

Job 1

Job 1:1–22

Outline of Chapter 1:

- Vv. 1–5 **Job, a spiritual man who has been blessed by God**
- Vv. 6–12 **A courtroom scene in heaven; Satan speaks before God**
- Vv. 13–19 **Satan removes Job's possessions and his children**
- Vv. 20–22 **Job blesses God despite the tragic circumstances of his life**

Introduction: Job chapters 1 and 2 are the prelude to the book of Job. Most of Job is a conversation between Job and three of his acquaintances. However, quite interesting and often overlooked theologically, is the throne room scene where Satan speaks to God. One of the most valuable points taught in the book of Job is that access to the third heaven by Satan and this interaction between God and Satan. Thieme has taught for a long time that Satan means *attorney* and that the reason Satan is not in the Lake of Fire is that the charges which were brought against him are on appeal. What is occurring on earth is a result of that trial. This may all seem fanciful to you at first, but the scene portrayed in Job 1 indicates that this is likely the case.

One of the interesting things about the style of Job is that it begins in prose, but when Job begins to speak with his old acquaintances, it changes to poetry. One of the things which I noticed almost immediately from this first chapter is that difference in the vocabulary of this book as opposed to the vocabulary found in, say, Deuteronomy. Moses occasionally uses words found nowhere else in the Bible, and often uses words found in one or two other places in the Bible. The author of Job has a more limited vocabulary, using the same verbs and nouns several times throughout even just the first chapter. Furthermore, we will find that there are words used more times in the book of Job than will be used in the remainder of the Old Testament.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

Job, a Spiritual Man Who Has Been Blessed by God

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

A man was in a land of Uz; Job, his name; Job 1:1a **There was a man in the land of Uz named Job,**

Most of the historical books are a continuation of what has come before. That is, Joshua continues where Deuteronomy left off, which hands off to Judges, which moves into Ruth, which segues into Samuel and then into Kings. Each of these books, to indicate that this is a continuation of what has gone before, begins with a *wâw* consecutive or a *wâw* conjunction. The significant exceptions to this are the books of Genesis, which begins the Bible; Chronicles, which begins with *Adam*; and the book of Job, which is a book that stands on its own. As has been covered, we do not even have a clue as to how this ancient book became a part of God's Word and when it was entered into the canon. It was written and somehow, during some time, adopted and recognized by the Hebrew people, who had the responsibility of preserving the canon of Scripture.

Uz, like most names, is a transliteration—that is, the Hebrew letters are changed into English letters and an English pronunciation is given to it. The word is *ʿûts* (עֹטִז) [pronounced *ootz*].¹ We find the name of Job's country used only by Jeremiah in Jer. 25:20 and in Lam. 4:21. I do not believe that these are vague references, but a place that Jeremiah was actually aware of. However, I am not certain of this because (1) no one else in the Bible mentions the land of Uz; and, (2) there could certainly be two areas with that same name.

¹ There is a z in Hebrew, but that is not used here

We can make reasonable conjectures as to the location of Uz. Zodhiates places it between the city of Damascus and the Euphrates River. McGee also places Uz near Damascus (which McGee notes is the oldest, continually inhabited city of the world). This would place Uz somewhere in the Syrian desert (which was likely not a desert at that time). Uz would be near the areas occupied by the Sabeans and the Chaldeans, the two marauding bands spoken of in Job 1:15–17. Today, this would place Uz the border between the countries of Iraq and Saudi Arabia.² The Lam. 4:21 reference associates Uz with Edom, which is southeast of the Land of Promise, which is not where Zodhiates places it. However, the Lamentations reference probably means that there was a colony of Edomites residing in that area. ZPEB equates Uz with Wadi Sirhan, east and southeast of the Dead Sea and on the outskirts of Edom, Moab and Ammon.³ The NIV Study Bible designates Uz as the very large territory east of the Jordan, which includes Edom and the Aramæan lands in the north.⁴ Its exact location is immaterial with respect to the content of this book. The most complete examination of just exactly where Uz is found is in the **90 page** introduction to the book of Job in Barnes's Notes. Barnes places Uz in the east, outside of Edom, but in an area at one time conquered by Edom, hence accounting for a settlement Edomites in that area. Barnes and Zodhiates seem to be in closest agreement here.⁵

