

Hedges in No Man's Land
Explanation of the Picture
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The motivation behind this drawing comes from Job. When God “challenged” Satan to consider Job’s righteousness, Satan complained about all the protective hedges God had placed about Job. “*Does Job fear God for nothing? (You always give Job everything he needs.) Hast Thou not made a **hedge** about him and his house and all that he has on every side? ...*” (Job 1:9,10). God did have protective “hedges” around Job. Satan, even in the Old Testament, needed to get permission from God before he could attack any of God’s servants. And after Jesus’ victory on the cross, Satan may have lost even more power to attack. “*Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same that through death He might render powerless him **who had** the power of death, that is, the devil ...*” (Heb 2:14). “*The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil*” (1Jn 3:8). And Revelation 1:18, “*I am the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.*” God’s servants today (Christians), surely have as much protection from Satan as Job had - and probably more. So, what kind of protective hedges were around Job? There were hedges;

- * “about him”
- * “and his house” (family members)
- * “and all that he has on every side.”

The Book of Job is nothing short of fabulous, and time reading it is time well spent. So, to find out how that confrontation went ... well, I leave that to you. So, this picture is a depiction of those Hedges - in No Man’s Land.

Hedges - No Man’s Land

A war zone, with opposing front lines, has an area between them known as No Man’s Land. Anyone entering that zone had no hope of survival. This current age - and world - is No Man’s Land. No one physically survives this zone. It is just a matter of time that a hostile volley - or series of volleys - will overcome every inhabitant in No Man’s Land.

But there is another war going on that is **physically unseen**. It is a spiritual war. On one side of this war is Satan (and his fallen angels) and on the other side is God (and His host). Ultimately, this will be exposed as a colossal mismatch - but for those presently in the war zone - it is a war zone. Peace ... is an illusion.

In this battlefield, I have drawn a chasm in the middle. On one side of the chasm - mayhem, despair, destruction and death. On the other - protections, encouragement, hope and productivity. One side is filled with confusion and poor counsel - the other with life-giving instruction. The unseen element determining which side a person is on is ... Biblical faith. The Bible divides people into two groups - believers and unbelievers. But, in this drawing, you won’t find a visible bridge between the two grounds - even though *it is possible* to transverse

the divide. In fact, if you look closely, you won't find anyone on the Desert Side even attempting to build something to span this chasm. *"God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there is anyone who understands, who seeks after God. Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one"* (Ps 53:2,3). All who find themselves on the Lush, Hedged Side will indeed acknowledge one day (if not now) that **it was God** *"who made us alive together with Christ"* (Eph 2:5). And it was His unseen, yet powerful Hand that *"delivered us from the domain (authority) of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of the beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins"* (Col 1:13,14). Man cannot build anything that is able to transverse the divide. And he doesn't even make a genuinely solid attempt. That is why there is no physical bridge anywhere in this drawing. Let's now look at some of the scenes.

The Desert Side

There are several scenes on the scorched earth side. I am starting at the lower left and working my way up.

1. The first fellow is leaving an explosion of his own making. He is on fire - and is about to step into a bear trap. *"The tongue is a fire ... and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell."* (Ja 3:6). We create much of our own misery. How many people cause explosions by what they say (and do), and set their own life on fire? And as they turn to "greener pastures" - they immediately and step into a bear trap! Many people rashly leave jobs and families and find themselves - like this man.

2. Just left of Cain - you will see a fellow hanging on the edge of the cliff. He is hanging on to this life as long as he can. *"Although a sinner does evil a hundred times, and may lengthen his life, still I know it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly"* (Eccl 8:12).

3. Cain was jealous of his brother Abel - and eventually attacked and killed him. He probably came up behind him rather than risk a face to face confrontation with the announcement of a planned assault. *"Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy?"* (Pr 27:4). Cain has fathered a lot of children who are just like him.

