth.  
**In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air.**  
And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; **kill and eat.**”  
But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.”  
And the voice came to him again a second time, “**What God has made clean, do not call common.**”  
(Acts 10:9b-15 ESV)

**Peter could NOT understand the vision.** While contemplating the vision, men arrived from Cornelius in Caesarea requesting that he come with them:

Now while **Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean,**  
behold, the **men who were sent by Cornelius,** having made inquiry for Simon’s house,  
stood at the gate and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there.  
And while **Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him,**  
“Behold, three men are looking for you.  
**Rise and go down and accompany them** without hesitation, for **I have sent them.**”  
(Acts 10:17-20 ESV)

The walk from Joppa to Caesarea would take a couple of days. During that time, **Peter came to understand the vision:**

And **on the following day they entered Caesarea.**  
Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.  
And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered.  
And he said to them,  
“You yourselves know  
how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation,  
**but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.** ...”  
(Acts 10:24, 27-28 ESV)

#### **Analysis of Peter’s walk:**

- The vision Peter saw was shocking, dramatic, to capture his attention:  
Peter saw filth animals, “**all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air**”  
He was told to eat them, “**kill and eat**”
- He was told the meaning of the vision in cryptic terms:  
The interpretation made no sense, “**what God has made clean, do not call common**”
- Peter did NOT understand the vision:  
There was no way for Peter to resolve the dilemma, “**Peter was inwardly perplexed**”, “**Peter was pondering the vision**”
- **The agency of the Holy Spirit is explicit:**  
God gave Peter instruction through the Holy Spirit, “**the Spirit said to him**”, “**I have sent them**”
- Peter had time to cogitate:  
Walking to Caesarea gave Peter time to think and pray, “**on the following day they entered Caesarea**”
- When he got to Caesarea, Peter understood:  
The symbols in the vision became clear to Peter, “**God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean**”

Clearly, it was the agency of the Holy Spirit which gave Peter the understanding. It is also the guidance of the Holy Spirit which helped Job sort through his experiences and come to the correct conclusion:

- Job was a True Worshipper of God; he had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as did Peter:  
There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job,  
and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.  
Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth ...  
(Job 1:1, 8bα ESV)
- Job's experiences were shocking and dramatic:  
Job expected comfort from his "Three Friends"; instead, they viciously attacked him:  
Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him,  
they came each from his own place ...  
They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him.  
I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all.  
(Job 2:11, 16:2 ESV)  
Elihu spoke plainly to Job, but Job considered Elihu to be impudent:  
But now, hear my speech, O Job, and listen to all my words.  
... I have heard the sound of your words.  
Behold, in this you are not right.  
(Job 33:1, 8b, 12a ESV)  
Far be it from me to say that you are right;  
till I die I will not put away my integrity from me.  
I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go;  
my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.  
(Job 27:5-6 ESV)
- Job's problem was communicated to him somewhat cryptically:  
Can a man be profitable to God?  
Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are in the right,  
or is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?  
(Job 22:2a, 3 ESV)  
If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him?  
And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to him?  
If you are righteous, what do you give to him?  
Or what does he receive from your hand?  
(Job 35:6-7 ESV)
- After all was said and done, Job still did NOT understand his problem:  
Job longed for the "good old days" when everything was right:  
Oh, that I were as in the months of old, as in the days when God watched over me,  
when his lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness,  
as I was in my prime, when the friendship of God was upon my tent,  
when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were all around me ...  
(Job 29:2-5 ESV)
- Elihu explicitly discussed the agency of the Holy Spirit:  
The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.  
If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath,  
all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.  
(Job 33:4, 34:14-15 ESV)
- Job must have been given time to cogitate:  
The author of the Book of Job provides no explicit temporal break following YHWH's final speech and Job's speech of repentance; but, some temporal break is required for Job to think.
- Job arrives at a correct understanding and repents:  
Then Job answered [YHWH] and said:  
"I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.  
*'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'*  
Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,  
things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.  
*'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.'*



I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;  
therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”  
(Job 42:1-6 ESV)

#### **Analysis of Job's repentance:**

- YHWH's use of General Revelation demonstrated his power, “you can do all things”, “no purpose of yours can be thwarted”
- Job now comes to see how empty were his complaints towards God and how ridiculous was his “legal case”, “I have uttered what I did not understand”, “things too wonderful for me”
- Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Job now understands the vast gulf that exists between God and man, “I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear”, “now my eye sees you”
- True repentance requires disgust of the former self, “I despise myself”
- True repentance is a commitment to go forward and be different, “repent in dust and ashes”
  - Abraham had used the phrase “dust and ashes” to indicate a state of “contrition”:  
Abraham answered and said,  
“Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord,  
I who am but dust and ashes. ...”  
(Genesis 18:27 ESV)
  - In his misery, Job sat in a pit of ashes and later compared himself to “dust and ashes”:  
So Satan went out from the presence of [YHWH] and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.  
And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.  
God has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes.  
(Job 2:7-8, 30:19 ESV)
  - “Ashes” were symbol of mourning, grief, and repentance:  
And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she wore.  
And she laid her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went.  
(2 Samuel 13:19 ESV)  
When Mordecai learned all that had been done,  
Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes,  
and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry.  
(Esther 4:1 ESV)  
And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached,  
there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting,  
and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.  
(Esther 4:3 ESV)  
O daughter of my people, put on sackcloth, and roll in ashes;  
make mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation,  
for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.  
(Jeremiah 6:26 ESV)  
Then I turned my face to the Lord God,  
seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.  
(Daniel 9:3 ESV)  
Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!  
For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon,  
they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.  
(Matthew 11:21 ESV // Luke 10:13)

**Conspicuously absent at the end of the story is Satan the Devil.** The implication of this is how truly meaningless Satan and his schemes are in the grand design of the Plan of God. Once Job had thwarted the attack of Satan through the “Three Friends”, Satan was out of the picture. It is reminiscent of Jesus' defeat of Satan:

Then Jesus said to him,  
“Be gone, Satan! For it is written,  
“You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.  
(Matthew 4:10-11 ESV)

## 4. The Sum of the Matter

**The Book of Job is about the Christian Calling.** A True Christian must prove to God that he/she will NOT succumb to the pulls of the world. **Satan's world is alluring.** Everything in it is designed to draw people to death. Resisting Satan is a test that each True Christian must pass.<sup>36</sup> Having resisted Satan, **God then confronts each True Christian with his/her own self.** Each person has one or more, perhaps many, severe personal trials to go through. Having successfully gone through these trials, **a True Christian is truly a candidate for the gift of eternal life.**

The first part of the Book of Job contains **Satan's attack on Job.** Satan used the three friends to **offer Job the world,** if he would only turn his back on God, **"curse God"**. Satan tried to convince Job that Job was in fact evil, that he had some grievous sin, but Job knew he was a "righteous" man. He trusted in his integrity, indeed his **"heart did NOT reproach him for any of his days"**. Job remained steadfast; he demonstrated his faith and commitment, and Satan fled from him.

In the second part of the Book of Job, **God forces Job to face himself.** His integrity served him well against Satan, but his trust in it is **his fatal character flaw.** **"Self-righteousness"** is perhaps the hardest sin for any person to see in his/her own self. Job had to be reduced to nothing, beaten down by the "Three Friends", castigated by a "young whippersnapper", and finally confronted by God himself in a theophany. **None of these things in itself was sufficient** – though all were apparently necessary. It was only through **quiet introspection guided by the Holy Spirit** that Job came to understand his sin and truly be able to say to God, **"now my eye sees you"**.