There have been several people with the name Uz; their names are found in Gen. 10:23 22:21 36:28 I Chron. 1:17, 42. It would be reasonable that one of their names also designated the land in which he settled. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Shem is the line of our Lord and therefore, the line of the Hebrews. His first son is Amram and Amram's first son was Uz (Gen. 10:23 I Chron. 1:17). The line of Shem is followed throughout Scripture and there are several great men in that line. One of God's commands was to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth. In order to fill the earth, the descendants of Noah had to spread out. Since they instead gathered to a large city (which, we have seen the results in our own time of the strong negative affects of large numbers of people congregated too closely together), God scattered these men throughout the earth by confounding their languages (Gen. 11). Since the family line ends in Gen. 10 with Uz and since man was scattered by the confounding of the languages, it would make perfect sense for one of the earliest geographical areas to be named Uz.

The next Uz in the Bible is Abraham's cousin Nahor's cutesy Uz and Buz names given to his first two kids (Gen. 22:21). Esau also had a descendant named Uz (Gen. 36:28 I Chron. 1:42). However, it is unlikely that either of these sons was prominent enough to begin their own territory. For this reason, it is my hypothesis the Job predates Abraham by several generations. Uz has become large enough to be called *the land of Uz*.

Job's name, in the Hebrew, is 'îyyôb (יְיֹבָב) [pronounced ee-YOBE] and it is very closely related to the verb *to be hostile towards* or to the feminine noun which means *enmity*. Gesenius says that it means *persecuted*. It is not unusual to give names in the Hebrew which are descriptive rather than meaningless. Although Barnes uses the term *anticipatory* several times, I don't think that is the case. I believe that this name was given by the author of the book or that Job became known by that name at the conclusion of the events described in the book of Job. Strong's #347 BDB #33.

Some have said that the book of Job is a long parable. If you will think back to the parables of our Lord, they generally began with *and a certain man*. The people in parables are not given names. Furthermore we do not have parables of this length. And, there are just too many details which are given, such as his country.

And the man the that was honorable and upright; and one fearing God and turning away from evil.

Job 1:1b

And that man had personal integrity and he demonstrated moral and spiritual stability; he was a man who had reverential respect and fear of God and he abstained from evil.

² *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; p 1309.

³ *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. V, p. 853.

⁴ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 726.

⁵ *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books; p. viii–xii.

The first adjective which describes Job is the word *tâm* (תָּם) [pronounced *tawm*], and it refers to one who has *personal integrity, honor or is complete*. This means Job was both saved and that he was a mature believer. This particular word occurs only once prior to Job 1:1, and that is in Gen. 25:27 in reference to Jacob. This says a lot about Jacob in his early life. We find this particular adjective used several times in the book of Job (1:1, 8 2:3 8:20 9:20–22) and then scattered throughout Scripture (Gen. 25:27 Psalm 37:37 64:4 SOS 5:2 6:9).^{*} Unfortunately, this word and related words are often rendered *perfect* in the KJV. That has led to no end confusion for some believers (like the translation *tongues*). There is no perfection in this life. We all possess an old sin nature. We may go from sinning every three minutes to sinning once a day or so, but there is no perfection in this life. Strong's #8535 BDB #1070. A similar word (but not the same word) is used to describe Noah in Gen. 6:9 and is commanded of Abram in Gen. 17:1 (Strong's #8549 BDB #1071).

The second word to describe Job is the adjective *yâshâr* (יָשָׁר) [pronounced *yaw-SHAWR*] and it means *right, correct, upright, straight, uniform, even, having no internal contradictions*. This word is used to describe the character of God in Deut. 32:4. When describing man, it refers to *moral stability and stable, correct behavior and thinking*. Strong's #3477 BDB #449.

