



IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

When Satan the Devil, and then Job, put God on trial, they brought some very serious charges against God. What were those charges that Satan and Job brought against God? And is God guilty as charged?

I. Satan Puts God on Trial

First we will look at the charges Satan brought against God. For this trial, you are the jury. So pay close attention to the charges and the evidence submitted so that you can accurately determine if God is guilty as charged!

Job 1:6 "A day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh. And Satan also came among them." Satan is called the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:9-10). And we're about to see what accusations Satan brought against God and God's servant Job.

Job 1:7 "Yahweh said to Satan, From where do you come? Then Satan answered, I come from walking up and down all over the earth." When Satan is walking up and down the earth, what do you think he's looking for? God warns us to be on the lookout because our adversary the Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet 5:8). So Satan was looking to devour someone. That's why God said ...

Job 1:8 "Have you considered My servant Job, because there is none like him in the earth, a whole-hearted and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil?" God holds Job up as the best example on earth of human righteousness. In other words Satan, if you want to devour someone try devouring Job.

Job 1:9 "Satan answered Yahweh and said, Does Job fear God for nothing?" Okay, here we have Satan's accusation against God. Satan is saying that the only reason why people serve God is because God pays them to serve Him! In other words, Job isn't serving God for nothing --- nothing in return, that is --- Job expects something in return for his service to God, claims Satan. The intonation is that God isn't worth our worship just because of who God is; God is only worth our worship when there's something profitable in it for us! The accusation is that: **GOD IS INHERINTALY WORTHLESS AND THEREFORE PAYS FOR WORSHIP!!!** Listen to how Satan further argues his case.

Job 1:10-11 "Have You not made a hedge around him, and around his house, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock have increased in the land." **11 "But put forth Your hand to snatch away all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face."**

So that's the charge Satan brought against God. Is God guilty as charged? Well, we're going to find out because God responds by saying to Satan, okay, I'll let you put Me on trial, and Job will be the witness. Let's see what his testimony will be. I'll take away all that he has, and we'll see if he curses Me to My face. If he does, you win the case; if he doesn't, I win the case.

Job 1:12 "So Yahweh said to Satan, Behold, all that he has is in your power. Only do not lay your hand upon him. Then Satan went forth from the presence of Yahweh."

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Satan prepares to submit his evidence by confidently devouring all of Job's children and all of Job's possessions.

Job 1:2 "Job had 7 sons and 3 daughters. 3 And he possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and a very great household; so that he was the greatest man of the east." 13 "A day came when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. 14 And there came a messenger to Job and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them. 15 And the Sabeans fell on and took them away. They have killed the servants with the edge of the sword. And I only have escaped to tell you. 16 While he was still speaking, there came a second servant and said, The fire of God has fallen from the heavens and has burned up the sheep and the servants, and destroyed them. And only I have escaped to tell you. 17 While he was still speaking, there came a third servant and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands and swooped down upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and have killed the servants with the edge of the sword. And only I have escaped to tell you. 18 While he was still speaking, there came a fourth servant and said, Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. 19 And, behold, a great wind came from the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead. And only I have escaped alone to tell you."

Any one of these four tragedies could cause the average God-fearing person to curse God to His face. Job suffered from all four --- and in a very short period of time. First, some of Job's servants were killed, and his cows and donkeys were stolen. Second, more servants were killed, and his sheep were killed. Third, the rest of his servants were killed, and his camels were stolen. This represented the loss of all of Job's possessions. But the worst was yet to come. Fourth, all of Job's 7 children died when a house collapsed on them.

Satan did a great job of devouring Job's family and possessions. With Satan's evidence submitted, we await Job's testimony. **Did Job curse God to His face?**

Job 1:20-22 "Then Job arose, and tore his robe, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshiped, 21 saying, naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. Blessed be the name of the LORD. 22 In all this Job did not sin, nor charge God foolishly."

When put on the witness stand, Job testified against Satan: instead of cursing God, Job blessed God. Listen again to Job's testimony: *"Then Job arose, and tore his robe, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and **worshiped**, saying, naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. **Blessed** be the name of the LORD. In all this **Job did not sin, nor charge God foolishly.**"* What a wonderful testimony Job gave on behalf of God. And that would be a wonderful ending to the story, right? Right. Unfortunately, that's not the end of the story, it's only the end of chapter 1. And Satan has some more evidence to submit. Before we hear more of Satan's evidence, let's really analyze the evidence already submitted. Remember, you are the jury, so you really need to understand this case.

Did you know that in the book of Job the word "curse" and the word "blessed" come from the same Hebrew word? The Hebrew word is "Barak", meaning either "to kneel down in praise and adoration" or "to blaspheme by committing treason". This is very interesting, isn't it? In other places in the Bible the word "curse" is translated from other Hebrew words, but in the book of Job the word "curse" is translated from the Hebrew word "Barak" --- just like the word "blessed" is translated from the Hebrew word "Barak". And the book of Job is the only place where the English word "curse" is translated from the Hebrew word "Barak". Why is that? What does God want us to learn from this? I'll give you a clue: it has everything to do with Satan's accusation against God.

Remember I said earlier that Satan's accusation against God is this: **GOD IS INHERINTALY WORTHLESS AND THEREFORE PAYS FOR WORSHIP!!!**

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That's why Satan said, God, if You "***put forth Your hand to snatch away all that Job has, and he will curse You to Your face.***"

In other words, Satan believes that no one values a relationship with God based on unconditional love. Satan believes that people only value a relationship with God based on conditions, i.e. the condition that God blesses us. Satan believes that as soon as the blessings are gone that we are gone. It's like ... God, what have you done for me lately? It's like ... God, if you don't bless me then what good are you? I can do bad all by myself! Satan believes that we treat God like a big fat Genie that we rub on the belly to get our 3 free wishes per day. Satan believes that we relate to God like He's our personal cosmic Bellboy that should say to us: Sire, your wish is my command! Satan believes that if we don't get what we want from God then we're going to say to God: You're fired!!! Furthermore, Satan believes that God believes that the only reason why people worship Him is because of what they can get from Him. So God just keeps on blessing us to keep us in His corner. Therefore, Satan has judged God as a hypocrite for portraying Himself as something inherently great, as someone who has multitudes of people adoring and worshipping Him simply because of who He is, when in reality, God knows that all of the adoration and worship would dry up as soon as the last blessing dried up. The height of hypocrisy, as Satan has judged, is that God knows that He's not all that plus a bag of chips, so God has to resort to paying for the pleasure of worship.

Is there any validity to what Satan espouses? Do people worship God only because of what they get from God? Is God a hypocrite for covering up people's motivation for worshipping Him? Believe it or not, God Himself does validate *a part* of what Satan espouses. But what part? Please turn to [*Mat 15:7-8*](#). *Yahshua* says, "*You hypocrites! How well did Isaiah prophesy of you when he said, 8 'These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.'*"

So the valid part of Satan's statement is that many, many people do relate to God as if He were a cosmic bellboy: they bless God with their lips as long as the blessings flow, but they really don't have it in their hearts to worship God with unconditional love! This is hypocrisy! But that doesn't make God a hypocrite --- unless God reinforces that type of worship! Does God reinforce that type of worship? Well, that's what God is on trial for. That's why God allowed Himself to be put on trial: to prove that people will worship Him unconditionally.

Before we return to the trial, let's talk about you for a moment. Is there hypocrisy in your worship? Do you worship God with unconditional love, or is your love predicated on what you get from God? If you're attending one of the "health and wealth" / "name it and claim it" / "blab it and grab it" / "word of faith" churches, and you've accepted this false gospel, then you are a hypocrite, simply honoring God with your lips while your heart is far from Him. I'm going to share with you 2 examples of this damaging "health and wealth" false philosophy.

First, I know of a woman who sang God's praises when God miraculously healed her father, but cursed God when God allowed her mother to die prematurely. As she turned away from God she said, we have a 50/50 chance of getting what we want from God, so what's the use of making all the sacrifices I do!

Second, I know of a woman who joined a church because the pastor assured her that God was going to miraculously heal her "incurable" disease as long as she just believed. After several years of believing and beseeching, of speaking health into her life, and of being badgered by the pastor and congregation for not having enough faith, she not only is still physical ill, but now she is also emotionally and spiritually ill. She may soon die a depressed and deceived disciple of the "health and wealth" doctrine of the devil.

Have they not read about the Apostle Paul, who was never healed though he besought God 3 times for healing? Have they not been taught about the millions of faithful and faith-filled Christians that have been brutally tortured and murdered? Have they not understood the story of Job? Do you understand the story of Job?

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Now let's return to the examination of Job's testimony in response to Satan's accusation that Job was only serving God because of God's blessings upon Job.

We were discussing why God inspired the same Hebrew word "Barak" to be translated into the two opposite words "curse" and "bless". God inspired this anomaly as an acknowledgment that mankind often does use the same mouth to bless God when the going is good, and to curse God when the going gets tough. Did Job follow this pattern?

"Blessed be the name of the LORD", Job said. As we've already discussed, "Blessed" comes from the Hebrew word "Barak", meaning, in some instances, "to kneel down in praise and adoration". Now let's discuss the word "Name". "Name" comes from the Hebrew word "Shem", meaning "an individual's characteristics". Coupling these two words together, "Blessed" and "Name", we see that Job "knelt down in praise and adoration" in recognition of Yahweh's "individual characteristics". Specifically, which characteristic of Yahweh did Job recognize as worthy of praise and adoration? *Job 1:21 "Naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. **Blessed be the name of the LORD.**"* This is exactly opposite of what Satan said Job would say.

Remember that Satan said to God *"Put forth Your hand to snatch away all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face"* (*Job 1:11*). Satan is arguing that when God withdraws His hand of providence and protection, with which He has covered Job, and instead of that, sends forth His afflicting hand upon Job, then that would be sufficient to discover Job's hypocrisy. But when God did allow Satan to snatch away all that Job had, Job's response was: I don't serve God just because of the benefits; I serve God when He gives and when He takes away. I will kneel down in praise and adoration of God no matter what the condition! Blessed be His characteristics!

Round 1 is over. God is winning the court case so far. But Satan isn't through yet; he has one more piece of "blockbuster" evidence he'd like to submit to the court if only God would allow it. God is not afraid of Satan's accusations. So what does God do? Get ready for round 2.

Job 2:1-5 "Another day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh. And Satan also came among them to present himself before Yahweh. 2 Yahweh said to Satan, From where do you come? Satan answered, From going back and forth in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 3 And Yahweh said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a just and an upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil? And still he holds on tight to his integrity, although you moved Me against him to destroy him without cause. 4 Satan answered Yahweh, Skin for skin, yes, all that a man has he will give for his life! 5 But if You dare put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, he will curse You to Your face!!"