### 4.1 The Allure of the World

Satan's world runs on "money" and "power". **Satan was lavished in wealth,** but he wanted more. **Satan's rebellion was motivated by desire for "power"** – he wanted to be equal to or greater than God:

You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
every **precious stone** was your covering,  
sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle;  
and **crafted in gold** were your settings and your engravings.

**On the day that you were created** they were prepared.  
**You were blameless in your ways** from the day you were created,  
**till unrighteousness was found in you.**  
(Ezekiel 28:13, 15 ESV)

**You said in your heart,**  
**'I will ascend to heaven;** above the stars of God I will **set my throne on high;**  
I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
**I will make myself like the Most High.'**  
(Isaiah 14:13-14 ESV)

**Satan's strategy** is usually<sup>37</sup> to **make evil, his evil, look desirable** – Eve and Adam fell for it:  
Now **the serpent** was more crafty than any other beast of the field that [YHWH] God had made.  
He said to the woman,

**"Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"**

And the woman said to the serpent,  
"We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,  
but God said,

**'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden,**  
**neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'**"

But the serpent said to the woman,  
**"You will not surely die.**  
For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened,  
and **you will be like God,** knowing good and evil."

<sup>36</sup> For further discussion of this topic, see section **3.1.2 Rejecting the Way of the World** in the paper "Third Pillar - The Way of God" located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>37</sup> Satan is too crafty to use the same strategy ALL the time.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.  
(Genesis 3:1-6 ESV)

**Satan' proxies use the same strategy:**

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil,  
who put darkness for light and light for darkness,  
who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

Ah, you who hide deep from [YHWH] your counsel, whose deeds are in the dark,  
and who say, "Who sees us? Who knows us?"

You turn things upside down!

Shall the potter be regarded as the clay,  
that the thing made should say of its maker, "He did not make me";  
or the thing formed say of him who formed it, "He has no understanding"?  
(Isaiah 5:20, 29:15-16 ESV)

Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel,  
who detest justice and make crooked all that is straight,  
who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity.  
(Micah 3:9-10 ESV)

But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said,  
"You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy,  
will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ..."  
(Acts 13:9-10 ESV)

The "Three Friends" were convinced that Job must have some hidden sin, some secret transgression for which he was being punished. They tried to convince him that his "righteousness" was just a façade to cover his sin. They tried to convince him that his "straight path" was indeed "crooked". **Rather than help Job to see his problem, they all offered immediate physical benefits:**

You shall know that your tent is at peace, and you shall inspect your fold and miss nothing.  
You shall know also that your offspring shall be many, and your descendants as the grass of the earth.  
You shall come to your grave in ripe old age, like a sheaf gathered up in its season.  
(Job 5:24-26 ESV)

Surely he who is wise is profitable to himself.  
if you lay gold in the dust, and gold of Ophir among the stones of the torrent-bed,  
then the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver.  
(Job 22:2b, 24-25 ESV)

if you are pure and upright, surely then he will rouse himself for you  
and restore your rightful habitation.  
And though your beginning was small, your latter days will be very great.  
(Job 8:6-7 ESV)

If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, and let not injustice dwell in your tents.  
You will forget your misery; you will remember it as waters that have passed away.  
And your life will be brighter than the noonday; its darkness will be like the morning.  
And you will feel secure, because there is hope; you will look around and take your rest in security.  
You will lie down, and none will make you afraid; many will court your favor.  
(Job 11:14, 16-19 ESV)

**The most tragic example of Satan's deception of a proxy through the allure of money and power is Judas Iscariot.** Judas allowed himself to be enticed and manipulated by Satan until Judas became the agency of Jesus' betrayal:

Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard,  
and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair.  
The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said,  
"Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"

He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief,  
and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.  
(John 12:3-6 ESV // Mark 14:3-5, Matthew 26:7-9)

Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve.  
He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them.

And they were glad, and agreed to give him money.  
 So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.  
 (Luke 22:3-6 ESV // Mark 14:10-11, Matthew 26:14-16)

Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him.  
 Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly."  
 Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him.  
 Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag,  
 Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the feast,"  
 or that he should give something to the poor.  
 So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.  
 (John 13:27-30 ESV)

Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned,  
 he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,  
 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."  
 They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself."  
 And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.  
 (Matthew 27:3-5 ESV)

The Apostle John states very clearly the perspective a True Worshipper of God must have towards Satan's world:

Do not love the world or the things in the world.  
 If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.  
 For all that is in the world—  
     the desires of the flesh  
     and the desires of the eyes  
     and pride of life—  
 is not from the Father but is from the world.  
 And the world is passing away along with its desires,  
 but whoever does the will of God abides forever.  
 (1 John 2:15-17 ESV)

These are the very things Satan uses to entrap people:

- desires of the flesh:  
 O you of little faith!  
 And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried.  
 For all the nations of the world seek after these things,  
 and your Father knows that you need them.  
 (Luke 12:28b-30 ESV)  
 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery,  
 enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies,  
 and things like these.  
 I warn you, as I warned you before,  
 that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.  
 (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)
- desires of the eyes:  
 And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven,  
 and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven,  
 you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them,  
 things that [YHWH] your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.  
 (Deuteronomy 4:19 ESV see also Ezekiel 6:9, 18:12, 20:8, 24, 33:25, Psalm 119:37)  
He who loves money will not be satisfied with money,  
 nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.  
 When goods increase, they increase who eat them,  
 and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes?  
 (Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 ESV see also 4:7-8, Jeremiah 22:17, 1 Timothy 6:9)  
 And you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field,  
 or his male servant, or his female servant,  
 his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.  
 (Deuteronomy 5:21b ESV see also Proverbs 19:2, 21:10)

- pride of life:

In the **pride** of his face the wicked does not seek him;  
all his thoughts are, **"There is no God."**  
(Psalm 10:4 ESV)

**"Scoffer"** is the name of **the arrogant, haughty** man who acts with **arrogant pride**.  
(Proverbs 21:24 ESV see also Isaiah 23:9, Ezekiel 16:49)

**The pride of your heart** has deceived you,  
you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart,  
**"Who will bring me down to the ground?"**

(Obadiah 3 ESV see also Isaiah 9:8–10)

I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity;

**I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant,**  
and **lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless.**

(Isaiah 13:11 ESV see also 10:12, 16:6 // Jeremiah 48:29, Proverbs 8:13, Ezekiel 7:10, 20, 24)

This remains Satan's world, True Worshipers must be vigilant, but **Jesus Christ has defeated Satan:**

**For some have already strayed after Satan.** ... among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander,  
whom **I have handed over to Satan** that **they may learn** not to blaspheme.

In their case **the god of this world has blinded the minds** ...

And no wonder, for even **Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.**

We know that we are from God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.**

I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world is coming.**

He has no claim on me ... because **the ruler of this world is judged.**

Now is the judgment of this world; **now will the ruler of this world be cast out.**

(1 Timothy 5:15, 1:20, 2 Corinthians 4:4a, 11:14, 1 John 5:19, John 14:30, 16:11b, 12:31 ESV)

**Through the power of the Holy Spirit,** True Worshipers of God can also **defeat Satan** by overcoming the allure of the world:

Do you not know that **friendship with the world is enmity with God?**

Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

But **each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.**

Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this:

to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and **to keep oneself unstained from the world.**

(James 4:4b, 1:14-15, 27 ESV)

And you were dead in the trespasses and **sin in which you once walked,**

**following the course of this world,** following the prince of the power of the air,  
the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

For **we** do not **wrestle** against flesh and blood,

but against the rulers, against the authorities,

against the cosmic powers over this present darkness,

**against the spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly places.

... so that we would **not be outwitted by Satan;** for **we are not ignorant of his designs.**

... so that [we] may **not fall into disgrace,** into **a snare of the devil.**

But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ,** and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

... **put off your old self,**

which belongs to your former manner of life and is **corrupt through deceitful desires** ...