These two words describe various aspects of Job's spiritual life. There are a lot of people who are saved that you would never know it. They are an embarrassment to Jesus Christ (I look back at a great deal of my life and feel the same way). Job was dependable, moral, stable, correct in his behavior. Finally, he is described by the Qal active participle of *yârê`* (יָרַע) [pronounced *yaw-RAY*], which means *to fear, fear-respect, reverence, to have a reverential respect*. The use of this word to describe someone in the Old Testament is similar to our calling someone a Christian today. Strong's #3372 BDB #431. In this description of Job, it cannot be overemphasized that, although Job was a mature and consistent believer, one on whom you could depend, this in no way implies that he was sinless. He clearly admits to transgressing against God: [“Why then do You not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?”](#) (Job 7:21a).

Whom Job had reverence for was God—in the Hebrew, the word is *ʿĕlôhîym*⁶ (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-o-HEEM*], which is translated *gods* or *God*. This word can refer to the Godhead or to foreign gods, and here it obviously refers to the Godhead. Strong's #430 BDB #43. It is unusual to find this particular word in the book of Job and it is remarkable as to where we find it. Job 1–2 is the prologue to the book of Job, and *Elohim* is found in these chapters 11 times. You certainly should be thinking, *Okay, so what's the big deal?* The big deal is that once Job and his friends begin talking, the name *Elohim* will not be found except in Job 5:8 (Eliphaz), 20:29 (Zophar), and 28:23 (Job). It is found in three other places, the quotes belonging first to Elihu (God's representative) and to God (Job 32:2 34:9 38:7). For most of the book, we find the name *ʿĕlôhah* (אֱלֹהָהּ) [pronounced *el-OH-hah*], a masculine singular name for God found primarily in Job (e.g., Job 3:4, 23 4:9, 17 5:17 6:4, 8, 9) and found scattered throughout the Bible in fewer than a dozen other places. Strong's #433 BDB #43. This second title for God is found over 40 times in the book of Job, primarily used in the conversations between Job and his three *friends*. This is what is known as progressive revelation. Job and his friends were not completely clear on God's plan nor were they even aware of the Trinity. God has not revealed everything to every generation. He has revealed whatever it is that we need at any given time. There will be at least once where at least two members of the Trinity are mentioned (Job 19:25–26 in the Hebrew)—however, it appears to more attributable to God the Holy Spirit rather than to Job directly and his knowledge of the Trinity.

The last verb in this verse is the Qal active participle of *çûwr* (סוּר) [pronounced *soor*] generally means *to turn aside*, however, in the Hiphil, it means *to cause to depart, to remove, to take away*. When followed by the preposition *mîn*, it means *to turn away from, to shun*. Strong's #5493 BDB #693. Paul admonished the Thessalonians: [Abstain from every evil](#) (I Thess. 5:22).

The word for evil, which we have seen many times in the past, is *ra`* (רָע) [pronounced *rahú*] and it means *evil, bad*. This is the masculine adjective, which is considerable stronger than the feminine adjective. Strong's #7451 BDB #948. Satan's plan—one of many—is to fill our lives with temptation and evil and evil thinking. There is a whole way of thinking in Satan's world which he desires for us to have. The concept here is not necessarily moral

⁶ Since this is so commonly referred to in reference books, we will use the designation *Elohim* as well.

depravity, but he sponsors moral relativity as well. We find it advertised in every way imaginable today—on television, in the movies, on the radio, through advertising, in school textbooks, in most churches. Whatever stands in opposition to God's Word is Satan's way of thinking, which is inherent evil. One of the most common attacks today is the concept of sex outside of marriage. Only a tiny fraction of movies and television programs present a man and a woman as not engaging in sex until after marriage. A smaller fraction of those present both parties as virgins prior to marriage. Satan intends to infiltrate our entire thinking process and he can only do this with a constant barrage of evil. Job avoided all evil in his life.

These four things describe the mature believer: a person with personal integrity; a person who is stable in their moral and spiritual life; a man who has a reverential trust in God; and a man who avoids evil in his life. The only thing which bothers me—and this is slight—it seems as if this description of Job, although apt, was just thrown together. I guess what I want to see is some sort of logical or chronological order in this description of Job, but I do not see one.