Okay, here we have the same old accusation from the "Accuser of the Brethren". **GOD, YOU ARE WORTHLESS; YOU KNOW IT; AND YOU TRY TO COVER UP YOUR HYPOCRISY BY PAYING BRIBES TO YOUR SERVANTS! AS SOON AS YOU TAKE AWAY THE PROFIT MOTIVE THEY'LL KICK YOU TO THE CURB!! THEY'LL DROP YOU LIKE A HOT POTATO!!! THEY'LL LOOK YOU STRAIGHT IN THE EYES AND TELL YOU TO GET TO STEPPIN!!!! JUST BEAT IT!!!!**

Is God up to the challenge? Will He allow Satan to submit more evidence? *Job 2:6 "And Yahweh said to Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand; only spare his life."* Wow, that's a lot of confidence God has that He will be acquitted by Job's testimony and Satan will be exposed as the deceiver that he is.

Well, Satan wastes no time in producing his "blockbuster evidence". *Job 2:7 "So Satan went forth from the presence of Yahweh and struck Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the top of his head."*

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A boil is a burning ulceration of the flesh that itches like crazy. As Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible states, "One boil, when it is gathering, is torment enough, and gives a man abundance of pain and uneasiness. What a condition was Job then in, that had boils all over him ... and those [boils were raging with heat as hot] as the devil could make them ... [Job must have felt like he was] *set on fire from hell!*" In short, Job's boils were so boiling hot that he must have come as close to anyone as experiencing the torment of hell fire! And this he suffered for many, many days without any sign of relief. And remember, his bodily suffering came on top of his emotional suffering from the loss of all 7 of his children and the loss of all of his vast wealth.

How did Job react toward God? Did Job curse God to His face?

Job 2:8-10 "Job took a broken piece of pottery to scrape himself with. And he sat down among the ashes. 9 Eventually his wife said to him, Do you still hold onto your integrity? Curse God and die! 10 But Job said to her, You speak as one of the foolish people speaks. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and then not receive evil? In all this Job did not sin with his lips."

Basically, Job's testimony in round 2 is the same as his testimony in round 1. In round 1 he said "The LORD gives and the LORD takes away; blessed be the name of the LORD". In round 2 he said "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and then not receive evil?" And guess what? There is no round 3. For the rest of the book of Job we do not hear from Satan. Satan gave it his best shot but couldn't shoot God down because Job stood up for God as a faithful witness. Job's testimony is that **GOD IS WORTHY OF OUR UNCONDITIONAL LOVE!**

Job's testimony should bring to mind another testimony by another one of God's great witnesses. Hear what the Apostle Paul says to the Church. *Rom 8:35-39 "Who [or what] shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, "For Your sake we are killed all the day long. We are counted as sheep for slaughter." 37 But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

In the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses a matter is established. Both Job and Paul, because of their allegiance to God, suffered greatly --- perhaps more than any other human beings, save Jesus the Christ. Yet, despite their great tribulations and trials, both of them testified that **GOD IS WORTHY OF OUR UNCONDITIONAL LOVE!**

So what's your judgment? And when I ask this, I'm asking you to think of this in your personal life. Examine the evidence in your own life. Satan believes that people only worship God because of what they can get from God, and that as soon as the blessing faucet is turned off we'll be turned off by the very thought of God. Obviously, there are people that do relate to God this way. Job's wife said, "Do you still hold onto your integrity? Curse God and die". In other words, she was reasoning, "Job, why are you kneeling down in praise and adoration of God when God is treating you the way He is? You fool, God is not worthy of your worship. It's not right what He's doing to you Job; you should curse that sorry @\$%^ and just go to your grave in peace". Is that the way you live your life, like Job's wife? Do you wonder if it's even worth it to serve God in light of all your sufferings? Worse yet, do you curse God when things don't work out the way you want? Are you like Job's wife or are you like Job? Job worshipped God in the good and the bad times. Despite Job's horrendous suffering over a prolonged period of time, Job never cursed God!

But Job did eventually have a problem with God. And God subsequently had a problem with Job. What problem did Job have with God? Why did Job put God on trial? What were the accusations Job brought against God? And is God guilty as charged?

II. Job Puts God on Trial

Have you ever noticed the subtle difference in God's analysis of Job after witnessing Job's responses to the two parts of his tribulation? After the commencement of the first part of his tribulation when Job's children and servants died and his possessions were stolen, God said of Job, *Job 1:22* "In all this Job did not sin, nor charge God foolishly." After the commencement of the second part of his tribulation when Job was smitten with grievous boils all over his body, God said of Job, *Job 2:10* "In all this Job did not sin with his lips."

Do you notice the difference? In the first analysis Job didn't sin --- period! In the second analysis Job didn't sin --- with his lips! The indication is that God did detect "a root of bitterness" in Job's heart, that if nurtured would grow into sin. And indeed, as Job puts God on trial we'll get to see exactly what God saw. I'm not going to tell you upfront what Job's problem was because I want you to come to the correct conclusion on your own as we watch this trial unfold. After all, the scripture says that the Saints will judge the world --- and even judge the Angels (1 Cor 6:1-3). But that awesome responsibility will only be given to us after we learn to judge as God judges!!!

In this trial we have Job as the prosecuting attorney; Job's three friends are the witnesses; Elihu is the defense attorney; Yahweh is the defendant; and you are the Judge. So here we go. Are you ready for trial # 2?

Job 2:11-13 "When Job's three friends heard of all the evil that was come upon Job, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. **12** When they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they tore their clothes, and sprinkled dust upon their heads. **13** So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spoke a word to him: for they saw that his grief was very great."

The first thing we see is that Job had 3 *friends* that came from afar to console him. It can be very, very comforting to have friends share in our grief because they help to carry the burden. On the other hand, sometimes our well-meaning friends can become the burden. We're going to see that Job's 3 friends became Job's 3 *enemies*. They were the ones who nurtured Job's "root of bitterness". How and Why did this happen? It happened because these three guys didn't judge with righteous judgment. Many people will tell you that it's flat out wrong for us to judge people. Well, I must say that the people who tell you that are flat out wrong. We are called to judge; that is a part of our training. The key is to judge righteous judgment!

Many people will read Matthew 7:1 and end the discussion as though verse 1 is the end of the discussion. But we're going to read the rest of the story. *Mat 7:1-5* "Judge not, that you may not be judged. **2** For with whatever judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with whatever measure you measure out, it shall be measured to you again. **3** And why do you look on the splinter that is in your brother's eye, but do not consider the beam that is in your own eye? **4** Or how will you say to your brother, Let me pull the splinter out of your eye; and, behold, a beam is in your own eye? **5** Hypocrite! **First** cast the beam out of your own eye, and **then you shall see clearly to cast the splinter out of your brother's eye.**"

Please catch this: first we have to judge ourselves (casting the beam out of our own eye), then we can judge others (casting the splinter out of our brother's eye), thus avoiding hypocrisy. If we are to first judge ourselves as God judges us, the obvious question is: how does God judge us? Well, I've said it already, but now I'll let God say it.

John 7:24 "Do not judge according to sight, but **judge righteous judgment.**"

That's our answer. Don't judge according to *sight* (what appears to be), but judge righteous judgment. Still not sure what that means? Okay, let's explore this further because you really need to know how to judge righteously.

What preceded Jesus' admonition in John 7:24 to judge righteous judgment instead of judging by sight, was a discussion with a mob that wanted to kill Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath. Following is the text of the

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discussion. *John 7:21-24* "Jesus ... said to them, I have done one work, and you all marvel. 22 Moses gave you circumcision and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath day. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath day so that the Law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry at Me because I have healed a man on the Sabbath day? 24 Do not judge according to appearances, but judge righteous judgment."

There are 2 aspects of judgment that Jesus is describing: one is the bad kind, i.e. "Do not judge according to appearances"; the other is the good kind, i.e. "Judge righteous judgment". So let's break this down.

Do not judge according to appearances -

Jesus is admonishing us not to judge based on how a thing first appears to us, without reflection or candor in light of the Scriptures. As an example Jesus says to the crowd, "**in appearance**, to circumcise a child on the Sabbath might be a violation of the Law of God, yet you do it because of the Law of Moses --- and you have judged rightly in this case. Likewise, **in appearance**, to heal a man on the Sabbath might be a violation of the Law of God, yet I do it because of the Law of Love --- but you have not judged rightly in my case." For what did Jesus say in another place? *Mark 3:1-5* "Jesus went into the synagogue again, and a man with a paralyzed hand was there. 2 The people watched Jesus closely to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, intending to accuse him of doing something wrong. 3 He said to the man with the paralyzed hand, 'Come forward.' 4 Then he asked them, 'Is it lawful to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill it?' But they were silent. 5 Jesus looked around at them with anger, for he was deeply hurt because of their **hardness of heart**. Then he said to the man, 'Hold out your hand.' The man held it out, and his hand was restored to health." And what did a disciple of Jesus say in another place? *Rom 13:8-10* "Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves another has fulfilled the Law. 9 For: 'Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not bear false witness; do not lust;' and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 10 Love works no ill to its neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law."

In short, the Scriptures teach us that we should **look deeper than what we see on the surface and learn to discern a person's heart**. A good question to ask ourselves is "our we judging solely on the Letter of the Law or are we judging also on the Spirit of the Law?" The Letter of the Law says "6 days you shall work but the 7th day you shall rest". The Spirit of the Law says "if on the 7th day your neighbor's ox falls into a ditch it's good to work as hard as you can to pull it out because you are showing love to your neighbor". With the question in mind, "our we judging solely on the Letter of the Law or are we judging also on the Spirit of the Law?", how would we have judged Jesus?

Judge righteous judgment –

No matter how someone tries to twist the truth, the truth is that the Sabbath was still in effect while Jesus was alive and Jesus never sinned, so Jesus obviously never transgressed the Law by breaking the Sabbath Commandment. Therefore, we must judge that Jesus followed the Letter and the Spirit of the Law. Jesus is God; God is love; so naturally, Jesus showed love. Conclusion: **judging righteous judgment** is judging based on whether a person's motivation is to keep the 2 GREAT COMMANDMENTS IN THE LAW – i.e. *Mat 22:37-40* "Jesus says to us, You shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it, You shall **love your neighbor** as yourself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

We are always to "speak the truth in love" (Eph 4:15). So now, back to Job's 3 friends to see how they judged Job.

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After the 7 days of silent mourning with his 3 friends, Job finally speaks.