For **everyone who has been [begotten] (gennao)<sup>38</sup> of God overcomes the world.**

And **this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.**

(Ephesians 2:1-2, 6:12, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 1 Timothy 3:7b, Romans 13:14, Ephesians 4:22, 1 John 5:4 ESV)

<sup>38</sup> See the discussion of "gennao" in *Excursus: Holy Ones - q\*doshim (You Are "Gods")*

## 4.2 Testing by God

Jesus characterized the Christian calling by the **“Parable of the Sower”**:

“Listen! Behold, **a sower went out to sow.**

And as he sowed, some **seed fell along the path**, and the birds came and devoured it.

Other **seed fell on rocky ground**, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil.

And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.

Other **seed fell among thorns**, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

And other **seeds fell into good soil** and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

And he said, **“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”**

**The sower sows the word.**

And these are **the ones along the path**, where the word is sown:

when they hear, **Satan immediately comes and takes away the word** that is sown in them.

And these are **the ones sown on rocky ground**:

the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy.

And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while;

then, when **tribulation or persecution** arises on account of the word, immediately **they fall away**.

And others are **the ones sown among thorns**.

They are those who hear the word, but the **cares of the world** and the **deceitfulness of riches** and the **desires** for other things enter in and **choke the word**, and it proves unfruitful.

But **those that were sown on the good soil** are the ones who hear the word and accept it and **bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.**”

(Mark 4:3-9, 14-20 ESV // Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23, Luke 8:5-8, 12-15)

**Satan the Devil hates True Christian most of all.** His focus is always to deprive human beings of eternal life. When **a person first begins to respond to the calling of God**, that person is most vulnerable. That is when Satan is most successful in his attack, **“the ones along the path”**, **“the ones sown on rocky ground”**, **“the ones sown among thorns”**. **Satan is ever watchful for a person to attack:**

Be sober-minded; be watchful.

**Your adversary the devil prowls** around like a roaring lion, **seeking someone to devour.**

(1 Peter 5:8 ESV)

The first three categories of people identified by Jesus are those who sadly succumb to Satan. The **fourth category** are **people who successfully resist Satan:**

**Resist him, firm in your faith,**

knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

(1 Peter 5:9 ESV)

**Submit yourselves therefore to God.**

**Resist the devil**, and he will flee from you.

(James 4:7 ESV)

Far be it from me to say that you are right;

**till I die I will not put away my integrity from me.**

**I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go;**

my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.

(Job 27:5-6 ESV)

To **“bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold”** is to grow from the tests of the Christian Life. As God confronts each person with the trials required to refine that person, the **Apostle James** admonishes:

**Count it all joy**, my brothers, **when you meet trials of various kinds**,

for you know that **the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.**

And let steadfastness have its full effect, **that you may be perfect and complete**, lacking in nothing.

Blessed is the man who **remains steadfast under trial**,

for when he has stood the test he will receive **the crown of life**,

**which God has promised** to those who love him.

(James 1:2-4, 12 ESV see also 1 Peter 1:6-7, 2 Corinthians 13:5-7, 1 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

**Abraham's test was severe.** God had promised Abraham descendants through his son Isaac. Isaac became the focus of Abraham's test:

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!"

And he said, "Here I am."

He said,

**"Take your son,** your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!"

And he said, "Here I am, my son."

He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

**Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering,** my son."

So they went both of them together.

But the angel of [YHWH] called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

And he said, "Here I am."

He said,

"Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."

(Genesis 22:1-2, 7-8, 11-12 ESV)

God had to know that Abraham truly knew God, **"now I know that you fear God"**, as Job said, **"now my eye sees you"**. Note also that Abraham's fear of God was rooted in faith – he trusted that God would fulfill his promise, **"God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering"**, even though he could NOT see how the promise would be fulfilled.

The author of Hebrews comments on the faith of Abraham:

**By faith Abraham, when he was tested**, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was **in the act of offering up his only son**, of whom it was said,

"Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."

**He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead**, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.  
(Hebrews 11:17-19 ESV)

The entire wilderness period was **a personal test for each individual** among the Nation of Israel who was going into the Promised Land:

And you shall **remember the whole way** that [YHWH] your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, **testing you to know what was in your heart**, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

And **he humbled you** and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, **that he might make you know** that man does not live by bread alone, but **man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of [YHWH]**.  
(Deuteronomy 8:2-3 ESV see also Exodus 15:25, 20:20)

Job's **"Three Friends"** filled the role of the **"false prophet"** that Moses warned about:

If a prophet or **a dreamer of dreams** arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says,

'Let us go after other gods,'  
which you have not known,  
'and let us serve them,'

**you shall not listen to the words of** that prophet or **that dreamer of dreams**.

**For [YHWH] your God is testing you**,

to know whether you love [YHWH] your God with all your heart and with all your [being] (nephesh).<sup>39</sup> You shall **walk after [YHWH] your God** and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and **hold fast to him**.  
(Deuteronomy 13:1-4 ESV)

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<sup>39</sup> See footnote 7



**King David** understood the necessity of testing and the value of having been tested:

Prove me, [YHWH], and try me; test my heart and my mind.

(Psalm 26:2 ESV see also Psalm 7:9, 11:5)

I know, my God, that you test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness.

In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things,

and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you.

(1 Chronicles 29:17 ESV)

A later Psalmist looks to the World Tomorrow, rejoicing that those who participate in it will be tested:

Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise!

All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name.

Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard,

who has kept our [being] (nephesh)<sup>40</sup> among the living and has not let our feet slip.

For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.

(Psalm 66:1-2, 4, 8-10 ESV)

## 4.2 Self-righteousness

As affirmed by God, Job had lived a righteous and blameless life:

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job,

and that man was blameless and upright,

one who feared God and turned away from evil.

And [YHWH] said to Satan,

“Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth,  
a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?”

And [YHWH] said to Satan,

“Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth,  
a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?”

He still holds fast his integrity,

although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.”

(Job 1:1, 8, 2:3 ESV)

Job’s righteousness was so profound that his involvement was acknowledged as efficacious in covering the sins of others:

His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day,

and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

And when the days of the feast had run their course,

Job would send and consecrate them,

and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all.

For Job said,

“It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.”

Thus Job did continually.

(Job 1:4-5, ESV)

After [YHWH] had spoken these words to Job, [YHWH] said to Eliphaz the Temanite:

“My anger burns against you and against your two friends,

for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.

Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams

and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves.

And my servant Job shall pray for you,

for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly.

For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”

So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite

went and did what [YHWH] had told them, and [YHWH] accepted Job’s prayer.

(Job 42:7-9 ESV)

In spite of Satan’s attacks, Job did NOT sin:

And he said,

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return.

[YHWH] gave, and [YHWH] has taken away; blessed be the name of [YHWH].”

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<sup>40</sup> See footnote 7

**In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.**

But he said to her,

“You speak as one of the foolish women would speak.

Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?”

**In all this Job did not sin with his lips.**

(Job 1:21-22, 2:10 ESV)

And indeed, **Job was aware of his righteousness. He trusted in his righteousness.** He was sure that his righteousness put him in a special place in God’s eyes:

**Though I am in the right**, my own mouth would condemn me;

**though I am blameless**, he would prove me perverse.

I am blameless; I regard not myself; I loathe my life.

I am a laughingstock to my friends;

I, who called to God and he answered me,

**a just and blameless man**, am a laughingstock.

**The upright** are appalled at this, and the innocent stirs himself up against the godless.

Yet **the righteous** holds to his way,

and **he who has clean hands** grows stronger and stronger.

There **an upright man** could argue with him, and I would be acquitted forever by my judge.