**Then seven sons were born to him
and three daughters.**

Job 1:2

**And so Job fathered seven sons and three
daughters.**

In this verse we have the *wâw* consecutive and the Niphal imperfect of *yâlad* (יָלַד) [pronounced *yaw-LAHD*] and it means *to bear, to bring forth, to beget*. This is the word translated *beget, begot*. The Niphal is the passive stem; Job did not bear these children, he sired them—he fathered them. The imperfect tense means that this did not occur all at once but over a period of several years. Strong's #3205 BDB #408. The *wâw* consecutive means that this happened next. After becoming a believer in Jesus Christ and after having become mature and having morally integrity, then he began a family. Most of you began your family as an accident or out of lust or without a single thought to the future from a position of moral bankruptcy. However, since you and they are still alive, God still has a plan for your life which includes them. Now you may have driven them away with your reprehensible behavior; however, if allowed any contact with them, you must begin there to be the father and as much of the husband and provider which is lawfully possible. You may have a previous history of five years of abusive and self-obsessed behavior, but if you are alive and they are alive, you can begin from that point and, through God's grace and the guidance of God's Word, demonstrate moral integrity and unambiguous and unimpeachable moral character.

In the ancient world, as should be true for today's world, the birth of a child is a great gift from God. **Observe: children are a gift of Y^howah; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate** (Psalm 127:3–5).

One of man's primal desires is to be the head of something, to rule over something, to have authority and power. One of the greatest places where we have that opportunity is in the area of family. A man has the opportunity to rule over a woman whom he has chosen and over children whom he has desired to have. A politician who has gotten into some high political office can certainly blame the corrupt nature of the system, of his predecessor, of his opposition. However, with a family, a man gets to begin from scratch. He has children with his genes and the genes of the woman whom he has chosen to spend the rest of his life with. God gives him rulership over that household, which is one of the most important responsibilities that any man can have. We all know about the ripple effect and how simply throwing a stone into the pool of water causes ripples that extend for sometimes hundreds of yards. Each action of our life has this ripple effect. Nowhere is this greater than in the raising of one child. This child of yours can be a blessing to hundreds and thousands of people. He can be a person to whom people look for advice, counsel, guidance, prayer and knowledge. And you can also raise a child who is destructive, who causes pain to tens or hundreds or to thousands of people. He can be a child who, when he is grown, hundreds will wish that he were dead. He can be a person who causes hundreds of people heartache and suffering. The child that God entrusts to you can cause a rippling affect beyond any legislative act, beyond the election of any politician to office, beyond any hundred acts of Congress. Fathers are given complete rulership over this family unit whose ripple effects can last for generations upon generations. Long after you are dead, the way you raised your child will affect the many generations which follow you. I mentioned a wife in all of this. We have all worked for men in authority or mid-management who were incompetent, had no clue as to their purpose in their chosen

vocation and who were an embarrassment to their company. They couldn't demonstrate competent leadership over a litter of kittens, let alone a group of three or more people. They are insensitive, self-involved, self-promoting and their position they see as one which sees to their every need and desire. They see their position of authority as a place to get their own way, to make everyone do their bidding, to run the show. They have no concept that a position of authority involves above all else a dedication and sensitivity to those under your authority. Your job is to look out for them to see after them. Now you may think that your job is to see to the best interests of the company and you are correct—however, looking out for those under your authority and looking out for the best interests of your company are not mutually exclusive concepts. They go hand-in-hand. For those who have no concept of their position of authority, their workers resent them, make fun of them and impatiently await the day that they can transfer to another office, take a vacation or take on another vocation or move to another state. Perhaps this is the way that you run your household and your marriage. Perhaps this is how your wife and children feel about you. Now certainly there are difficult decisions to make and that the one in charge will not always be popular and well-liked. However, when all is said and done, when those under him look back in retrospect, they will have a longing to be under that command again and their overriding feeling will be one of trust and respect. So, this is how your family feels about you? Your wife, who is a responder, should be thinking *it doesn't get any better than this*; she should not have her eye on the door, looking for any lame excuse to bolt. Your children should not have an over-riding desire to leave home by age 16 or younger. God gives a man great power and authority in the realm of a family. Your family members can tell you whether you have properly used your authority or whether you are a worthless tyrant whose only hold over the members of his family is petty tyranny. Is that which binds you to your family simply convenience? You, if you are honest, can answer this yourself.