Job 3:1-3 “Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. *2* Job spoke, *3* Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night which said, A man-child is conceived.” I must point out here that Job did not curse God. He cursed the day of his birth due to his present unquenchable suffering. Continuing his lamentation, Job asks: *Job 3:20-25* “Why is light given to one who is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul, *21* who is waiting for death, but it comes not; and digs for it more than for treasures? *22* They are glad when they can find the grave. *23* To a man whose way is hidden, God has made a hedge about him. *24* For my sighing comes before I eat, and my groaning is poured out like the waters. *25* For the thing which I greatly feared has come upon me, and that which I was afraid of has come to me.” I want you to remember Job’s comment in verse 23. Job is saying that God sometimes prevents people from dying even though those people would prefer to die in order to be relieved from their intense and prolonged suffering.

Eliphaz, the first of Job’s 3 friends, responds to Job’s lamenting.

Job 4:2-9 “Shall one try a word with you, you who are weary? But who can hold back with words? *3* Behold, you have instructed many, and you have made the weak hands strong. *4* Your words have upheld him who was falling, and you have made strong the feeble knees. *5* But now it has come upon you, and you faint. It touches you, and you are troubled. *6* Is not your reverence your hope? Is not your hope the uprightness of your ways? *7* Remember, please, who ever perished, being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off? *8* As I have seen, the ones who plow iniquity and sow wickedness reap the same. *9* By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of His nostrils they are destroyed.” Whoa! Keep in mind that this guy is a well-meaning FRIEND. Eliphaz is plainly telling Job that Job’s tribulations are the result of Job’s sins. As we’ll soon see, this kind of rebuke from his friends fuels Job’s bitterness of heart and sparks a desire to put God on trial.

Eliphaz continues:

Job 5:1-8 “Call now, is there anyone who will answer you? And to which of the saints will you turn? *2* For vexation kills the fool, and envy slays the simple one. *3* I have seen the fool taking root, but suddenly I cursed his dwelling place. *4* His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, nor is there any to deliver them. *5* Their harvest the hungry eats, and takes it even out of the thorns; and the snare swallows up their wealth. *6* For affliction does not come forth from the dust, nor does trouble spring up out of the ground; *7* but man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward. *8* Truly, I would seek to God, and to God I would put my plea ...” Can you believe this? Eliphaz is actually saying that it is to be expected that Job’s children would not be protected because of Job’s foolish behavior. And then he ends his rebuke of Job by saying Job should consider himself blessed because God is correcting him for his wrongdoing. *Job 5:17, 27* “Behold, blessed is the man whom God corrects. Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. *27* Understand this: we have searched out the matter and what we say is true. Hear it and know for yourself.”

You can imagine what kind of reaction this provoked in Job.

Job 6:8-9 “Oh that I might have my request; And that God would grant me the thing that I long for! *9* Even that it would please God to crush me; That he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!” *24-25* “Cause me to understand where I have sinned; teach me, and I will be silent. *25* Right words are powerful, but what does your argument reprove?” *Job 7:11* “Therefore I will not hold my mouth; I will speak in the trouble of my spirit; **I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.**” I can understand Job’s frustration with Eliphaz. Eliphaz sees Job suffering and instead of speaking words of comfort to him, he accuses Job of sinning, and consequently bringing God’s chastisement upon himself. So instead of pouring oil on Job’s wounds Eliphaz pours vinegar on Job’s wounds. This understandably riles up Job. Unfortunately, Job’s complaining became misdirected. How is that so?

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For the first time we see a chink in Job's armor. For the first time Job directs his thoughts against God.

Job 7:12-21 God, "Am I like the sea, or a whale, that You set a watch over me? **13** When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, **14** then You scare me with dreams, and terrify me with visions; **15** so that my soul chooses strangling, death rather than my life. **17** What is man, that You should magnify him, and that You should set Your heart on him, **18** and visit him every morning, trying him every moment? **20** If I have sinned. What shall I do to You, O Watcher of men? **Why have You set me as a target for You**, so that I am a burden to myself? **21** And why do You not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity?" At this point Job hasn't yet asked for God to be put on trial, but the charges Job will lay out against God are being formulated.

Bildad, the second of Job's 3 friends speaks.

Job 8:1-6 "Bildad the Shuhite spoke next and said, **2** How long will you speak these things, since the words of your mouth are like a strong wind? **3** Does God pervert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice? **4** If your sons have sinned against Him, and if He has cast them away for their transgression, **5** if you would seek earnestly to God and make your prayer to the Almighty; **6** if you were pure and upright, surely now He would awake for you, and make the dwelling-place of your righteousness blessed." I can't tell you how hurtful it must feel to be told by a family friend that your children deserved to die in a tragic accident because they had sinned! I mean, if you're like Job where you love God, and you love your children, and you look around at evil people that don't even believe there is a God, and you see that their wicked children live a long and prosperous life, you would want to defend yourself and say, "NO, my children didn't die because they sinned. I always made supplication for them. They didn't deserve to die, and I don't deserve this suffering!" It's natural to feel and react this way. And frankly, it's perfectly fine to ask our Heavenly Father "Why me, LORD?!!!" And frankly, it's perfectly fine to ask it with the greatest intensity as we cry out in the anguish of our soul. But there is a line that we shouldn't cross. Where is that line that shouldn't be crossed? Remember that we are not to judge according to appearances, but instead to judge righteous judgment. And how does God define righteous judgment? **Righteous judgment is to judge from a perspective of love.** We should ask ourselves these two questions: 1) are my thoughts and actions motivated by love?; 2) is the person I'm dealing with motivated by love? Keep these questions in mind as we listen to Job's response to Bildad.

Job responds to Bildad.

Job 9:1-4 "Job answered Bildad and said, **2** Truly I know it is so [that my words are like a strong wind], but how can man be just with God? **3** If he will argue with Him, he cannot answer Him one of a thousand. **4** He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength. Who has hardened himself against Him and been blessed?" *Job 9:14-20* "How much less shall I answer Him, and choose my arguments with Him? **15** Whom, **though I were righteous**, yet I would not answer; I seek mercy for my judgment. **16** If I had called and He had answered me, **yet would I not believe that He had listened to my voice**; **17** He who breaks me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause; **18** who will not allow me to take my breath, but fills me with bitterness. **19** If I speak of strength, lo, He is mighty! And if of judgment, who shall set me a time? **20** If I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me; **though I am perfect, He shall declare me perverse.**" I am going to ask the question again: is Job judging with righteous judgment, and if not, where is he crossing the line?

Job 10:1-2 "My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint on my self; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. **2** I will say to God, Do not condemn me; make me know why You contend with me." **14-18** "If I sin, then You mark me, and **You will not acquit me from my iniquity.** **15** If I am wicked, woe to me; and if I am righteous, I will not lift up my head, being filled with shame, and looking on my affliction. **16** For it increases! You hunt me as a fierce lion; and again You show Yourself marvelous on me. **17** **You renew Your witnesses against me**, and increase Your anger on me; changes and warfare are against me. **18** Why then have You brought me from the womb? Oh that I had given up the spirit, and no eye had seen me!" Job uses the words "acquit" and "witnesses". Do you hear a trial coming on?

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Zophar, the third of Job's 3 friends speaks.

Job 11:1-6 "Zophar the Naamathite answered and said, **2** Should not the multitude of your words be answered? And should a man full of talk be justified? **3** Should your lies make men silent? And will you mock and no one make you ashamed? **4** For you have said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in God's eyes. **5** But who will grant that God would speak, and open His lips against you, **6** and would tell you the secrets of His wisdom, that sound wisdom is manifold? Know therefore that God forgets some of your iniquity." Man, can this get any worse? Zophar calls Job a liar, and implies that he's not being punished as much as he deserves! Well this infuriates Job and breaks the last straw. Job demands that his case be heard in order to clear his righteous name!

Job answers Zophar.

Job 12:1-3 "Job answered and said, **2** For truly you three guys are the people, and wisdom will die with you. **3** But I have understanding as well as you; I do not fall short of you; who does not know such things as these?" *Job 13:3-24* "**Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue my case before God.** **4** But you are imputers of lies; you are all worthless healers. **5** Oh that you would stop speaking entirely! Now that would be your wisdom. **6** Hear now my reasoning, and listen to the pleadings of my lips. **7** Would you speak unrighteously for God, and talk deceitfully for Him? **8** Will you lift up His person, or contend for God? **9** Is it good that He should search you out? Or as one man mocks another, do you mock Him? **10** He will surely blame you, if you secretly lift up persons. **11** Shall not His highness make you afraid, and His dread fall on you? **12** Your remembered sayings are like ashes, your bodies like bodies of clay. **13** Be quiet. Let me alone so that I may speak, and let come on me what may. **14** Why do I take my flesh in my teeth and put my life in my hand? **15** Though he slay me, I will not wait, but I will maintain my own ways before Him. **16** He also is my salvation, for an ungodly one shall not come before Him. **17** Listen carefully to my words, and let what I say be in your ears. **18** **Behold now, I have set my cause in order; I know that I shall be justified.** **19** Who is he that will plead for me, for now I would be quiet and expire. **20** **God, please do these two things for me; then I will not hide myself from You.** **21** **Withdraw Your hand far from me, and let not Your fear make me afraid.** **22** **Then call, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer You me.** **23** **How many are my iniquities and sins? Make known my transgressions and my sin.** **24** **Why do You hide Your face, and hold me for Your enemy?"**

Clearly, Job requests that God be put on trial. From Job's comments we can see that the charges are as follows:

- 1) You will not listen to my voice (Job 9:16)
- 2) You hide Your face from me (Job 13:24)
- 3) You scare me with dreams, and terrify me with visions (Job 7:14)
- 4) You set me as a target for Yourself, and hold me for Your enemy (Job 7:20)
- 5) You multiply my wounds without cause, and increase Your anger on me (Job 9:17)
- 6) You renew Your witnesses against me (Job 10:17)
- 7) You shall declare me perverse though I am perfect (Job 9:20)

Those are the charges --- so far --- that Job made against God. Are you able to make righteous judgment in this case? Did Job cross the line from simply asking "Why me LORD?" to actually accusing God of wrongdoing? Did Job's friends hit the nail on the head when then said that Job's tribulations came upon his head because he sinned? Or is there some other reason why Job is suffering? What does Job hope to prove in his case against God? And is God guilty as charged?