... **my lips will not speak falsehood**, and my tongue will not utter deceit.

Far be it from me to say that you are right;

till I die **I will not put away my integrity from me.**

**I hold fast my righteousness** and will not let it go;

**my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.**

**I put on righteousness**, and it clothed me;

**my [justness] (mish<sup>e</sup>pat)<sup>41</sup>** was like a robe and a turban.

Let me be weighed in a just balance, and **let God know my integrity!**

(Job 9:20-21, 12:4, 17:8-9, 23:7, 27:4-6, 29:14, 31:6 ESV)

**Self-righteousness is perhaps the most difficult sin to see in oneself.** Satan could NOT see it Job, or if he did, he could not devise a way to use it to attack Job. The only way to combat self-righteousness is by having **a true perspective on who and what God is** – to truly come to know God. The basis of this relationship is humility before God. This was the focus of Elihu’s speeches and God’s own emphasis on the creation.

The problem with **self-righteousness** is that it **can lead into other attitudinal problems** which result in sin. The slippery slope begins with **“self satisfaction”** – being perfect in every way, can cause a person to feel everything is okay, “I am doing alright”! This can lead to **“arrogance”**, “it’s a shame all these other people are not as good as me”. This can lead to putting **one’s own ideas and perceptions** forward as superior, in fact, setting them up as **“idols”**. **Idolatry is the “mother of all sin”**.

**Moses warned the Israelites about self satisfaction:**

**Take care lest you forget [YHWH] your God** ... lest,

**when you have eaten and are full** and have built good houses and live in them,

and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied

and all that you have is multiplied,

**then your heart be lifted up**, and **you forget [YHWH] your God**,

who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery,

who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness,

with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water,

who brought you water out of the flinty rock,

who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know,

**that he might humble you and test you**, to do you good in the end.

**Beware lest you say in your heart**,

**‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’**

(Deuteronomy 8:11a, 12-17 ESV)

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<sup>41</sup> See footnote 31

In a parable, **Jesus exemplified the arrogance that can result from self-righteousness:**

He also told this parable to **some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous,**  
and **treated others with contempt:**

Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

**The Pharisee**, standing by himself, prayed thus:

‘God, **I thank you that I am not like other men**, extortioners, unjust, adulterers,  
or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’

But **the tax collector**, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven,  
but beat his breast, saying,

‘God, **be merciful to me, a sinner!**’

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other.

For **everyone who exalts himself will be humbled**, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”  
(Luke 18:9-14 ESV)

The **Prophet Ezekiel** reports **God’s own succinct summation:**

**Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live,**  
**yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice,**  
**none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered,**  
but in his injustice that he has done **he shall die.**  
(Ezekiel 33:13 ESV)

In a heartfelt prayer, the **Prophet Isaiah** puts **human righteousness into perspective:**

Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;  
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?  
We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and **all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.**  
(Isaiah 64:5b-6a ESV)

Elsewhere, Isaiah reported **God’s treatment of self-righteousness:**

**Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!**  
**Man is humbled,** and each one is brought low, and **the eyes of the haughty are brought low.**  
And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled,  
and **the lofty pride of men shall be brought low,**  
and [YHWH] alone will be exalted in that day.  
And **the idols shall utterly pass away.**  
(Isaiah 5:21, 15, 2:17-18 ESV)

**The Apostle Paul has the last word. True righteousness is God’s righteousness.** Human beings can  
strive to learn righteousness in this life, but we cannot attain it. **True righteousness, holiness, is a gift**  
**from God,** conferred upon those he chooses at the resurrection:

For when you were **slaves of sin**, you were **free in regard to righteousness.**  
But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed?  
For **the end of those things is death.**

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become **slaves of God,**  
the fruit you get leads to **sanctification** and its end, **eternal life.**

For the wages of sin is death, but **the free gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
(Romans 6:20-23 ESV)

But now **the righteousness of God has been manifested ...**  
**—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.**

For there is no distinction: for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,  
and are **justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,**  
whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, **to be received by faith.**

**This was to show God’s righteousness,**  
because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.  
It was **to show his righteousness at the present time,**  
so that he might be just and **the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**  
(Romans 3:21a, 22-26 ESV)

## Epilogue

**The key to the Book of Job is the dialogue between the various actors.** The genre of the Book of Job is “wisdom literature”; as such most of the book is poetry. This inherently presents a challenge to understanding. But the difficulty goes beyond that. **The structure of the book is such that straight forward reading does NOT yield satisfactory understanding.** The different parts of the Book of Job require independent analysis. Having understood each part, the whole can be appreciated.

**One must approach the Book of Job on its own terms:** it is in the Bible for a reason. God intends True Worshipers to take from the book valuable information required assist in the Christian life. The reader must approach the book with humility and **let the Holy Spirit speak through its words** the messages from God that he intends True Worshipers to glean. **The dialogue of the Book of Job contains the messages God has inspired through the Holy Spirit.** Understanding the dialogue requires a wholistic approach to the book. **Much of the meaning of the book is implicit** and can only be discerned by careful analysis of the various parts of the book. A **key to understanding** is the knowledge of the Nature of God, the Plan of God, and the Way of God as expounded in the rest of the Bible. Using this approach, the Book of Job becomes a treasure trove of valuable insight.

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[www.esv.org](http://www.esv.org)

This excellent website provides full access to the ESV text, plus many useful tools to work with the text.

[www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca)

The location of the paper "The Book of Job", as well as other papers referenced herein.

## Appendix: Thematic Analysis of the Book of Job

Chapter	Speaker	History, Setting	Eternity / Resurrection	Satan / imagery	Worship	Integrity, Iniquity	Curse / birth / Death	Way of the World	"Light" Understanding	Suffering	God is Responsible	Patient / Impatient	Revelation, Visions	Human Condition	Deliverance, Salvation	Retributive Justice	Prosperity	Nature of God
1	narrator	v1-5, 13-19	v6-12	v6-12	v20-22	v1,22	v5,11				v8,12,21							
2	narrator	v7b-10, 11-13	v1-7a	v1-7a		v3,9,10b	v5,9b			v7-8,13	v3,6							
3	Job	V1-2a		v8b			v1-22	v14-15	v20,23	v24-26	v23b							
4	Eliphaz	v1				v6	v21		v3-4	v7-11,20	v9	v2,5	v12-21	v17-21				
5	Eliphaz				v8		v26		v27				v1	v2-7	v15-22		V23-26	v9-16
6	Job	v1,18-19				v10b, 28-30	v8-9	v27	v24-26	v2-3,5-7, 10a,12-13	v4,8-9	v3b,11		v14-23	v23			
7	Job		v9b,16a			v21a	v7-10, 15,21b			v3-6	V12,20	v11	v13-14	v1-2, 16b-19				
8	Bildad	v1,8-10			v5	v6			v8b,10b		v3,20	v2		v9,11-19		v4,22	v7, 21-22	
9	Job	v1		v13		v2-3,14-16, 20-21a,35	v21b			v25-31	v17-18, 22-24,33-34					v22		v4-13,19, 32
10	Job		v12b			V6-7,14-15	v1a,9b, 18-19 21-22		v13	v1b,10	v2-3,8, 16-17,20b			v9,11,20a	V12a			v4-5
11	Zophar	v1			v13,15	v4,14			v5-6a	v16		v2-3				v6b,10-12,20	v17-19	v7-9
12	Job	v1,18-25				v4		v5-6	v2-3,11-13,16-17	v4	v7-10							v14-15
13	Job				v17-22	v3,13-16, 23-26	v19b	v4-5, 7-9	v1-2,6,12	v27-28						v10-11		
14	Job		v7-17							v22	v5-6,18-20			v1-4,21				
15	Eliphaz	v1	v8a		v4,11-13	v5-6			v7-10, 17-19			v2-3		v14-16		v20-35		
16	Job	v1			v17		v22	v2-4		v5-6,10, 12-16	v7-9,11				v18-21			