4. Korah's Rebellion. While these people are attacking "Uncle Sam" and the USA, the broader picture represents those who hate authority. When discussing false teachers, we are told they *"indulge the flesh with its corrupt desires and despise authority"* (2Pet 2:10). It is amazing how victorious rebels often create a new order that becomes more unjust and corrupt than the one they overthrew.

5. The Car on the Road beside "Your Place." This is a scene from my days at a Street Gospel Mission in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I was on staff for almost two years and lived in the Mission. In this scene, an arm is sticking out of the car with a gun, and bullets are being fired into the back of a young man named Ronnie. He died right there. I never did know his last

name. Let me tell you a little bit about him though.

Ronnie was “a player” on the Strip. He was the manager of “Your Place” - a pizza joint. But, he also ran other “businesses” from there. Drugs and girls mainly. Our Mission building was between the Pizza place ... and the little motel rooms where he serviced his clients. We were in his way. He, and other businessmen on the Fort Lauderdale strip, tried to get us shut down in various ways over those years. We were “*a bad influence on the neighborhood*” because we were a magnet for “The Maggots.” Because we gave away free food and put up people without charge we attracted the wrong type of people. And, I must say, they did have a valid point. The only real flaw to their position was that these business people did not see themselves - as maggots. The Fort Lauderdale Strip area was maggot infested. It probably still is. Anyway, Ronnie hated us. To give you an idea what I mean, here was one episode.

We had a rule that if anyone was caught with drugs on our property, they would be permanently banned from the Mission. We could not provide “a safe spot” for drug transactions. One young man named Ernie (he had a huge red afro) decided to do that anyway. I told him to clear out, and never return (he knew and understood our policy). He shrugged his shoulders, got up and left - and could have cared less. Several months later, I was awakened by our night guard in the middle of the night. Ernie was insisting an audience with me. As I met with him, he told me he hadn’t been able to sleep for the last several nights, and had something to tell me. But, I had to promise him a one-way bus ticket out of town before he would share his information. I phoned our Director, and he okayed the ticket. Ernie then told me that *Ronnie*, and several of his cohorts, were planning on blowing up the building. He wasn’t sure of the date, or exact strategy - but was certain about the intent. He was clearly relieved to get that off his chest. I then sat back, smiled a bit and said, “*Well, I guess we must be doing something right!*” He had probably always thought we were crazy - but with my reaction to his news, he was sure we were all nuts. He was stunned. Well, we got him out of town, and over the next few weeks several things surfaced that confirmed this plot. And some funny things happened, too. I can’t relate all the stories, but here’s one. Our cook was in his room one night reading his Bible - when a car backfired outside his window. That Bible is probably still stuck in the ceiling.

Back to Ronnie. One of those nights, after closing, I was up in my room and had just finished reading Psalm 55. Part of the last verse says, “*Men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days*” Seconds later, I heard three deliberate shots. I came out of my room and asked, “*Well, who just got shot?*” It was Ronnie. He had taken three shots in the back and died eyes wide open. Evidently, he had just been at that car and had threatened the local pimp inside. Probably a territory dispute or some important matter like that. This was not their first run in, and the pimp later pleaded, “Self Defense.” He claimed he had been beaten up by Ronnie and Company on previous occasions.

Soon after that, another of the ringleaders of the plot, stepped in front of a car on highway A1A. Last I heard - broken legs, etc. We never saw him again. A third fellow was arrested for something and we never saw him again either. The last main fellow of the plot just sort of melted away. He actually knew us pretty well ... and maybe he read the handwriting on the wall (Dan 5:1-31). God was not yet ready for any of us to exit (Ps 139:16).