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Eliphaz takes his 2nd shot at Job

Job 15:1-13 “Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said, **2** Should a wise man answer with windy knowledge? **3** Should he reason with speeches which have no profit? **4** You do away with fear. **5** For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty. **6** Your own mouth condemns you, not I; yes, your own lips testify against you. **7** Were you the first man born? **8** Have you heard the secret counsel of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself? **9** What do you know that we do not know? **10** With us are both the gray-headed and aged, mightier than your father as to days. **12** Why does your heart carry you away **13** that you turn your spirit against God, and let such words go out of your mouth?” During Eliphaz’s first discourse he judged Job of committing sins that resulted in being punished by God. During this second discourse Eliphaz judges Job of charging God with foolishness, and with turning his spirit against God. Remember that you are the judge in this case; Job is the accuser and prosecutor; God is the defendant; and Job’s three friends are the witnesses. Upon hearing Eliphaz’s testimony so far, how do you judge the case? Is Job being punished by God because of sins he committed? Or is God unjustly punishing Job? Is Job simply asking God: “why me, LORD?” Or has Job crossed the line and sinned with his lips?

Job gives his rebuttal to Eliphaz.

Job 16:1-4, 11, 20-21 “Job answered and said, **2** I have heard many such things. You are all miserable comforters. **3** Shall words of wind have an end? Or what provokes you that you should answer? **4** I also could speak as you do; if your soul were in my soul’s place. I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you.” **11** “God has delivered me to the perverse; and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.” **20** “My friends scorn me; my eye pours out tears to God. **21** Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor!” We should pause for a moment to consider how longtime friendships can turn hostile so quickly. I’m sure that Job was initially relieved to see his friends as they came into focus over the horizon, anticipating that they would bring him some comfort and encouragement. And it’s obvious that his friends were sincerely concerned for him, after all, they had come from far away lands and were prepared to stay for as long as it would take to help mend their friend. So what went wrong?

The friendship was torn apart because both sides were judging according to appearances rather than judging righteous judgment. To Job’s 3 friends it appeared that Job was suffering because he sinned, and they rebuked Job as though they were speaking on God’s behalf. To Job, it appeared that God was punishing him for no good reason since he knew he was guiltless, and he rebuked his friends because he knew that they weren’t speaking on God’s behalf. Both sides needed to take the beams out of their own eyes, and then they would have been able to judge righteous judgment. By judging righteous judgment, both sides would have been able to see God’s love in the situation.

Job’s friends should have reasoned: God is good all the time; we love Job, and love says that we believe the best about people; Job says that he didn’t commit some horrible sin, so we believe him; therefore, God isn’t punishing him, God is doing something good in Job’s life that we just can’t see right now.

Job should have reasoned: God is good all the time; I love God no matter the depth and breadth of my suffering; I don’t believe that I’ve committed some horrible sin, so I don’t think God is punishing me; therefore, God is doing something good in my life that I just can’t see right now.

The longer both sides based their arguments on appearances rather than looking for love, the worse the situation became. We see this as Job’s 3 friends fire their second round of salvos at Job.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Bildad takes his 2nd shot at Job.

Job 18:3, 5, 12-13 “Bildad the Shuhite answered and said, **Why are we counted as cattle, or seem stupid in your sight?** **5** Yes, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. **12-13** His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and trouble shall be ready at his side. **13** It shall devour the parts of his skin; the first-born of death consumes his parts.” To tell you the truth, when I read this it makes me want to jump up and slap Bildad. I mean, how cruel can someone be? Bildad is watching Job suffering from excruciating emotional and physical pain and he has the nerve to blast Job with accusations that his boils are punishment from God for being wicked. Where’s the proof? At least Bildad could show some proof. It’s hard enough to take correction when we’re wrong --- especially when we’re already suffering greatly, but it’s a thousand times harder to take correction when we believe we’re right and our accusers haven’t shown us evidence to the contrary. Where’s the proof, Bildad?! That’s all I ask, Bildad; show me the proof, Job demands!

Job utters his retort to Bildad.

Job 19:1-11, 21-23 “Job answered and said, **2** How long will you torment my soul and break me in pieces with words? **3** Ten times you have blamed me; you are not ashamed that you have wronged me. **4** And if indeed I have erred, my error remains with me. **5** If indeed you magnify yourself against me, and plead against me my misery, **6** know now that God has overthrown me, and His net has closed on me. **7** Behold, I cry out, Violence! And I am not answered. **I cry aloud, but there is no justice.** **8** He has fenced up my way so that I cannot pass, and He has set darkness in my paths. **9** He has stripped me of my glory, and has taken the crown from my head. **10** He has broken me on every side, and I am gone, and He has uprooted my hope like a tree. **11 He has also kindled His wrath against me, and to Himself He counts me as His enemy.** **21** “Have pity on me! Have pity on me, my friends! For the hand of God has touched me. **22 Why do you, like God, persecute me** and are not satisfied with my flesh? **23** Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were engraved in a book!” I really feel sorry for Job on several fronts. First, he’s suffering tremendously from the emotional loss of his children and his possessions, he’s suffering enormously from the horrendous boils covering his body, his wife told him to forget about God and die, his best friends have become his enemies as they lambaste him for being wicked, and he surmised that even the Almighty God is against him. What a heavy burden to bear!!! Unfortunately, the burden is about to get even heavier.

Zophar takes his 2nd shot at Job

Job 20:1-5 “Zophar the Naamathite answered and said, **2** Therefore my thoughts cause me to answer, even because of my haste in me. **3** I have heard the rebuke meant to shame me, and the spirit of my understanding causes me to answer. **4** Do you know this from days of old, from the setting of man on earth, **5** that the exulting of the wicked is short, and the joy of the ungodly is for a moment?

Job 20:18-23 As to the wealth of his trading, even he shall not enjoy it. **19** For he pressed down and forsook the poor; he stole a house, but he had not built it. **20** Surely he shall not know quietness in his belly; he will not escape with the things of desire. **21** None of his food shall be left; therefore his good will not last. **22** In the fullness of his plenty he shall be in trouble; every wretched one shall come on him. **23** It shall happen at the filling of his belly, God shall cast the fury of His wrath on him, and He shall rain on him while he is eating. *Job 20:29* This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the inheritance of his word from God.” When it rains it pours! For the first time we hear a specific annunciation of Job’s supposed sins. Zophar not so subtly announces that Job has oppressed and forsaken the poor, and has stolen at least one house. Then he sums it up by repeating that Job is suffering for his wicked deeds. Certainly this is NOT an example of judging righteous judgment --- and it’s not even a good example of the shallow practice of judging by appearance since Zophar had never seen nor heard of Job doing anything of which he had just been accused. Zophar should have headed the principle “judge not that you be not judged for with whatever judgment you judge others, you will be judged likewise”.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Job utters his retort to Zophar.

Job 21:1-2, 34 “Then Job answered, **2** Listen diligently to my speech. Let this be your consolation. **34** How can you comfort me with nonsense, seeing that in your answers there remains only falsehood?” In other words, Zophar, you are a liar!

Eliphaz takes his 3rd shot at Job.

Job 22:1-11 “Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said, **2** Can a man be useful to God, as he who is wise may be useful to himself? **3** Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous, or gain to Him that you make your ways perfect? **4** Will He reprove you because of your reverence, or enter into judgment with you? **5** Is not your wickedness great, and your iniquity without measure? **6** For you have taken a pledge from your brother for nothing, and stripped the naked of their clothing. **7** You have not given water to the weary to drink, and you have held back bread from the hungry. **9** You have sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. **10** Therefore snares are all around you, and sudden fear troubles you; **11** or darkness, so that you cannot see; and a flood of waters covers you.” Boy oh boy, can a man get a break? Now Eliphaz spews out lies against Job. Without a shred of evidence Eliphaz blatantly blurted out: Job, you cheated your brother out of some money; you beat people out of their clothing; you callously ignored people desperate for food and water; and you’ve abused orphans and the elderly. How can a friend say that without a shred of evidence? Where did that hostility come from? And this from a supposedly Godly man, as Eliphaz claimed himself to be.

Job gives his rebuttal to Eliphaz.

Job 23:1 “Then Job answered and said, **2** Even today my complaint is bitter; His hand is heavy in spite of my groaning. **3** Oh that I knew where I might find God, that I might come even to His seat! **4** I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. **5** I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say to me. **6** Will He plead against me with His great power? No, surely He would give heed to me. **7** There the righteous might reason with Him; and I would be delivered forever from my Judge. **8** Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot see Him; **9** on the left hand, where He works, but I cannot behold Him. He turns to the right, but I do not see Him. **10** But He knows the way that I take; when He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” Okay, I felt sorry for Job before, and really I still do, but I think something is very wrong with Job’s reasoning. I’m not saying by any stretch of the imagination that I agree with Job’s three friends regarding their accusations against him concerning his suffering for his supposed sins, but I am saying that God has a problem --- a quite justified problem --- with Job’s attitude. Of course I’m going to ask you --- if you agree in the first place that God does have a problem with Job’s attitude, what is the problem with Job’s attitude?

After Bildad and Zophar each take their third same lame shots at Job, we hear a final retort from Job.

Job 27:1-6 “Job continued the lifting up of His speech, and said, **2** **As God lives, He has taken away my judgment;** the Almighty has made my soul bitter. **3** As long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, **4** my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. **5** Far be it from me that I should justify you [Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar]; until I die I will not retract my integrity. **6** **I hold tight to my righteousness,** and I will not let it go; my heart shall not shame me any of my days.”

And now we hear a final plea from Job.

Job 31:35 “Oh that I had one to hear me! Here is my signature. Let the Almighty answer me, and let my Accuser write an indictment.” “Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!” (Job 19:23).

All I have to say to Job at this point is be careful what you ask for, for we are now going to examine the very indictment you asked God to write, that we now have preserved in a book we call the Bible!

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Job put God on trial for two reasons:

- 1) because of his intense and immense suffering for no apparently good reason; and
- 2) because his friends accused him sinning and therefore suffering.

So Job seeks to clear his name by demanding that God give him his day in court. As we'll soon see, God grants Job his wish because God knows that He will be vindicated when judged, and he knows that Job will repent of his sin. But wait a minute, didn't God say that Job wasn't being punished for any sins he had committed? Let's go back to the beginning of our story and reread a couple of scriptures.

Job 1:8 "Yahweh said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job, because there is none like him in the earth, a whole-hearted and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil?" God holds Job up as the best example on earth of human righteousness. And there's no implication of wrongdoing on Job's part.

Job 2:3 "Yahweh said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a just and an upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil? And still he holds on tight to his integrity, although you moved Me against him to destroy him without cause." God explicitly states that Job didn't do anything to cause his own suffering.