Chapter	Speaker	History, Setting	Eternity / Resurrection	Satan / imagery	Worship	Integrity, Iniquity	Curse / birth / Death	Way of the World	"Light" Understanding	Suffering	God is Responsible	Patient / Impatient	Revelation, Visions	Human Condition	Deliverance, Salvation	Retributive Justice	Prosperity	Nature of God
17	Job					v8-9	v1b,13-14,16	V5a,12	v4a,10b	v1-16					v15			
18	Bildad	v1										v2-4		v21		v5-20		
19	Job	v1	v23-29			v4-5				v13-22	v6-12	v2-3						
20	Zophar	v1,4						v12-13, 20-21a					v2-3			v5-29	v21b	
21	Job	v1					v13b,21-26,32	v7-16, 28-34		v5-6		v2-4,27				v17-20, 22	v13a	
22	Eliphaz	v1			v2-4, 21-23	v5		v6-9, 13-15, 17-18a		v10-11				v29-30		v16, 18b-20	v2b, 24-28	V3-4,12
23	Job	v1			v15-16	v10-12,14			v17	v2					v3-7			v8-9,13
24	Job				v1b		v19b-20a	v2-17, 21-23	v25							v18-20, 24		v1a
25	Bildad	v1				v4-6												v2-3
26	Job	v1		v12			v5-6			v2-4								v7-14
27	Job Bildad	v1				v3-6					v2					v7-12, 13-23	v16-17	
28	Job								v12-28					v1-11			v1,6	
29	Job	v1				v14											v2-25	
30	Job						v23	v3-8		v1-2,9-18 ,24-31	v11a, 19-23							
31	Job					v1-40					v35-37			v15			v24-25	v4,23,28b
32	narrator Elihu	v1-6a, 15-17				v21-22			v6b-14				v18-20					
33	Elihu		v23-30			v1-3,8-9	v18,22		v31-33	v19-22	v10-11		v4,15-18	v5-7				v12-14
34	Elihu	v1				v31-37		v17-19	v2-4,16		v5-9					v20-30		v10-15
35	Elihu	v1				v8								v2-16				v6-7
36	Elihu	v1			v24-33	v17-21			v2-4						v15-16	v6-14		v5,22-23
37	Elihu				v1				v14-20				v2-12					v13,21-24



Chapter	Speaker	History, Setting	Eternity / Resurrection	Satan / imagery	Worship	Integrity, Iniquity	Curse / birth / Death	Way of the World	"Light" Understanding	Suffering	God is Responsible	Patient / Impatient	Revelation, Visions	Human Condition	Deliverance, Salvation	Retributive Justice	Prosperity	Nature of God
38	YHWH	v1							v2-3,4b, 36	v21						v13b,15		v4-41
39	YHWH								v17									v1-30
40	YHWH, Job	v1,3, 6		v16	v4-5,8-9	v2,7						v4-5			v14	v11-13		V9-24
41	YHWH			v1	v9-11													v1-34
42	Job, narrator	v1,10-17			v2-9				v2-6									
<b>Count:</b>		28	8	7	16	24	17	11	22	22	19	11	7	13	8	15	8	18

## Excursus: Holy Ones - *q<sup>e</sup>doshim*

The verbal root קָדַשׁ - qadash, carries the range of meaning including “holiness”, “to be holy”, “to make holy”. The adjective קָדוֹשׁ - qadosh carries a range of meaning including “holy”, “Holy One”, “saint”.<sup>42</sup> The plural of the adjective, קְדוֹשִׁים - q<sup>e</sup>doshim, has **a unique range of meaning: it identifies “beings” that are accounted “holy” by God**. Consider the following examples:

Call now; is there anyone who will answer you?

**To which of the holy ones (q<sup>e</sup>doshim) will you turn?**

(Job 5:1 ESV)

His power shall be great—but not by his own power;  
and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does,  
and destroy mighty men and **the people who are the saints (q<sup>e</sup>doshim)**.

(Daniel 8:24 ESV)

And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal.

And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.

Then [YHWH] my God will come, and **all the holy ones (q<sup>e</sup>doshim) with him**.

(Zechariah 14:5 ESV)

Let the heavens praise your wonders, [YHWH],  
your faithfulness in **the assembly (qahal)<sup>43</sup> of the holy ones (q<sup>e</sup>doshim)**!

For who in the skies can be compared to the [YHWH]?

Who among the [sons of God] (beni ‘elohim)<sup>44</sup> is like [YHWH],

a God greatly to be feared in **the council (sod)<sup>45</sup> of the holy ones (q<sup>e</sup>doshim)**,

and awesome above all who are around him?

(Psalm 89:5-7 ESV)

Job 5:1 is ambiguous, but in Daniel 8:24, the *q<sup>e</sup>doshim* are clearly human beings. In Zechariah 14:5, the *q<sup>e</sup>doshim* are resurrected human beings. In Psalm 89:5-7, the *q<sup>e</sup>doshim* appear to be angelic beings, but the implication is much broader.

## The Divine Council

Psalm 89:5-7 introduces the concept of the divine assembly or divine council. The divine council/assembly exists in eternity, and it is presided over by God the Father and Jesus Christ/YHWH.

**Angelic beings can present themselves in the divine council/assembly:**

Now there was a day when **the sons of God** (b<sup>e</sup>ne ha‘elohim,<sup>46</sup> ‘sons the of God’) **came to present themselves before [YHWH]**, and Satan also came among them.

[YHWH] said to Satan, “From where have you come?”

Satan answered [YHWH] and said,

“From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.”

(Job 1:6-7, ESV see also 2:1-2)

In his second speech, **Eliphaz challenges Job as to whether or not he has participated in the divine council/assembly:**

**Have you listened in the council (sod) of God?**

And do you limit wisdom to yourself?

(Job 15:8 ESV)

This begs the question, **“Can human beings be presented before the divine council/assembly?”**

<sup>42</sup> See TWOT article 1990 pages 786-789; see also the discussion in *Excurses 3 – Survey of qodesh qadashim* in the paper “The Seventy Periods Prophecy” and sections **1.4.1 God is Holy** and *Holiness* קָדַשׁ - qadash in the paper “First Pillar - The Nature of God”; both papers are located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>43</sup> The Hebrew word קָהָל - qahal, is the most common word for an “assembly” of any type, religious or otherwise; see TWOT article 1991 pages 789-790.

<sup>44</sup> See the discussion of ‘elohim in section **2.1.1. The Family Name** in the paper “Second Pillar - The Plan of God” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>45</sup> The Hebrew סֹד - sod, occurs only 21 times, the primary meaning is “confidential speech”; see TWOT article 1471 page 619.

<sup>46</sup> See footnote 44

In castigating the “false prophets”, the **Prophet Jeremiah** reports the words of YHWH denying that “false prophets” have such access but implying true “true prophets” do have access to the divine council/assembly:

Thus says [YHWH] of hosts:

“Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of [YHWH].

They say continually to those who despise the word of [YHWH],

‘It shall be well with you’;

and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say,

‘No disaster shall come upon you.’”

“For who among them has stood in the council (sod) of [YHWH] to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his word and listened?

Behold, the storm of [YHWH]!

Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked.

The anger of [YHWH] will not turn back

until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart.

In the latter days you will understand it clearly.”

“I did not send the prophets, yet they ran;

I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

But if they had stood in my council (sod),

then they would have proclaimed my words to my people,

and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.”