6. Balaam. It is *not true* that “*the love of money is the root of all evil*” (1Tim 6:10 KJV). There are many evils that have nothing to do with money. People are murdered every day in outbursts of jealous rage or arrogant prejudice - and money is not a part of the equation in any way. Lies, slanders, hatred, gossiping and assaults occur continuously - absent money - all over the globe. So ... is the Bible wrong? No it's not. The translation is wrong - hence, the translators were wrong. For starters, **no** Greek manuscript, or fragment, has the definite article, “the” with the word, “root.” The correct translation is either, “a root,” or just, “root,” depending on the context. Next, all Greek witnesses agree that what is translated, “of all evil,” is mistake number two. This is translated **singular** - but the phrase is unmistakably **plural**. How the King James translators mistook the unmistakable ... well, that is for you to figure out. And they also *left out* the definite article in this phrase! (So, they add definite articles where they do not belong, and leave them out where they do!) This phrase should be translated, “*of all the evils.*” Finally, the importance of the word order in the Greek is lost in this translation. That is a fairly common problem for many translators as many languages (like English) do not use word order as a literary device for emphasis (as does Koine Greek). So, here is the correct translation; “*a root of all the evils is the cherishing of silver.*” By identifying the offense at *the end* of the sentence, this structure builds “the suspense” and gives it “a punch” to the reader. So, **a** root of all the various types of evil is that the perpetrator of the evil has an emotional bond towards silver. He/she is motivated by money to do evil! Well now, ... that is true. Balaam is a case in point - and has made it into my drawing in the Wastelands of No Man’s Land. Of course, a closer look at the offender in this drawing shows *a border agent with a drug sniffing dog taking money (a payoff) from the drug smuggler.* So, this “officer” is one of Balaam’s descendants - just a different time and place. But the motive is the same ... a love for unrighteous wages (2Pet 2:15).

7. The Worldly Counselor Pointing the way. This poor fellow is being pointed by a blind counselor to walk into the chasm. Also, if you can see it, he will step into a bear trap within a step or two. When one follows the advice of a blind guide, there should be no shock to find nasty surprises ahead. Why settle for their way (little “w”) when you can follow *The Way*? “*There is no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel against the Lord*” (Pr 21:30).

8. The Massage Parlor. To be sure there is pleasure in many kinds of sin ... but it is only for a season (Heb 11:25). When describing the scene of the young man with the seductive, adulterous harlot of Proverbs 7:6-23, the matter concludes with this; “*Suddenly he follows her, as an ox goes to the slaughter ... until an arrow pierces through his liver ... so he does not know that it will cost him his life.*” Some activities make a straight line to the chasm. This is one.

9. The Aimless Drifter. His sign says, “Any Place.” It could also read, “Any Place But Here.” You have heard it said that all roads lead to Rome. Well, that is not exactly true. The road I live on comes nowhere close to Rome. But, here is what is true. Every Road outside of Christ does lead to the same place. If you are on any of those roads, abandon them. Call upon the Lord, and ask Him to allow you entrance onto the King’s Highway (Isa 35:8 & Jer 18:15). That is the only road that leads to safety.

10. The Bombed Businessman. *“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we shall go into such and such a city, and spend a year there and make a profit.’ Yet, you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that’”* (Ja 4:13-15). And James says of the rich man, *“For the sun rises with a scorching wind, and withers the grass; and its flower falls off, and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man will be cut off in the midst of his pursuits”* (Ja 1:11). There is nothing innately wrong with business or riches. The Bible speaks glowingly about both in the Old and New Testament alike. The problem is when one adopts a position of arrogance and leaves God out of the picture ... like the businessman in my picture. Business is good (1Thes 4:11), profit is good (same verse), and success is good (3Jn 2) And God wants you to acknowledge Him in these benevolences. Otherwise, *“even what (a man) thinks he has shall be taken away from him”* (Lk 8:18).

11. The Graveyard. There are six tombstones. Biblical numerologists say the number six stands for man. This earth was created *for man* as he is *“from the dust of the earth”* and to that dust he now returns ... because of sin. (Gen 1:26-30, 2:7, 3:17-19, Ro 5:12). One tombstone says, **“Wise(man).”** Another, **“Debater.”** Another, **“V.I.P.”** Another, **“Loser.”** Another, **“Dead End.”** *“Where is the wise man? ... Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the ‘wisdom’ of the world?”* (1Cor 1:20). The answer is irrefutably, “yes.” The negative in this last sentence (“ou” translated, “not”) has the built in response of “yes” in it. So, the answer to this question is already supplied by that word. Koine Greek is superior to English in this regard. So, whatever the philosophy of life ... whatever the activity of life ... whatever the accomplishments in life ... all outside of Christ, and His agenda, will be pummeled into nothing. That is just the way it is.