How then can I say that during the court case God knows that Job will repent of his sin? I can't have it both ways: I can't say that Job didn't sin and thereby bring suffering upon himself; then turn around and say that Job will repent of his sin. Or can I? Now believe me, I don't want to cast my lot in with the nonsense of Job's three friends who salaciously accused him of sins without specifying what sins Job had committed. After all, I don't know any of Job's sins prior to his calamities. Ah, but that's the key phrase there ... "prior to his calamities." I don't know any of Job's sins prior to his calamities, but I do know of Job's sin in the midst of his calamities. Do you know what sin Job committed in the midst of his calamities? Before I reveal the answer let's address the sins of Job's 3 friends.

THE PROBLEM WITH JOB'S 3 FRIENDS

The problem with Job's 3 friends is that they condemned Job without reason, plus they couldn't prove Job was wrong nor answer his questions. This is what the Scriptures attest.

Job 32:3 "Then was the wrath of Elihu kindled against Job's three friends because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job."

Since a matter has to be established in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses, let's hear the testimony of a second witness.

Job 42:7 "The LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against you, and against your two friends: for you have not spoken of me the thing that is right".

Now we can address the question: what sin did Job commit in the midst of his calamities?

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

THE PROBLEM WITH JOB

Do you remember when Job asked for his case to be tried before God?

Job 13:3 "Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue my case before God."

What two negotiating points did Job want God to agree to in order to have a fair trial?

1) He pleaded with God to withdraw His fearsome hand so that Job wouldn't be afraid to speak up in court.

2) He pleaded with God to reveal to him what sin he had committed.

Job 13:20-23 "God, please do these two things for me; then I will not hide myself from You. 21 Withdraw Your hand far from me, and let not Your fear make me afraid. 22 Then call, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer You me. 23 How many are my iniquities and sins? Make known my transgressions and my sin."

But Job didn't believe that God would darken the doors of the courthouse.

Job 13:24 "Why do You hide Your face, and hold me for Your enemy?"

Therefore Job pleaded for God to make a concession and at least send a representative for God with more sense than his 3 friends so that Job could argue his case with this representative.

Job 16:21 "Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor!" Job 9:32 "For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, that we should come together in judgment."

God is not at all afraid to show his face in court, so He will eventually grant Job his request to meet "face to face". But first, God grants Job his request to have a man represent him in court. That man is named Elihu.

Elihu, a much younger man than Job and Job's 3 friends, waits until all the bantering ends, and then steps into the fray as a true representative of God. Elihu was able to **judge righteous judgment**. So let's pay very close attention to Elihu's arguments.

Job 32:2 "The wrath of Elihu was kindled against Job because he justified himself rather than God."

Bam! Right out the gate Elihu hits the nail on the head. So what was Job's sin in the midst of his calamities?

JOB JUSTIFIED HIMSELF RATHER THAN GOD!!!

Let's examine the evidence Elihu submits to prove his point. In speaking to Job's 3 friends, Elihu said, *Job 32:6-22 "I am young, and you are very old; Therefore I held back, and didn't dare show you my opinion. 7 I said, 'Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.' 8 But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding. 9 It is not always the great who are wise, nor the aged who understand justice. 12 I gave you my full attention, but there was no one who convinced Job, or who answered his words, among you. 13 Beware lest you say, 'We have found wisdom, God may refute him, not man;' 14 for he has not directed his words against me; neither will I answer him with your speeches. 21 Never let it be said of me that I am a respecter of persons, neither will I give flattering titles to any man. 22 For I don't know how to give flattering titles; or else my Maker would soon take me away."*

In dissecting Elihu's comments we see that he gave the men their due respect, then he reminded them that everyone has "a spirit in man" that the Almighty works through, which he mentions as a warning to not take his comments lightly just because he's the "new kid on the block". Next he chides them for not having helped Job in any way. Finally, he lets them know that he won't make the same mistake; for just as he showed them their mistake, he was surely going to show Job his mistake --- but **in a loving manner**. Elihu **spoke the truth in love** and was therefore **judging with righteous judgment**.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Elihu now turns his attention to Job and stands as a man in the place of God just like Job had requested.

Job 33:4-8 "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. **5** If you can, answer me. Set your words in order before me, and stand forth. **6** Behold, I am toward God even as you are; I also am formed out of the clay. **7** Behold, my terror shall not make you afraid, and my burden shall not be heavy on you. **8** Surely you have spoken in my ears, and I have heard the sound of your words."

A good attorney should take copious notes --- whether mentally or on paper --- because it can be essential in convicting someone of a transgression. So it is with Elihu. Notice how he uses Job's own words against him to bring him to the realization that he had sinned --- and more importantly, to show Job exactly what his sin was.

Job 33:8 "Surely you have spoken in my hearing, I have heard the voice of your words, saying:

- 1) **33:9** I am clean, without disobedience. I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.
- 2) **33:10** Behold, he finds occasions against me. He counts me for his enemy.
- 3) **33:11** He puts my feet in the stocks.
- 4) **33:11** He marks all my paths.
- 5) **34:5** I am righteous, but God has taken away my right.
- 6) **34:6** Should I be a hypocrite and say that I am wrong?
- 7) **34:6** My wound is incurable, though I am without disobedience.
- 8) **34:9** It profits a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.
- 9) **35:3** What profit shall I have, more than if I had sinned?
- 10) **35:2** My righteousness is more than God's.

After Elihu replays the tape of Job's comments he lovingly picks Job apart using the following Godly principles.

Gal 6:1 "Brethren, if a man is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself, that you not also be tempted."

2 Tim 2:24-26 "The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome, but be gentle towards all, able to teach, patient, **25** in gentleness correcting those who oppose him: hoping that God may give them repentance leading to a full knowledge of the truth, **26** and that they may be recovered out of the devil's snare."

So now let's see how Elihu, God's defense attorney, leads Job to repentance and a full knowledge of the truth.

Elihu gives Job an answer by observing the superior greatness of God to man, not being accountable to man for anything done by God. Subsequently, man should be silent and submissive to God. And yet, though God is so great and majestic, and is not obliged to give an account of His affairs to man or the reasons for them; yet God does condescend by various ways and means to instruct mankind in God's mind and will. But as is often the case, the very ways and means God uses to instruct mankind in God's mind and will are the very things that no one takes notice of. *Job 33* ...

12 Behold, in this case Job you are not right; I will answer you, for God is greater than man.

13 Why do you fight against Him? For He does not give account for any of His matters.

14 For God speaks once, yea, twice, but not one person takes notice.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Elihu, God's defense attorney, leads Job to repentance and a full knowledge of the truth by using Job's own testimony against him as self-incriminating evidence.

On several occasions Job said that God was his enemy. As evidence of this, Job recounted how God terrified him through nightmares and visions. *Job 7:12-20* God, "Am I like the sea, or a whale, that You set a watch over me? *13* When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, *14* then You scare me with nightmares, and terrify me with visions; *15* so that my soul chooses strangling, death rather than my life. *17* What is man, that You should magnify him, and that You should set Your heart on him, *18* and visit him every morning, trying him every moment? *20* If I have sinned. What shall I do to You, O Watcher of men? **Why have You set me as a target for You, so that I am a burden to myself?**

Elihu counters by saying, "As is often the case, the very methods God uses to instruct mankind in His will are the very things that no one takes notice of, or simply misinterprets." *Job 33:14* "For God speaks once, yea, twice, but not one person takes notice."

Elihu then proceeds to give Job an example of how Job had misinterpreted God's method of revelation. *Job 33:14* "In a dream, a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men; while they slumber on the bed;"

Additionally, Elihu tells Job WHY God does what He does. *Job 33:16-18* "then He opens the ear of men and seals their teaching, *17* so that He may turn man from his act, that He might hide pride from man. *18* He keeps back his soul from the Pit, and his life from perishing by the sword."

Elihu correctly interpreted dreams sent by God as meant by God to open our ears to hear the voice of God so that we are humbled, kept from sinning, and therefore kept from perishing.

Elihu argues that the same is true for physical ailments and impairments like boils and broken bones. Job had especially complained of his sicknesses and pains; and, as to these, he took them as being tokens of God's wrath. *Job 9:17-18* "He who breaks me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause; *18* who will not allow me to take my breath, but fills me with bitterness."

Job 10:15-18 If I am wicked, woe to me; and if I am righteous, I will not lift up my head, being filled with shame when looking on my affliction. *16* For it increases! You hunt me as a fierce lion; and again You show Yourself marvelous on me. *17* You renew Your witnesses against me, and increase Your anger on me; changes and warfare are against me. *18* Why then have You brought me from the womb? Oh that I had given up the spirit, and no eye had seen me!"

To counter Job's unwarranted complaints, Elihu shows that Job's physical ailments were so far from being tokens of God's wrath, as Job took them, or evidences of Job's hypocrisy, as his friends took them, that these ailments were really wise and gracious methods, which God, in His divine grace took as an opportunity to deepen Job's personal relationship with Him --- especially in the areas of patience, experience, and hope. God is good all the time! Everything God does is good because God is LOVE! (1 John 4:8, 16). *Job 33:19-24* "Mankind is also chastened with pain on his bed, and enduring strife in his bones; *20* so that his life is sick of bread, and his soul doesn't desire food. *21* His flesh wastes away so that his bones are laid bare. *22* Yes, his soul draws near to the Pit, and his life to the dealers of death. *23* If there is a messenger for him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to declare to man God's righteousness, *24* then God is gracious to the one who is suffering, and says to the interpreter, Deliver him from going down to the Pit; for I have found a ransom."

Before we proceed to the next phase of the court case, we need to spend a few moments discussing this idea of an "interpreter".

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

In this scenario, Elihu is the “interpreter”, Job is the one who is suffering, and Jesus is the ransom.

Job 33:23-24 If there is an interpreter for Job --- just one man in a crowd of a thousand, to declare to Job God's righteousness, 24 then God is gracious to the one who is suffering [Job], and says to the interpreter [Elihu], Deliver Job from going down to the Pit; for I have found a ransom [Jesus].

Elihu, as the “interpreter”, is that rare 1 out of 1000 people who truly understands that God is good all the time --- and can show people exactly how God is being good in their particular situation. Thus, Elihu instructs Job and his 3 friends that the method God is using to help Job “grow in the grace and knowledge of our LORD and Savior Jesus the Christ” (2 Pet 3:18) is through the sanctified use of his physical affliction. As Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible so eloquently puts it, “when God in that way speaks to man, God intends to be heard and understood, so that man does not speak in vain. Man is happy *if there be a messenger with him* to attend to him in his sickness, to convince, counsel, and comfort him, *an interpreter* to expound God's Divine providence and give him to understand the meaning of it, *a man of wisdom* that knows the voice of the affliction and its interpretation; for, when God speaks by afflictions, we are frequently so unlearned in the language, that we have need of an interpreter. That type of highly skilled interpreter is *one of a thousand*, and should be valued accordingly. His business at such a time is *to show unto man* God's uprightness, that in faithfulness God afflicts him and does him no wrong, which it is necessary to be convinced of in order for us to see the benefit of the affliction. If it appears that the afflicted person is truly pious, the interpreter will not do as Job's friends had done: make it his business to prove him a hypocrite because he is afflicted but won't admit it his sin, but on the contrary will acknowledge his piety despite his afflictions, that he may take the comfort of it.”