(Jeremiah 23:16-22 ESV)

Similarly, the **Prophet Ezekiel** is emphatic that “false prophets” DO NOT have access to God:

Therefore thus says the Lord [YHWH]:

“Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions,

therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord [YHWH].

My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and who give lying divinations.

They shall not be in the council (sod) of my people,

nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel,

nor shall they enter the land of Israel.

And you shall know that I am the Lord [YHWH]. ...”

(Ezekiel 13:8-9 ESV)

**The Prophet Micaiah explicitly reports his experience with the divine council/assembly:**

And Micaiah said,

“Therefore hear the word of [YHWH]:

I saw [YHWH] sitting on his throne,

and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on his left;

and [YHWH] said,

‘Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’

And one said one thing, and another said another.

Then a spirit came forward and stood before [YHWH], saying, ‘I will entice him.’

And [YHWH] said to him, ‘By what means?’

And he said, ‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’

And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.’

Now therefore behold, [YHWH] has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets;

[YHWH] has declared disaster for you.”

(1 Kings 22:19-23 ESV // 2 Chronicles 18:18-22)

**The Apostle Paul reports a similar experience:**

I must go on boasting.

Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven —

whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows.

And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—

whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—

and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.

(2 Corinthians 12:1-4 ESV)

## The “Spirit” Realm

Paul describes “eternity” as the “third heaven”. It is clear that “flesh and blood” cannot exist in eternity:

I tell you this, brothers:

**flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,**

nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

For this perishable body must put on the imperishable,

and this mortal body must put on immortality.

(1 Corinthians 15:50, 53 ESV)

Jesus answered him,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

Jesus answered,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit,

he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**

(John 3:3, 5-6 ESV)

It is NOT clear how God gives human beings glimpses into the “spirit” realm.<sup>47</sup> **The Prophet Ezekiel reports the experience several times:**

Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of [YHWH].

And when I saw it, **I fell on my face,** and I heard the voice of one speaking.

And he said to me,

“Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you.”

And as he spoke to me, **the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet,**

and I heard him speaking to me.

(Ezekiel 1:28b, ESV)

**Then the Spirit lifted me up,** and I heard behind me the voice of a great earthquake:

“Blessed be the glory of [YHWH] from its place!”

It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a great earthquake.

**The Spirit lifted me up and took me away,** and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, **the hand of [YHWH] being strong upon me.**

And I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who were dwelling by the Chebar canal, and I sat where they were dwelling.

**And I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.**

(Ezekiel 3:12-15 ESV see also 22-26)

In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, with the elders of Judah sitting before me,

**the hand of the Lord [YHWH] fell upon me there.**

Then I looked, and behold, a form that had the appearance of a man.

Below what appeared to be his waist was fire,

and above his waist was something like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming metal.

He put out the form of a hand and took me by a lock of my head,

and **the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem,**

to the entrance of the gateway of the inner court that faces north,

where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy.

And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the valley.

(Ezekiel 8:1-4 ESV see also the rest of chapters 8 through 11)

**The hand of [YHWH] was upon me,**

and **he brought me out in the Spirit of [YHWH] and set me down in the middle of the valley;**

it was full of bones.

And he led me around among them,

and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.

And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

And I answered, “O Lord [YHWH], you know.”

(Ezekiel 37:1-3 ESV)

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<sup>47</sup> For further discussion of this, see section **1.3.2 Glimpses into Eternity** in the paper “First Pillar - The Nature of God” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, **the hand of [YHWH] was upon me**, and **he brought me to the city**.

**In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel**, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south.

When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand. And he was standing in the gateway. And the man said to me,

“Son of man, **look with your eyes**, and **hear with your ears**, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you.

**Declare all that you see to the house of Israel.**”

(Ezekiel 40:1-4 ESV see also the rest of chapters 40 through 48)

In every instance, Ezekiel was aware of the overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit, “**the Spirit entered into me**”, “**the Spirit lifted me up and took me away**”, “**the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven**”. In each instance, the actual presence of God was manifest, “**the hand of [YHWH] being strong upon me**”. In each instance, Ezekiel was physically affected, “**I fell on my face**”, “**I sat there overwhelmed**”. Ezekiel was aware that the experience was somehow “visionary”, “**the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem**”, “**in visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel**”. Through the experiences, what Ezekiel saw and felt was very real, “**look with your eyes**”, “**hear with your ears**”, “**declare all that you see to the house of Israel**”.

**Human beings cannot actually enter into the “spirit” realm**. However, God can and has provided human beings glimpses into eternity, “the spirit realm”. **The resurrection from the dead transforms human beings into spirit beings** – full members of the “God Family”, with full access to eternity.

## You Are “Gods”

The **Apostle John** reports a particularly ugly encounter in the Temple between Jesus and some “Jews” (likely instigated by some Pharisees):

At that time **the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem**.

It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon.

So the Jews gathered around him and said to him,

“How long will you keep us in suspense?

**If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.**”

Jesus answered them,

“**I told you**, and **you do not believe**.

The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me,

but you do not believe because **you are not among my sheep**.

**My sheep hear my voice**, and I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all,

and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.

**I and the Father are one.**”

**The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.**

Jesus answered them,

“I have shown you many good works from the Father;

for which of them are you going to stone me?”

The Jews answered him,

“It is not for a good work that **we are going to stone you but for blasphemy**,

because **you, being a man, make yourself God.**”

Jesus answered them,

“Is it not written in your [nomos],<sup>48</sup> **‘I said, you are gods’?**

**If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—**

and Scripture cannot be broken—

do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world,

‘You are blaspheming,’

because I said, **‘I am the Son of God’?** ...”

(John 10:22-36 ESV)

The phrase, **“I said, you are gods”**, is quoted from Psalm 82, “A Psalm of Asaph”:

(1) **God has taken his place in the divine council (‘edah);**<sup>49</sup>

**in the midst of the [God Family] (‘elohim)<sup>50</sup> he holds judgment:**

(2) **“How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?**

(3) **Give justice** to the weak and the fatherless;

**maintain the right** of the afflicted and the destitute.

(4) **Rescue** the weak and the needy;

**deliver** them from the hand of the wicked.”

(5) **They have neither knowledge nor understanding,**

they walk about **in darkness**;

**all the foundations of the earth are shaken.**

(6) I said,

**“You are [God Family] (‘elohim), sons of the Most High, all of you.”**

(7) Nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.

(8) **Arise, [God Family] (‘elohim), judge the earth;** for **you shall inherit all the nations!**

(Psalm 82:1-8 ESV)

This Psalm can be very difficult to understand; however, **Jesus’ citation from it solidifies the meaning.**

The focus of the Psalm is **“prophetic”**: verse 8, **“arise”** looks to the **first resurrection**; **“judge the earth”**

will occur after the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ is the ultimate Judge, but

**“judgement”** is also given to the **resurrected saints**, the **“God Family”**:

The times of ignorance **God** overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

because he **has fixed a day on which he will judge the world** in righteousness

**by a man whom he has appointed;**

and **of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.**

(Acts 17:30-31 ESV)

And **Jesus** came and **said** to them,

**“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.**

(Matthew 28:18 ESV)

For **the Father** judges no one, but **has given all judgment to the Son** ...

I can do nothing on my own.

**As I hear, I judge,** and **my judgment is just,**

because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

Yet even if I do judge, **my judgment is true,** for it is not I alone who judge,

but I and the Father who sent me.

Do not judge by appearances, but **judge with right judgment.**

(John 5:22, 30, 8:16, 7:24 ESV)

Jesus said to them,

**“Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne,**

**you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones,**

**judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

(Matthew 19:28 ESV)

Or do you not know that **the saints will judge the world?**

And if **the world is to be judged by you,** are you incompetent to try trivial cases?