Job was a man who was delivered from eternal separation from God; he was a man who was mature and had personal integrity. He was a person on whom others could depend. And because of this, God gave him ten children. This is the meaning of the wâw consecutive *then*.

Again, these details concerning Job's life infer that he is a real historical person. He had a real family with a specific number of children. There is no poetical reason for Job to have seven boys and three girls, other than he will face seven trials or seven tests and he will primarily speak to three friends (although there are actually four in the book of Job). That was simply the actual number of children which he had.

Now, surprisingly enough, none of these children's names are given; and more surprisingly, the name of his wife is never given. The Chaldean rendering of this book gives his wife's name as Dinah in Job 2:9; on what authority, we have no clue. And, interestingly enough, the names of the daughters of Job's second family will be given.

Then his [life's] acquisition was 7000 sheep,⁷ 3000 camels and 500 yoke of oxen and 500 female mules and very large staff [of slaves] so that the man the this was greater than all of the sons of antiquity.

Job 1:3

In addition, he acquired 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen and 500 female mules along with a huge slave staff so that this man was greater than all the people of old.

The sentence structure of this verse is that it begins with a wâw consecutive and the Qal imperfect of the verb *to be*. The imperfect indicates that this was an on-going process. What there was, was the masculine singular of qin^eyân (יָׁן יָׁן) [pronounced *kin^e-YAWN*], which is translated *getting, substance, possession, purchase, riches, goods* in the KJV (this word only occurs 10 times, by the way). BDB gives its meaning as *a thing got or acquired, acquisition, possession*. This is one of the many examples where we seem something as plural, but the Hebrews expressed it as a singular (similarly, there are words like *face*, which we express in the singular and the Hebrews saw as plural). Strong's #7075 BDB #889.

One of the poetic devices used in this verse, which is lost in the translation is the trade off between singular and plural. It is possible that these were the common ways to refer to these animals. It reads:

⁷ This is, literally, *seven of a thousand of sheep*.

seven of thousand of sheep (singular)
 and three of thousand of camels (plural)
 and five of hundred of yoke of oxen (singular)
 and five of hundred of she-asses (plural)
 and a slave staff (singular)—very large.

Because Job was as wealthy as is described here, this indicates that he was several generations removed from Uz in order to acquire all of this wealth. In our own modern economy, he would be said to have acquired a diversified and wealthy portfolio of stocks and bonds, well-performing mutual funds, perhaps owned some real estate and precious metals. However, in that economy, wealth was measured by the size of your family and the number of livestock which you possessed; and, on occasion, the land that you occupied (although that apparently was much rarer in the ancient world). In Job's time and area, the land was less important because most people with livestock moved from place to place for new grazing area.

Job was called, in your Bible, the wealthiest man of the sons of the east. The last word is *qedem* (קֶדֶם) [pronounced *KEH-dem*] and it means *eastward, east, ancient, antiquity, front, aforeside*. The connection between these words is that the beginning of things is thought to be in the east, as that is where the sun rises and that is where civilization began (although east is obviously a relative term). That which is the beginning is also *old, antiquitous* and *ancient*. We are not speaking of a particular geographical area, but we are speaking of a particular time. Of the sons of antiquity, Job was the wealthiest man. Strong's #6924 BDB #869. This helps to place him in time. Jacob, in order to placate the anger of Esau, which he expected, preceded his return to Esau with hundreds of animals as gifts to Esau. We would expect that Jacob offered Esau a considerable portion of his personal wealth. I do not know what was polite, whether it was 10% or 51%, or just exactly the numbers here, but Jacob is never really spoken of as being an incredibly wealthy man, although God did prosper him greatly. For this reason, I would say that Job pre-dates the patriarchs by a significant amount of time. For this reason, I place him as being somewhere between a fifth to tenth generation person from the flood. This also fits in quite well with the notion of *the land of Uz* which was discussed in v. 1.