And lastly, the interpreter will lift up the name of Jesus, just as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so that the sufferer will look up and see from whence cometh their salvation, and will repent of their sin and accept the ransom. That's when the work of the interpreter is done. And when the work of the interpreter is done, God will grant to the sufferer the restitution of all things. *Job 33:25-30 “His flesh shall be fresher than in vigor; he shall return to the days of his youth; 26 he shall pray to God, and God will be gracious to him; and he shall see God's face with joy, for God will restore to man his righteousness. 27 God wants us to admit, “I have sinned and perverted righteousness; and it was not equally repaid to me, 28 He has redeemed my soul from passing over into the Pit, and my life shall see the light.” 29 Lo, all these things God does two or three times with a man, 30 to bring back his soul from the Pit, to be lighted with the light of the living.”*

In review, Elihu first extolled God's greatness and goodness, then he assured Job that God was not punishing Job for any sins that Job had committed, but rather was seeking to help Job grow in God's grace and knowledge. After having accomplished that, Elihu must now show Job that he did end up sinning in his attempt to clear his name from the smear campaign of his 3 friends.

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As we have seen already, Elihu pointed out to Job that he had “justified himself rather than God.” But specifically, how is he going to help Job realize the error of his ways?

1) Elihu charges Job with accusing God of acting unrighteously, which he shows is impossible.

Job 34:5-12 “For Job has said, ‘I am righteous, God has taken away my right: 6 Notwithstanding my right, I am considered a liar. My wound is incurable, though I am without disobedience.’ 7 What man is like Job, who drinks scorn like water, 8 Who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men? 9 For Job has said, ‘It profits a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.’ 10 “Therefore listen to me, you men of understanding: far be it from God, that he should do wickedness, far be it from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. 11 For He repays man’s work, and causes him to find according to his ways. 12 Yes surely, God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert justice.”

2) Elihu then extols the virtues of God (**Job 34:**)

- His incontestable justice (**10-12, 17, 19, 23**).
- His sovereign dominion (**13-15**).
- His almighty power (**20, 24**).
- His omniscience (**21-22, 25**).
- His severity against sinners (**26-28**).
- His overruling providence (**29-30**).

3) Elihu teaches Job how men should address God.

Job 34:31-32 “For has any said to God, ‘I am guilty, but I will not offend any more. 32 Teach me that which I don’t see. If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more’?”

4) And then, lastly, Elihu leaves the matter to Job’s own conscience, and concludes with a sharp reproof of him for his irreverent behavior and discontent.

Job 34:33-37 “Should it be according to your mind? God will recompense it. Now whether you choose to refuse or accept God’s recompense, that’s up to you, not me. Therefore speak what you know. 34 Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man listen to me. 35 Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom. 36 My desire is that Job may be tried to the end because of his answers for wicked men. 37 For **he addeth rebellion to his sin**, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplies his words against God.”

Verse 33 deserves some more attention. We are ready to think that every thing that concerns us should be just as we would have it; but Elihu here shows that it is absurd and unreasonable to expect that everything “*Should be according to our mind. God will recompense*”. As it says in **Rom 9:20-21**, “Who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” **21** Doesn’t the potter have a right over the clay to make from the same lump one part for a vessel of honor, and another for dishonor?” **Rom 11:33-36** “Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” 35 “Or who has first given to him, that God must repay?” 36 By Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. To God be the glory for ever! Amen.” Elihu here speaks with great deference to the Divine will and wisdom: it is highly fit that every thing should be according to God’s mind.

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Elihu reminds Job that God is so great that it is foolishness for anyone to believe that God makes mistakes. This was necessary because, as Job's tribulation dragged on and on, it wore him down. Instead of continuing to say, "Blessed be the Name of the LORD God", Job started to say blessed be the name of Job. Acting as his own defense attorney against the accusations of his 3 friends, Job got himself entangled in his own web of self-righteousness.

This should be a lesson for us. What would happen if you lost your children to a terrible accident caused by a drunken driver? You might be able to say, "Blessed be the Name of the LORD God" after getting over the initial shock. Soon you notice that your spouse isn't recovering from the emotionally devastating event. One day you come home from work to find that your spouse has died from an overdose of anti-depressant drugs. "Boy oh boy, how life can be turned upside down so quickly", you pine. "Just 2 months ago I was sailing along without a care in the world". At this point you wonder how much more you can take. You start to wonder if God is punishing you. You rewind the tape of your life to see if you've done something to deserve this. "I've gone to church every week; I pray and study the Bible frequently; I visit nursing homes whenever I can to bring comfort and cheer. No, there's nothing I've done to deserve these trials." Suddenly, you find that your employer has downsized and restructured you right out of a job. It's very difficult to keep a good attitude now that your livelihood has been stripped away. Like dark clouds that cover the sky when a thunderstorm is approaching, dark clouds of worry begin to encompass you. Day after day you plead with God begging Him to show you what's going on. For 3 long months silence is all you hear. Unable to pay the mortgage any longer, you receive notification that your house is going into foreclosure. Even fasting and prayer has failed to save the day. You become homeless and find yourself sleeping in your car. Now you're mad at God! "God, if you're all powerful, how come you haven't intervened? This is not fair #@\$%! God, I need you to come through real quickly because I'm just about at the end of my rope."

Although you've been suffering for 5 months now, something tells you not to give up on God or life just yet. You know that God parted the Red Sea. You know that God raised His Son from the dead. You know that you are a child of God, blessed and highly favored. At least that's what you've been told by your minister. With a frazzled strand of rope, you hang on to Hope and say, "my ship is going to come in if I just *name it and claim it* --- if I just *speak it into existence*. God has promised me *health and wealth*". Unfortunately, in interview after interview you get the door slammed in your face, which you suspect is due to your advanced age and out of date skills. After 4 months of sleeping in your car, you leave another sorry interview only to find out that your car was stolen. "9 months of 'hell' and now I have to live in a homeless shelter. How embarrassing", you exclaim. And oh yes, there's just one more thing: while sleeping in the homeless shelter you are drugged and raped, which results in contracting Aids. "The very thing I feared has come upon me. What if my friends find out?" Sure enough, on one of their monthly visits, several of your church friends spot you before you can flee the shelter. Well-meaning though they are, instead of encouraging and comforting you, they tell you that all this has come upon you because you've sinned. That's the last straw. You never curse God and die, but you do defend yourself by recounting all the good that you've done. You then compare yourself to all the really evil people you've heard about, and you just simply lose it when you see how they and their children lived in prosperity to a ripe old age without the hint of trouble. You weigh things in the balance and conclude that it doesn't really benefit anyone from serving God. After all, bad things happen to good people, and good things happen to bad people. Nevertheless, you know that you'll continue to serve Him because you don't want to give God any justification for His actions against you. Furthermore, you want to prove to the world to your dying day that you have done right by God, but God is not doing right by you. You have fallen into the sinful trap of JUSTIFYING YOURSELF RATHER THAN GOD.

Perhaps for a while, any of us could endure horrific suffering. But how many of us could endure the suffering if it dragged on and on without an end in sight. How would we feel towards God? Now perhaps we can imagine how Job felt. Now perhaps we can see how difficult a task Elihu has in convincing Job that he has sinned by self-righteously JUSTIFYING HIMSELF RATHER THAN GOD.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

I realize that it may be difficult for some of you to accept that God had a problem with Job. Even though we've already spent 22 days proving that Job put God on trial with charges against God that God was unjust for letting him suffer though he had not done anything wrong to deserve the suffering, some of you still might not believe that God had a problem with Job. Most likely this arises from the reading of two scriptures and a misunderstanding of how to study the Bible. First, let's read the two scriptures.

Eze 14:13-14 "Son of man, when a land sins against me by committing a trespass, and I stretch out my hand on it, and break the staff of the bread of it, and send famine on it, and cut off from it man and animal; **14** though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, says the Lord GOD."

Jam 5:10-11 "My brethren, as an example of affliction and patience, remember the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. **11** Behold, we call those blessed who patiently endured. You have heard of the patient endurance of Job and have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful."

The first passage says that Job was RIGHTEOUS. The second passage says that Job was PATIENT. There's no hint of God having a problem with Job --- only praise for Job. Well, if those were the only scriptures pertaining to Job then that would be the end of the story. But there are half a dozen other scriptures that show that Job was SELF-RIGHTEOUS and ANXIOUS. The way to study and understand the Bible is to put "line upon line; precept upon precept; here a little and there a little" (Isa 28:9-10). Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible explains this concept wonderfully. "For our instruction in the things of God it is requisite that we have precept upon precept and line upon line, that one precept and line should be followed, and so enforced by another; the precept of justice must be upon the precept of piety, and the precept of charity upon that of justice. It is necessary that the same precept and the same line should be often repeated and ingrained in us, that we may better understand them and more easily recollect them when the need arises." In short, we need to put all of the scriptures together to get the full picture. Following are the half-dozen other scriptures.

Job 32:2 "The wrath of Elihu was kindled against Job **because he justified himself rather than God.**"

Job 34:7-9 "What man is like Job, who drinks scorn like water, **8** Who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men? **9** For Job has said, 'It profits a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.'"

Job 34:35-37 "Job has spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom. **36** Would that Job may be tried to the end because his answers are like men of iniquity. **37** For **he adds rebellion to his sins; he multiplies his words against God.**"

Job 35:2-4 "Do you think this to be right, you that say, **I am more just than God?** **3** For you say, **What will it benefit you? And, What good shall I have more than if I had sinned?** **4** I will answer your words, and your friends with you."

Job 35:13-16 "Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty look on it. **14** How much less when you say you do not see Him! Judgment is before Him; you are waiting for Him. **15** And now, because His anger has not visited, and He does not **recognize stupidity,** **16 even Job opens his mouth in vanity; he multiplies words without knowledge.**"

Job 36:1-3 "Elihu went on and said, **2** Wait for me a little, and I will show you that there are yet words for God. **3** I will bring my knowledge from afar, and I will credit righteousness to my Maker."