But, you will notice there is a sixth marker in that graveyard. It is a simple cross. No one’s current body - whether a Christian or non-Christian - can endure this environment. Even as I type this, I am alternating between sitting on a chair - to kneeling on kneepads because of my back. All of us will eventually succumb to this environment ... unless the Lord returns first. But for the saint, these next two statements sum up this reality most directly. *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones”* (Ps 116:15). Because to be absent from this body is to be *“present with the Lord,”* which is *“very much better”* (2Cor 5:8, and Phil 1:23).

But, ... why is only **one** out of **six** a Christian marker? Well, even when Israel was operating under the Theocracy, God often spoke about *“a remnant”* being right with Him (Isa 10:22 and Ro 9:27). That is just the hem of an entire garment. When Jesus came, He put it this way: *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it”* (Mt 7:13,14). O, my Gracious God - may all whose eyes light on these words be given the ability to find, and enter through, that narrow gate. We will all thank You for all eternity for granting this request.

12. Random Explosions ... Traps and Potholes Scattered Everywhere ... Bodies

Strewn All Over the Landscape. Much of the Book of Ecclesiastes is a lament about the realities of the current age. Solomon listed all kinds of futilities, evils, and vanities that beset man on every side. By chapter 9, verse 11,12, he states, *“I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability; **for time and chance overtake them all.** Moreover, man does not know his time; like fish caught in a treacherous net, and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men **are ensnared at an evil time when it suddenly falls on them.**”*

To exponentially compound the peril of existence in this age, all who are outside of Christ (unbelievers) are regarded **as enemies** by a holy, all powerful Creator. At any time, His wrath comes (present tense) ... when and where He chooses (Ro 5:10 and Col 3:6). And when He selects His target, bends His bow, and let's His arrow fly - He never misses the mark. Indeed, *“Thy arrows are sharp; the peoples fall under Thee; Thy arrows are in the heart of the King's enemies”* (Ps 45:4,5). We live in a slaughterhouse. My drawing depicts the tip of the iceberg.

That's Enough. I have also read that Biblical numerologists consider “twelve” to be a number of completeness. So, I am stopping at twelve. This Age ... is truly a **complete** mess.

The Lush Side

As you can see, there are angels everywhere. Some are praising God, and others are doing other things. But, they are all relaxed. As God's chosen angels (1Tim 5:21), they have never partaken of any “forbidden fruit,” and, as a result, they have never been **infected by**, or **defected by**, sin. But, sin has **affected** them. *“And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him”* (Rev12:7-9). If sin was not present in Satan and his fellow fallen angels, the chosen angels would never be called upon to go to war. So, sin has affected them and their activities. It would be interesting to know how such a war was (or will be) waged. What kind of weapons (if any). What kind of injury is inflicted (if any). How is Satan, and his host kept out of heaven Questions, questions, questions! But there is another way the chosen angels have been **affected** by this sin scenario. Now, they are all *“ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation”* (Heb1:14). For powerful, holy, eternal, chosen angels to be dispatched by my Father to render service *for me* ... surely that is a phenomenal Hedge in No Man's Land. And I have the feeling this is an ongoing service. You see, I do a lot of stupid things. And, as my Father already gave His Son to die for me, this perk (of an Angelic Secret Service) is no big deal to Him. These agents are far superior to anything this world will ever produce. What a massive understatement. *One* angel, on *one night*, brought Egypt to her knees. And if God had not restrained that angel - he could have easily wiped out the entire populace (I am assuming “the destroyer” of Exodus 12:23 is an angel). I wonder if I will be able to talk with my guardians after this life concludes? What did they do for me? Were they surprised by

some of my actions and responses? Were they disappointed in me? Did I bore them - or inspire them? I hope to meet them and listen and learn from them ... and maybe, one day, somehow be of benefit to them.