As was mentioned, Job's wealth was not measured in land, as he was a part of a nomadic culture, probably the head of a nomadic tribe. Their wealth was not attributed to structures or to land, but to their livestock. In fact, they lived in tents, primarily, although we do not know if this was the case with Job and his family. It is said that Job's 7000 sheep corresponded to his seven sons and that his 3000 camels corresponded to his three daughters. Barnes gives the example of a Persian king from 1676 AD who suffered the loss of 3000 camels to marauding tartars, as he only had 7000. Job, who lived several millenniums prior to this Persian king, was equally wealthy, indicating almost untold wealth for his own day.⁸

Camels were primarily beasts of burden in the desert, used in war, in caravans and for food. One camel can carry between 300–500 pounds, depending upon the distance it must be carried. It can survive upon *the driest of thistles and barest of thorn*. It is claimed that he can store water for up to 30 days at a stretch. God has given the camel large reservoirs or stomach where the water is kept pure from which he can draw for his necessary moisture. Furthermore, there is no other animal like the camel in this regard.⁹

The oxen which Job had indicates that he was also a tiller of the soil, as that is their primary function. There is some disagreement here as to whether this refers to oxen or to cows, as cows were also used in the ancient world for tilling the soil (the word used here means *to divide, to cleave* as in the dividing of the soil in tilling). She-asses were preferred over horses for travel as their food requirements are minimal by comparison. It is from these that milk could be obtained.

Then we have the feminine noun *ʿăḇvûddâh* (עֲבֻדָּה) [pronounced *ăvûddâh*], which means *household, household servants*. By application, this could be rendered *slave population, staff or servant and slave staff*. Strong's #5657 BDB #715. This is modified by the adjective *rah* (רַב) [pronounced *rah*] means *many, much*,

⁸ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books; p. 95.

⁹ This material came from Barnes' Notes Job, Volume 1; Baker Books; p. 93–94.

great (in the sense of large, not acclaimed). Strong's #7227 BDB #912. This adjective is further modified by the adverb *m^eôd* (מֵֹד) [pronounced *m^e-ODE*] means *muchness, abundance, exceedingly, greatly, very*. Strong's #3966 BDB #547. Altogether, this means Job had a very large staff [or slaves]. With such a huge amount of livestock and no mention of grandsons, it is necessary for Job to have a large staff of cowhands, who were probably both slaves and hirelings. If memory serves, there was a great ancient custom where people who were far in debt sold themselves into slavery in order to repay this debt. The time was specified and their master satisfied the debt.

And his sons went and they made a house-feast of a man [on] his day and they would send and proclaim to three of their sisters to eat and to drink with them.

Job 1:4

And his sons went and prepared a feast in the house of each one on his day and they would send invites to their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

These men held great parties—not drunken festivals, but huge garden parties for all of their family. Because Job was wealthy, his sons were also wealthy and, rather than each family preparing a meal and eating it separately, there was a great deal of family rapport and they went from house to house to eat together. The word for make is the very common *âsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*], which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. In this context, I think that we could get away with *prepared*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. The Qal perfect indicates a completed action, so the writer of the book of Job is looking backward into time and telling of what was customary for their family. Obviously, the preparation of the feast and the surrounding activity took time and each time they went to another person's home, this would be a process. However, the perfect tense takes all of these occasions and wraps them up into one completed action, as though the writer of this book is looking back at a wonderful time.

After the word feast, we have the construct of *bayîth* (בַּיִת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*], which means *house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*. Although it can refer to a temporary nomad hut (Gen. 27:15 33:17), it usually does not. Usually we find domiciles with door posts, gates, etc (see, for instance, Ex. 12:7 Deut. 6:9 11:20). Strong's #1004 BDB #108. It is possible that the word for *feast* and *house* should be combined to mean *house-feast*.