Do you not know that **we are to judge angels?**

(1 Corinthians 6:2-3a ESV)

<sup>48</sup> Jesus uses “nomos” to refer to the Old Testament in general, in particular the Psalms. For a discussion of the Greek word νόμος - nomos, see [Excursus 8 – torah and nomos](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca) in the paper “True Worship of the True God” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>49</sup> The Hebrew word עֵדָה - ‘edah, is more or less synonymous with *qahal*; see Holladay page 265.

<sup>50</sup> See footnote 44

Then I saw thrones,  
and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed.  
(Revelation 20:4a ESV)

As members of the Kingdom of God, the resurrected saints will “inherit all the nations”:

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.  
(Matthew 5:5 ESV)

... being strengthened with all power,  
according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;  
giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.  
He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son ...  
(Colossians 1:11-13 ESV)

By faith Abraham obeyed

when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance.  
And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land,  
living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.

For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.  
(Hebrews 11:8-10 ESV)

Given the prophetic focus of Psalm 82, the earlier verses fall into place. Verse 1, the “divine council” is a permanent fixture in eternity. The Psalmist sees a situation where members of the “God Family” are receiving instruction. God the Father ultimately “holds judgment”. The instruction in verses 2 through 4, relates to the nature of “judgement”. The recipients of the instruction are adjured to NOT “judge unjustly” and NOT “show partiality”. Righteous judgement is to “give justice”, to “maintain the right”, to “rescue”, and to “deliver”. Verse 5, the way of the world is without “knowledge” and without “understanding”. The people of the world are “in darkness”. At the Day of YHWH, indeed, “the foundations of the earth are shaken”, and the Kingdom of God is established.

In verse 6, the Psalmist speaks. He is addressing “the saints” – True Worshipers, those who have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They are “begotten” by God, but they are NOT yet born into full membership of the God Family. The Greek word γεννάω - gennaō,<sup>51</sup> carries the range meaning including the whole process from “procreation” through actual “birth”. In the spiritual analogy, “begettal” is the provision of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; “birth” is the resurrection from the dead. In many cases, *gennaō* should be translated “begotten”:

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name,  
he gave the right to become children of God,  
who were [begotten] (gennaō),  
not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.  
(John 1:12-13 ESV)

If you know that he is righteous,  
you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been [begotten] (gennaō) of him.

No one [begotten] (gennaō) of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him;  
and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God,  
and whoever loves has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God and knows God.  
Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

For everyone who has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God overcomes the world.

We know that everyone who has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God does not keep on sinning,  
but he who was born (gennaō) of God protects him,  
and the evil one does not touch him.  
(1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7-8, 5:4a, 18 ESV)

A Christian is “begotten” by God after baptism by the provision of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Christian life is to learn to overcome sin. In 1 John 5:18, “he who was born” is Jesus Christ. He is the “firstborn”,<sup>52</sup> the only human being, so far, who has been transformed into a spirit being by the

<sup>51</sup> See GEL pages 154-155

<sup>52</sup> See Romans 8:29, Colossians 1:15,18, Hebrews 1:6, Revelation 1:5



resurrection of the dead. At the First Resurrection, others will be transformed. This gets back to verses 7 and 8 of Psalm 82, all human beings die. Those in whom is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, will “arise”.

Jesus’ citation from Psalm 82 in John chapter 10, “I said, you are gods”, makes clear this understanding. Jesus goes on to say, “he called them gods to whom the word of God came”, implying that all True Worshipper since Abel, who have received and understood the word of God, are candidates for the gift of eternal life at the First Resurrection. All these people are q<sup>e</sup>doshim – God accounts them “holy”. With this understanding, the other uses of *q<sup>e</sup>doshim* in the Old Testament are very clear.

## You Shall Be Holy

In the Book of Leviticus, there are several injunctions to “be holy”, for example:

For I am [YHWH] your God.

Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy (q<sup>e</sup>doshim), for I am holy.

You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground.

For I am [YHWH] who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God.

You shall therefore be holy (q<sup>e</sup>doshim), for I am holy.”

Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them,

You shall be holy (q<sup>e</sup>doshim), for I [YHWH] your God am holy.

(Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2 ESV see also 20:7, 26, 21:6, Numbers 15:40)

The entire congregation of Israel was considered “holy” by God as they came out of Egypt.<sup>53</sup> God was working with the entire corporate body, not just select individuals; hence, God’s injunction was for them to be holy as a called-out nation.<sup>54</sup> This injunction of “holiness” passed to individuals with the Covenant of Life<sup>55</sup> just before the Israelites traversed into the promised land:

You are standing today, all of you, before [YHWH] your God:

the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel,

your little ones, your wives, and the sojourner who is in your camp,

from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water,

so that you may enter into the sworn covenant of [YHWH] your God,

which [YHWH] your God is making with you today,

that he may establish you today as his people,

and that he may be your God, as he promised you,

and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

It is not with you alone that I am making this sworn covenant,

but with whoever is standing here with us today before [YHWH] our God,

and with whoever is not here with us today.

(Deuteronomy 29:10-15 ESV)

The Covenant of Life was made before the whole nation, but it was an individual covenant with each person, “whoever is standing here”, that “YHWH ... may be your God”. The covenant explicitly applied to all persons in the future to be called by God, “whoever is not here with us today”. The purpose of the Covenant of Life was to open the door to individual salvation which had been closed by the choice Adam and Eve to sin. The choice of Adam and Eve had committed the whole human race to the way of sin and death. The Covenant of Life opens up the individual choice of each person subsequent to the calling of God, to choose the Way of God, the way of life:

See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.

If you obey the commandments of [YHWH] your God that I command you today,

by loving [YHWH] your God, by walking in his ways,

and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his [mish<sup>e</sup>patim],<sup>56</sup>

then you shall live and multiply,

and [YHWH] your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today,

that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse.

Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,

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<sup>53</sup> See Numbers 16:3

<sup>54</sup> See Exodus 19:6

<sup>55</sup> See the discussion in section 5. The Covenant of Life in the paper “Covenants of Grace” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>56</sup> The plural word מִשְׁפָּטִים - mish<sup>e</sup>patim, carries a distinct range of meaning from the singular (see footnote 31); there is no English word for *mish<sup>e</sup>patim*; it is the understanding, wisdom, and discernment that comes from a lifetime of living by the Way of God.

**loving [YHWH] your God**, obeying his voice and holding fast to him,  
for **he is your life** and length of days ...  
(Deuteronomy 30:15-16, 19-20a ESV)

### **The injunction to “individual holiness” is made explicit upon Christians by the Apostle Peter:**

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded,  
**set your hope fully on the grace** that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.  
As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,  
but **as he who called you is holy, you also be holy** in all your conduct,  
since it is written, **“You shall be holy, for I am holy.”**  
(1 Peter 1:13-16 ESV see also Ephesians 1:4, 5:27)

## **I YHWH Your God Am Holy**

### **Only God is truly “holy”.**<sup>57</sup> God’s presence<sup>58</sup> or blessing<sup>59</sup> can make “things”<sup>60</sup> holy:

Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it,  
and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that **it may become holy (qodesh)**.  
You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils,  
and consecrate the altar, so that **the altar may become most holy (qodesh qadashim)**.<sup>61</sup>  
(Exodus 40:9-10 ESV)

### **No human being can be truly “holy”.** Aaron and his sons were **“consecrated”**, **set apart for holy use**, but they were NOT in fact declared to be “holy”:

Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting  
and shall wash them with water and put on Aaron the holy garments.  
And **you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest**.  
You shall bring **his sons** also and put coats on them,  
and **anoint them**, as you anointed their father, **that they may serve me as priests**.  
And their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations.  
(Exodus 40:12-15 ESV)

### **When God created the angels in eternity, they were by definition “holy”.** In speaking to the angelic being known as הֵלֵל בֶּן-שָׁחַר - hehel ben shahar, God extolled his created “holiness”:

**You were the signet of perfection**, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.  
You were **an anointed guardian cherub**.  
I placed you; **you were on the holy mountain** of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.  
**You were blameless** in your ways from the day you were created ...  
(Ezekiel 28:12b, 14-15a ESV)

This being, of course, went on to rebel against God. He became Satan the Devil, corrupt, profane,  
unclean, and he was condemned to a shadowy existence on the earth. He and the angelic beings who  
followed him are no longer “holy”:

**How you are fallen from heaven**, O Day Star, son of Dawn (hehel ben shahar)!

**How you are cut down to the ground**, you who laid the nations low!

You said in your heart,

‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God  
I will set my throne on high;  
I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
I will make myself like the Most High.’