Job 36:21 "**Beware, do not turn to iniquity; for this you have chosen rather than affliction.**"

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Interestingly, Job never once utters a peep as Elihu is speaking, though Elihu gave him plenty of chances to rebut his cross examination. Elihu has a continuous speech for 6 whole chapters without a single interruption from Job. We would all do well to meditate on Elihu's overall approach and his specific arguments. Let's analyze the points Elihu is making in his closing argument.

God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and the Master Teacher

Job 36:22-26 Behold, God is exalted in His power; who teaches like Him? **23** Who has appointed Him His way; or who can say, You have done wrong? **24** Remember that you magnify His work of which men have sung; **25** every man has seen it; man may see it afar off. **26** Behold, God is great, and we do not know; the number of His years cannot be searched out.

Psa 19:1-6 "The heavens declare the glory of God. The expanse shows His handiwork. **2** Day after day they pour forth speech, and night after night they display knowledge. **3** There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. **4** Their voice has gone out through all the earth, their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tent for the sun, **5** which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a strong man rejoicing to run his course. **6** His going forth is from the end of the heavens, his circuit to its ends; There is nothing hidden from its heat."

Rom 1:18-20 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **19** because that which is known of God is revealed in them, for God revealed it to them. **20** For the invisible things of God, since the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divine Nature; so that all mankind may be without excuse."

God Teaches Us Through the Rain, Lightning and Thunder

27-30, 32-33, 31 For He draws up the drops of water; they distill rain into mist, **28** which the clouds pour down and drop on man plentifully. **29** Also can any understand the spreading of the clouds, or the crashing of His canopy? **30** Behold, He spreads His light on it, and He covers the bottom of the sea. **32** He covers His hands with the lightning, and commands it to strike the mark; **33** its thunder declares concerning Him, and the cattle, concerning what is coming. **31** For by them He judges the people; He gives plenty of food.

Remember The Flood in the days of Noah. Also, recall the story of David's victory over Saul when The Most High used thunder and lightning. *2 Sam 22:1-4, 14-15, 18* "David spoke to the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: **2** and he said, The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, even mine; **3** God, my rock, in him I will take refuge; my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge. My savior, you save me from violence. **4** I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: So shall I be saved from my enemies. **14** The LORD thundered from heaven. The Elyon uttered his voice. **15** He sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and confused them. **18** He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me."

Now consider how God in His mercy gives plenty of food even to fools. *Act 14:11-17* "Seeing what Paul did, the crowd lifted up their voice, saying, The gods have come down to us, becoming like men. **12** They called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury. **14** But hearing this, Barnabas and Paul tore their clothes, crying out, **15** We are simply men just like you. Our purpose in preaching the gospel to you is to turn you from these vanities to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all things in them; **16** who in past generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. **17** Yet, He did not leave Himself without witness, doing good, giving rain and fruitful seasons to us from heaven, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

In chapter 37, Elihu continues to set forth the wisdom and omnipotence of God, as manifested in the thunder and lightning, and in the snow and rain, and the purposes for which they are sent.

Thunder and Lightning (Job 37)

1-5 My heart trembles at this also, and it leaps out of its place. 2 Listen carefully to the thunder of His voice, and the rumbling that comes out of His mouth. 3 He loosens it under the whole heavens, and His lightning to the ends of the earth. 4 After it a voice roars; He thunders with the voice of His majesty, and He will not hold them when His voice is heard. 5 God thunders marvelously with His voice; He does great things, and we do not understand.

Snow and Rain

6-12 For He says to the snow, Fall on the earth; also to the shower of rain, and to the shower of heavy rains in its strength. 7 He seals up the hand of every man, so that all men may know His work. 8 Then the beast goes into its lair, and it remains in its dens. 9 Out of the storeroom comes the tempest; and cold from scattering winds. 10 By the breath of God ice is given; and the expanse of waters is frozen tight. 11 Also He loads the clouds with moisture; He scatters the lightning cloud, 12 and it is turned around by His guidance, so that they may do whatever He commands them on the face of the world in the earth.

Why God uses the Weather

13 Whether as a whip, or for His land, or for mercy, He determines it.

Job is exhorted to consider the wondrous works of God in the light, in the clouds, in the winds, in heat and cold, in the formation of the heavens, and in the changes of the atmosphere.

14-22 Listen to this, Job; stand still, and consider the wonderful works of God. 15 Do you know when God placed them, and caused the lightning of His cloud to shine? 16 Do you know the balancing of the clouds, the wonderful works of Him who is perfect in knowledge? 17 You whose clothes are warmed when He quiets the earth from the south wind? 18 Have you beat out the expanse with Him, hard like a cast mirror? 19 Teach us what we shall say to Him; for because of darkness we cannot arrange our case. 20 Shall it be told Him that I would speak? If a man speaks, surely he shall be swallowed up. 21 And now men cannot look upon the light; it is in the clouds; but the wind passes and clears them. 22 Golden splendor comes out of the north; God is awesome in His majesty.

Job is exhorted to consider the perfections of God, and how he should be revered by his creatures.

23-24 The Almighty [El Shaddai], whom we cannot find out, is exalted in power; and to judgment and overflowing righteousness He does no violence. 24 Therefore, men fear Him; He does not respect any who are wise in heart.

Okay, what point do you think Elihu is making in his closing argument? Remember I said at the beginning of the trial that Elihu is the defense attorney. So obviously, Elihu is defending God's character. Elihu is taking up where Job unfortunately left off – i.e. “Blessed be the Name of the LORD our God”. Another way of saying it is, “I kneel down in praise and adoration of God's characteristics”. Specifically, what are some of the characteristics Elihu enumerates as worthy of our praise and adoration? They are:

- 1) God is all powerful; God is Omnipotent.
- 2) No one knows anything that God doesn't know, so no one can teach God anything; God is Omniscient.
- 3) No one is as skilled as God is in teaching whatever they know; God is the Master Teacher.
- 4) God is eternal and infinite while we are temporal and finite.
- 5) God is Creator, and we can't even begin to replicate His wonders through our puny scientific “advancements”.

Elihu closes his case by extolling God's attributes. He thereby prepares Job to meet his Maker.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

After Elihu, God's defense attorney, rests his case, God takes the witness stand. Job had asked to speak to God face to face, so now Job is going to get exactly what he asked for. As we'll see, it was much more than he bargained for.

Job 38:1-3 "Yahweh answered Job out of the tempest, and said, 2 Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Now gird up your loins like a man; for I will ask of you questions, and you teach Me."

Uh oh, Job, you're about to get a beat down! Please allow me a little liberty in paraphrasing what God is saying to Job. "Boy, how dare you come into my house and accuse me of wrongdoing. You have no idea what you're talking about or who you're dealing with. You're still in diapers; go put on some clothes befitting a real man. When you come back I've got some questions for you, and you better have some mighty good answers with all that junk you've been talking."

Of course Job's Heavenly Father is doing this in love, no question about that. But can't you just see in this scenario a young teenage boy getting smart with his Dad, and the Dad jumping out of his seat and saying: "Boy, I brought you into this world and I can sure enough take you out of it! Now sit down and shut up!! I'll doing the talking from now on!!!"

So what does our Heavenly Father say to Job to humble him? *Job 38 ...*

Creation of the Earth

4-7, 18 Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell if you have understanding! 5 Who has set its measurements, for you know? Or who has stretched the line on it? 6 On what are its bases sunk, or who cast its cornerstone, 7 when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? 18 Have you understood the breadth of the earth? Tell, if you know it all!

Boundaries of the Oceans and Seas

8-11, 16 Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth as it came from the womb? 9 When I made the clouds its robe, and darkness its navel-band, 10 and set My limit on it, and set bars and doors, 11 and I said, You shall come to here, but no further; and here your proud waves shall stop. 16 Have you gone to the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in search of the depths?

Separation of Morning from Night

12-15, 19-21 Have you commanded the morning from your days, and caused the dawn to know its place, 13 that it might take hold of the ends of the earth; that the wicked might be shaken out of it? 14 It is turned like clay under a seal; and they stand forth like a garment. 15 And from the wicked their light is withheld, and the high arm shall be broken. 19 Where is the way where light dwells? And where is the place of darkness, 20 that you should take it to its boundary, and that you should know the paths to its house? 21 You know, because you were born then. And the number of your days is great.

Power over Life and Death

17 Have the gates of death been opened to you? Or have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?

Have you noticed that God is using the same line of reasoning that Elihu did? In the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses a matter is established.

Job is already humbled by this point, but God isn't finished yet. There's much more that God has to say.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Understanding Snow, Rain, Thunder and Lightning (Job 38)

22-30, 34-38 Have you entered into the storehouses of the snow? Or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, 23 which I have kept for the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war? 24 How is it, the way the light is distributed, and how does the east wind spread itself on the earth? 25 Who has cut a channel for the flood, or a way for the thunderclaps; 26 to cause rain to fall on the earth where no man is, a wilderness and no man in it; 27 to satisfy the desolate and waste ground, and to cause the source of grass to spring forth? 28 Has the rain a father? Or who has brought forth the drops of dew? 29 Out of whose womb came the ice? And the frost of the heavens, who fathered it? 30 The waters are hidden like stone, and the face of the deep is frozen. 34 Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, so that floods of waters may cover you? 35 Can you send lightnings, that they may go, and say to you, Here we are? 36 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who has given understanding to the mind? 37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom; or who can empty out the jars of the heavens, 38 when the dust is melted into hardness, and the clods cling fast together?

The Science of Astronomy (not the hocus pocus of astrology)

31-33 Can you bind the bands of the Pleiades, or loosen the cords of Orion? 32 Can you bring the constellations in their season? Or can you guide the Bear with its sons? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you set up their rulership on the earth?

Providing Food for the entire Food Chain

39-41 Will you hunt the prey for the lion, or fill the appetite of the young lions, 40 when they crouch in dens, and sit in the cover of their hiding place? 41 Who provides food for the raven, when its young ones cry to God and wander about without food?