And Christians are narrow-minded? God has given us the greatest of matters to inquire of, investigate, and contemplate. Unbelievers are never occupied with His information and agenda. For my first 24 years, I had no interest in God's information, so I have a good idea of the "breadth of mind" available to those outside of Christ. The Bible opens a whole new world with wonders to behold! The true narrow-mindedness lies in the natural man and that mind. The Christian who is truly growing in the grace *and knowledge* of our Creator, is growing into the greatest breadth of mind on the planet. I have been involved in both realms of thought - and there is no limit to the things of the true and living God. What another massive understatement. As of this writing I have been active in God's information for 30 years (I'm 54 now) {As of this "final" edit, now 66}. I think I am just getting a good start. {Agree again. Also since this article, I wrote a 4 part series called, "[Breadth of Mind and the Bible – An Illustrative, Philosophical View](#)", "[Breadth of Mind and the Bible – A Personal Narrative](#)", "[Breadth of Mind and the Bible – Spiritually](#)" and "[Breadth of Mind and the Bible – The End Game](#)"}.

A Few of My Activities ... and Yours?

God does not call an individual from the *wastelands* of No Man's Land ... to nothing. "*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*" (Eph 2:10). And "*it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure*" (Phil 2:13). God does indeed have a plan for a Christian's life. He uses us to assault the Wastelands and bring others to the Lush Side. We are individually gifted as He determines, and He opens up doors for us on our individual journey (1Cor 12:11 and Rev 3:8). And He works in us so that the very things we want to do is what He wants us to do! So, in practical terms, here is how this affects me. If I want to do something (except sin), *then I do it*. I trust it is God who is working in me so that the things I want to do are the very things He wants me to do. So, on the Lush Side, you can see me presenting [The Stick Figure Gospel Presentation](#), preaching God's word to listeners in the pews (no beard), drawing *this picture* on my drafting table, reading my Bible under the shade of God's tree of life, sitting and writing at my desk (a rough draft of this picture explanation), and singing with the saints. The point? As a Christian, you can put *yourself* in all those scenes - but you will be doing entirely different things than I. The truth is - each Christian can be producing 100% of the time and never step "on the turf" of another Christian. God's fields are that big and there is plenty of real estate for each saint.

A Bit of a Curvy Road

... that leads to "*Mount Zion in the far north, the city of the Great King*" (Ps 48:2). I'm heading north. I face north when I pray (at least in my mind - if not physically). The Road is actually straight, but as I have a tendency to stray, God accommodates my waywardness ... to a degree. But then He intervenes to get me going due north again. Sometimes the intervention is by means of "*a soft word (that) breaks the bone*" (Pr 25:15). Sometimes it is by a word behind me saying, "*This is the way, walk in it*" (Isa 30:21). But other times it is by direct rebuke, or

unfortunately, by a needed scourging (Heb 12:5,6). Such is the life of the saint.

Lots of Green, Yellow, White, and Blue.

That's to say ... lots of life, light, holiness (cleanness) and cool blue. I've lived on both sides of the divide. Give me the green, yellow, white and blue.

The Blue Sky Over *Both Sides*.

Unbelievers do experience the goodness of God in many ways in their Wasteland. "*He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous*" (Mt 5:45). This is often referred to as "Common Grace." But this phenomenon is going to end. The moment is coming when God's Name will be damned one time too many. Or, maybe the breaking point will be one attack too many on a preborn. Or, maybe it will be something as simple as ... one lie too many. Hell has been described as a place that is absent of the goodness of God. No cool breezes, no beautiful sunsets, no cool sips of water ... all the extended Common Graces ... will be withdrawn. Abandon the Wasteland now. There is nothing there worth its cost.

Life in this age - is, at best, a tough task,
And the scenes of our life - we're just part of the cast.
Your hedges secured - our present and past,
And with more life ahead - those won't be the last.

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