(Isaiah 14:12-14 ESV)

And [Jesus] said to them, **“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ...”**

(Luke 10:18 ESV)

For if **God did not spare angels when they sinned**,

but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;  
(2 Peter 2:4 ESV)

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of the concept of “holiness”, see section 6. *Holiness* in the paper “To Be a Priest” and section 1.4.1 *God is Holy* in the paper “First Pillar - The Nature of God”; both papers are located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>58</sup> See Exodus 3:5

<sup>59</sup> See Genesis 2:3

<sup>60</sup> The only place where *q’doshim* is applied to a thing is Numbers 5:17: And the priest shall take **holy (q’doshim) water** in an earthenware vessel and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. (ESV)

<sup>61</sup> See the discussion of this idiom in the next sub-section, *Jesus’ Flock*.

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority,  
but left their proper dwelling,  
he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day ...  
(Jude 6 ESV)

However, the angels who remained faithful to God, remain “holy”:

For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words,  
of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory  
and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.  
(Luke 9:26 ESV // Mark 8:38 see also Acts 10:22, Revelation 14:10)

In committing the nation of Israel to live by the Way of God, the Leader Joshua cut a new covenant with the people, The Covenant of Fidelity.<sup>62</sup> Prophetically, Joshua warns the people of the human propensity to apostatize in contrast with God’s inherent “holiness”:

But Joshua said to the people,  
“You are not able to serve [YHWH], for he is a holy (q<sup>e</sup>doshim) God.  
He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.  
If you forsake [YHWH] and serve foreign gods,  
then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.”  
(Joshua 24:19-20 ESV)

Two proverbs and the Prophet Hosea explicitly apply *q<sup>e</sup>doshim* as an epithet of God:

The fear of [YHWH] is the beginning of wisdom,  
and the knowledge of the Holy One (q<sup>e</sup>doshim) is insight.  
I have not learned wisdom, nor have I knowledge of the Holy One (q<sup>e</sup>doshim).  
(Proverbs 9:10, 30:3 ESV)  
Ephraim has surrounded me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit,  
but Judah still walks with God and is faithful to the Holy One (q<sup>e</sup>doshim).  
(Hosea 11:12 ESV)

To be transformed through the resurrection from the dead is to become “truly holy”, *q<sup>e</sup>doshim*, like God, “the Holy One”. As human beings, we are required to learn “holiness” through living by the Way of God. That is the purpose of the Christian calling.

## Jesus’ Flock

There is a unique usage of qadashim in Ezekiel chapter 36: קֳדָשִׁים -qadasim is the plural form of the noun קֹדֶשׁ - qodesh. Elsewhere, this plural form is always used in the idiom, קֳדָשִׁים קֳדָשִׁים - qodesh qodashim, “holy of holies” to refer to things that are “most holy”.<sup>63</sup> Chapter 36 of Ezekiel contains one of the seminal scriptures on the New Israel in the World Tomorrow. God is explicit that his purpose is to use the new nation of Israel as a witness to all the nations of the world:

Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]:  
It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act,  
but for the sake of my holy (qadosh) name,  
which you have profaned among the nations to which you came.  
And I will vindicate the holiness (qadosh) of my great name,  
which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them.  
And the nations will know that I am [YHWH], declares the Lord [YHWH],  
when through you I vindicate my holiness (qadosh) before their eyes.  
I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries  
and bring you into your own land.  
(Ezekiel 36:22-24 ESV)

God will accomplish his purpose through the process of conversion. Those called to the New Israel will be brought to repentance, and they will be baptised and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit:

I will sprinkle clean water on you,  
and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses,

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion of this covenant, see section 6. The Covenant of Fidelity in the paper “Covenants of Grace” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

<sup>63</sup> See, for example, Exodus 29:37, Leviticus 2:3, Leviticus 2:3; see also the discussion of the idiom in Excurses 3 – Survey of qodesh qadashim in the paper “The Seventy Periods Prophecy” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

and from all your idols I will cleanse you.  
And I will give you a new heart, and **a new spirit I will put within you.**  
And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.  
And **I will put my Spirit within you,**  
and cause you to **walk in my statutes** and be careful to **[live by my mish<sup>a</sup>patim].**<sup>64</sup>  
(Ezekiel 36:25-27 ESV)

Finally, **God makes a commitment to the people of the New Israel:**

Thus says the Lord GOD:

This also I will **let the house of Israel ask me to do for them:**

**to increase their people like a flock.**

Like the flock [of qadashim],

like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts,

so shall the waste cities be filled with **flocks of people.**

Then they will know that I am [YHWH].

(Ezekiel 36:37-38 ESV)

The ESV translates *qadashim* as “for sacrifices”, taking “flocks” to literally mean animals, sheep for sacrificing. This translation ignores the normal use of the plural adjective, *q<sup>e</sup>doshim*, to refer to beings, usually persons. Given the immediate context, “**increase their people like a flock**”, “**flocks of people**”, and the context of chapter 36 as a whole, **the converted people of the New Israel, it is far more likely that qadashim refers to persons.**

**The prophecy of the Good Shepherd,**<sup>65</sup> which Jesus explicitly applies to himself, makes it certain that “persons” are the *qadashim*:

For thus says the Lord [YHWH]:

Behold, **I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out.**

As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land.

And **I will feed them** on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land.

There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel.

**I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep,** and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord [YHWH].

I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy.

I will feed them in justice.

(Ezekiel 34:11-16 ESV)

So Jesus again said to them,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, **I am the door of the sheep.**

All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

**I am the door.**

If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

**I am the good shepherd.**

**The good shepherd** lays down his life for the sheep.

He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

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<sup>64</sup> See footnote 56

<sup>65</sup> For additional scriptures on the “Good Shepherd”, see line 12 in the table in section **2.4.3 The Centrality of Jesus Christ** in the paper “**Second Pillar - The Plan of God**” located at [www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca](http://www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca).

**I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me ...**  
(John 10:7-14 ESV)

**Jesus' flock comprises those persons called by God** to be True Worshipers, in every age. But today, Jesus' flock is the "body of Christ", the New Testament Church. **True Worshipers are required to become accounted q<sup>e</sup>doshim by God**. No human being can be truly "holy", but **through the propitiating sacrifice of Jesus Christ** and a subsequent life committed to **living by the Way of God**, a person can be accounted q<sup>e</sup>doshim by God. **To be accounted q<sup>e</sup>doshim by God is a pre-requisite for being considered as a candidate for the gift of eternal life.**

**This was, of course, Job's problem**. He could NOT see his self-righteousness. His self-righteousness was a sin. It stood between Job and his Creator, the great God of Heaven, YHWH, Jesus Christ. **God could not account Job q<sup>e</sup>doshim, until repented**. Then Job could be considered a candidate for the gift of eternal life.