Instilling Intelligence and Instincts in Living Creatures Job 39

1-30 Do you know the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? Can you observe the calving of deer? 2 Can you number the months that they fulfill? Or do you know the time for their bearing, 3 when they bow down and bring forth; they send out their pangs. 4 Their young ones are strong, they multiply with grain; they go forth and do not return to them again. 5 Who has sent out the wild ass free? Or who has loosed the bands of the wild ass, 6 to whom I have assigned the wilderness for its home, and the salt land for its dwellings? 7 He scorns the turmoil of the city; he does not hear the driver's shouts. 8 He seeks out mountains for his pasture, and he searches after every green thing. 9 Will the wild ox be willing to serve you, or spend the night by your feed-trough? 10 Can you tie the wild ox in the furrow with his rope? Or will he harrow the valleys for you? 11 Will you trust him because his strength is great? Or will you leave your labor to him? 12 Will you trust him, that he will return your seed and gather it to your grain-floor? 13 The wing of the ostrich beats joyously; though not like the stork's wings for flight. 14 For she leaves her eggs to the earth, and lets them warm in the dust, 15 and forgets that a foot may crush them, or that the beast of the field may break them. 16 She treats her young roughly, as if not hers; for her labor is vanity without fear; 17 because God has caused her to forget wisdom, and He has not given her a share in understanding. 18 At the time she lifts herself up on high, she scorns the horse and its rider. 19 Have you given the horse strength? Have you clothed his neck with a mane? 20 Can you make him leap like a locust? The glory of his snorting is terrifying. 21 He paws in the valley, and rejoices in his strength; he goes on to meet the weapons. 22 He mocks at fear, and is not terrified; and he does not turn back from the sword. 23 The quiver rattles against him, the glittering spear and the shield. 24 He swallows the ground with quivering and rage; and he does not stand still at the sound of the trumpet. 25 When the trumpet sounds, he says, Aha! And he smells the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting. 26 Does the hawk soar by your understanding? Will he spread his wings toward the south? 27 Does the eagle mount up at your command and make his nest on high? 28 He lives and stays on the rock, on the crag of the rock and the strong place. 29 From there he seeks food, and his eyes see afar off. 30 And his young brood also sucks up blood; and where the dead are, there he is.

Just like that, Job got the message. Can't you just see him shrinking in his seat?

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Job 40:1-5 “Yahweh answered Job and said, **2** Shall he who argues contend with the Almighty? He who reproves God, let him answer my questions. **3** And Job answered Yahweh and said, **4** Behold, **I am vile!** What shall I answer You? I will keep my mouth shut from now on. **5** Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yes, twice, but I will go no further.”

Job realizes that he’s nothing compared to God. He realizes that God is correct when He says of Himself and His wondrous works: “you can’t touch this”. Ah, but God is not through giving Job a tongue lashing. The LORD directs Job’s attention to matters of justice.

Job 40:6 “Yahweh answered Job out of the tempest, and said, **7** Now gird up your loins like a man. I will question you, and you teach Me. **8** Will you also set aside My judgment? **WILL YOU CONDEMN ME SO THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED?** **9** And have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His? **10** Adorn yourself now with majesty and grandeur, and with glory and honor clothe yourself. **11** Pour forth the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. **12** Look on everyone who is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. **13** Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in darkness. **14** Then I also will confess to you that your own right hand can save you.” No one human being, and no group of human beings can eradicate evil from this earth, after all, human beings are the ones that introduced and reproduced all the evil on this earth. Only El Shaddai, God Almighty, can eradicate evil from this earth. That’s what the 2nd Coming of Christ is all about.

Elohim returns to His matchless creation to continue breaking down Job.

Huge Animals – the Largest of the Large

Job 40:15-24 Now behold behemoth, which I made along with you; he eats grass like an ox; **16** see, now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the muscles of his belly. **17** He hangs his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are knit together. **18** His bones are like tubes of bronze; his bones are like bars of iron. **19** He is the first of the ways of God; his Maker brings near his sword. **20** For the mountains yield food for him, and all the beasts of the field play there. **21** He lies under the lotus, in the hiding place of the reed and the marsh. **22** The lotus trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook surround him. **23** Behold, though a flood presses, he does not run away; he feels safe even if Jordan swells up to his mouth. **24** Shall any take him before his eyes, or pierce through his nose with cords?

Job 41:1-5, 8-20, 30-34 Can you draw out the leviathan with a hook? **2** Can you put a rope into his nose, or pierce his jaw with a thorn? **3** Will he multiply pleas for you to help him? Will he speak soft words to you? **4** Will you take him for a servant for ever? **5** Will you play with him as with a bird? Or will you bind him for your maidens? **8** Lay your hand on him, think of the battle; you will never do it again. **9** Will not one be cast down at the sight of him? **10** None is so fierce as to dare to stir him up; who then is able to stand before Me? **12** I will not keep silent concerning his limbs, or his mighty strength, or the grace of his frame. **13** Who can take off the surface of his skin; who can come to him with his double bridle? **14** Who can open the doors to his face? Terror is round about his teeth. **15** The rows of shields are his pride, shut up with a close seal; **16** one is so near to another that no air can come between them; **17** and that they can not be separated. **18** His sneezing flashes forth light, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn. **19** Out of his mouth sparks of fire leap out. **20** Out of his nostrils goes smoke. **24** His heart is cast hard as a stone. **25** The mighty are afraid from his rising. **27** He counts iron as straw and bronze as rotten wood. **28** An arrow cannot make him flee; stones are turned by him into stubble. **29** Darts are counted as straw; he laughs at the shaking of a javelin. **33** On earth there is nothing like him, one made without fear. **34** He beholds all high things; he is a king over all the sons of pride.

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

Well, our trial is just about over. Job demanded his day in court with God. He walked into the courtroom brimming with confidence that when he “*set his cause in order, he just knew that he would be justified*” (Job 13:18). It was a drastically different story once Elihu and God got through with him.

*Job 42:1-6 “Job answered Yahweh and said, 2 Now I know that You can do all, and not any purpose is withheld from You. 3 “Who is he who hides counsel without knowledge?” [You asked]. Foolishly, I have spoken what I did not understand; things too wonderful for me; truly, I did not know. 4 “Hear me Job, if you dare, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You will cause me to know” [You said].. 5 I acknowledge that previously I have only heard of You by the hearing of the ears; but now my eyes have seen You. 6 **Therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.**”*

That’s it; case closed. Job had to eat his words. God is innocent of all charges! But there’s still some unfinished business; somebody else needs to eat their words. God is finished with Job alright, but He’s not finished with Job’s 3 friends. They’ve got a butt whipping coming also.

Job 42:7-9 “After Yahweh had spoken these words to Job, Yahweh said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against you and your two friends. For you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. 8 Take to yourselves seven young bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering. My servant Job will pray for you. Surely I will lift up his face so as not to do with you according to your foolishness, in that you have not spoken of Me what is right, like My servant Job. 9 So Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar went and did as Yahweh commanded them.”

Don’t do it ... don’t do it ... don’t let yourself say, “If I were Job I wouldn’t pray for them suckers; no way, not the way they treated me!” If Job wouldn’t have been thoroughly humbled by God then I’m sure he wouldn’t have prayed for his friends-turned-enemies. But to whom much is forgiven, much is required. We would do well to practice what our Savior taught us in “The Lord’s Prayer”. *Mat 6:9-12 “Pray in this way: Our Heavenly Father, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. 12 Forgive us of our debts as we also forgive our debtors.”* Immediately following the prayer, Jesus affirmed, *Mat 6:14 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; 15 but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*

Since Job had grown in God’s grace and knowledge, what do you think Job did?

Job 42:9 “... Yahweh also accepted the face of Job. 10 And Yahweh turned away the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends.”

Isn’t it wonderful how abundant the mercies of God are? Job and his 3 friends were forgiven by God, plus God put it in the heart of Job to forgive his 3 friends. Isn’t it also wonderful how abundant the grace of God is? For subsequent to everyone’s spiritual restoration, God also granted Job physical restoration.

Job 42:11-17 “Also Yahweh added to Job double all that he previously had. 11 All of his brothers and sisters and friends came to eat bread with him in his house, and consoled him and comforted him over all the evil that Yahweh had brought upon him. Each one also gave him a piece of money and a ring of gold. 12 So Yahweh blessed the latter days of Job more than the beginning, for he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 she asses. 13 He also had 7 sons and 3 daughters. 16 After this Job lived 140 years, and he saw his sons, and his sons’ sons, up to four generations. 17 Job died, being old and full of days.”

IS GOD GUILTY AS CHARGED?

In conclusion, let's talk about the most important lessons learned from the life of Job.

First and foremost, we must GLORIFY GOD AT ALL TIMES NO MATTER WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

Second, we must understand the meaning of the phrase "God is Good All of the Time". The "Health & Wealth" false prophets of modern day American Christianity misinterpret that as "God will always ensure that good things happen to me". The correct interpretation is that "God will sometimes ensure that good things happen to me, and God will sometimes allow bad things to happen to me, but God will ALWAYS MAKE THINGS TURN OUT FOR MY GOOD --- even if I realize this after my death and resurrection to life". In other words, God will allow bad things to happen to good people, but will never give us more than we can bear. God will always make the bad things work for my good. Memorize [Rom 8:28](#), which says, "*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.*"

Third, we must understand that when bad things happen to us it doesn't necessarily mean that God is mad at us.

Fourth, don't judge someone as a bad person just because bad things are happening to them. Likewise, don't judge someone as a good person just because good things are happening to them.

Fifth, we must learn not to judge by *appearance*, but to judge righteous judgment. By *appearance* it looked like Job brought suffering upon himself because of sins he had committed. That was far from the truth --- even as Yahweh testified before Satan. The right judgment is that God knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that Job wouldn't curse Him to His face and die, but would instead say, "Blessed be the Name of the LORD our God." God allowed Job's suffering to be prolonged because God longed for Job to comprehend with all of his head and heart what he had only said with his lips: "Blessed be the Name of the LORD our God."

On this point, of judging righteous judgment, let us read from "The Love Chapter".

[1 Cor 13:1-13](#) *"If I speak with the languages of men and of angels, but don't have love, I have become like a sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, know all mysteries, and have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but don't have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, but don't have love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love is patient and kind. Love doesn't envy, doesn't brag, 5 doesn't behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil; 6 doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, various languages, or great knowledge, they will be done away with. 9 Now we know in part, and we prophesy in part; 10 but when that which is complete has come, then that which is partial will be done away with. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, felt as a child and thought as a child. Now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things. 12 Now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, even as I am also fully known. 13 The three things that remain are faith, hope, and love. The greatest of these is love."*

Sixth, like Elihu, we should be slow to speak and quick to hear (Jam 1:19). When we do speak, it should be according to God's word, and in the spirit of Godliness.

Seventh, God may be teaching several lessons to several different audiences at the same time, so let God do His thing. [Jam 1:2-4](#) *"Count it all joy, my brethren, when you fall into manifold temptations; 3 Knowing that the testing of your faith works patience. 4 And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."*

What is your judgment in this case? Is God guilty as charged? No! But God is guilty ... God is guilty of being Good All of the Time! Blessed be the Characteristics of Yahweh our Elohim!!!