This is followed by the construct of *îysh* (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*] and it means *man*. The second word in this sentence is *îysh* (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*] and it means *man*. Now, even though BDB doesn't seem to mention this, *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* allows for: **the house of each in his day** and *The Emphasized Bible* reads: **at the house of each one upon his day**. Strong's #376 BDB #35

At first, I did not yet have a sense as to how often this occurred; whether they got together every day at one brother's house, or whether they met once a week at a different brother's house. Barnes, in fact, suggests as few times as once a year at each house on the birthday of the son holding the feast. Keil and Delitzsch suggest that this took place every single week. In any case, what is clear is that there was a rapport and a love in this family, which can only come from the training of the parents. It would seem reasonable to expect that, considering that the ancient world functioned on a seven-day week that each brother had a particular day of the week when he held this dinner. Although the seven day feast plan for each week appeals to me, the next line indicates that this was more formal. There are two separate verbs held together by the *wâw* conjunction; literally, it reads: **and they would send and they would proclaim to three of their sisters**. It would appear that if each brother had a day of the week, then sending out a formal invitation to the three sisters would appear to be over-doing it. In the next verse, these feast days will have a significance beyond merely getting together and having dinner. That would further indicate that this was not done each and every day. However, what is revealed to us, as some dispensationalists have taught, is that the spiritual life and spiritual things were dealt with within each extended family. With all of their servants, a group of the servants could have traveled from house to house to help in the preparation.

Barnes points out another reason why the sisters are invited. If these were drunken revelries, then their sisters would have been the last people they would have invited. However, these feasts were celebrations. If your only concept of a celebration is once where all the participants overindulge in drugs or alcohol, then you have no

capacity for life and neither do your friends. In fact, if you see all celebrations as an excuse to overindulge, then you have an abuse problem.

And then it would come to pass days of the feast had completed [their circuit], then Job would send and he would consecrate them.

Job 1:5a

Then it would come to pass at the end of the days of the feast, that Job would commission his servants to set aside his children [and these days?] to God.

V. 5 is a long verse and needs to be handled in reasonable mouthfuls. After the Qal imperfect of the Hebrew verb *to be*, we have the Hiphil (causative) perfect of *nâqaph* (נָקַף) [pronounced *naw-KAHF*]. BDB gives the meaning *strike off* for a few verses (Job 19:26 Isa. 10:34 29:1) and *go around, compass about, complete a circuit, encompass* for the other occurrences. Strong's #5362 BDB #668. This verb makes the case for a seven-day feast seem likely. As we will see in Leviticus and Numbers, some of the feasts were on an eight day schedule. They would go from one Sabbath to the next. What Job did would have occurred on the eighth day. It is not clear as to what occurred here—that is, whether his children gathered with him on the eighth day and participated in the sacrifices or whether Job did this on his own apart from but on behalf of his children. In any case, this appears to have taken place apart from the feasting, so that would not put one set of feasts back to back with another. My educated guess is that they got together once a month for this round of feasts, and on the eighth day, Job offered sacrifices on their behalf.

The next verb is *qâdash* (קָדַשׁ) [pronounced *kaw-DAHSH*] and it means *consecrate, sanctify, dedicate, hallow*. Although any of these words are good translations, particularly *consecrate*, however, unless you have been going to church for a long time or speak old English fluently, they don't mean much to you. This verb means that something is set apart to God; this something takes on the quality of being sacred, holy, different from that which is tied to the earth. Strong's 6942 BDB #872. These are rebound offerings or fellowship offerings. Given Job's spiritual status—a man chosen by God to be set as an example before Satan—it is likely that his family has all believed in Jesus Christ and the purpose of these sacrifices is to recall the sacrifice necessary to their salvation. The end of this verse lends further credence to this when Job says, "Perhaps my sons have sinned."

What is being set aside to God (sanctified) at first appears to be the seven days of feasting. *Days* is a masculine plural to match the masculine plural suffix of the previous verb. Normally, one would go with the closest noun which matches both gender and number. However, v. 4 ends with a masculine plural suffix, which refers to his children; and v. 5 will end speaking of the possible sins of his sons. So, primarily, Job is setting apart his sons unto God, and secondarily is setting apart the days of the feasting. It appears as though they would run a set of seven days in a feast, possibly in commemoration of the six days of restoration and the one day of rest. As I mentioned, we are looking at the times prior to Abraham, roughly five or six generations since the flood, and spiritual matters appear to be handled within each family. So far, even though the feast days are not incontrovertibly connected to spiritual activities, this verse at least implies that these days involved more than simple feasting. What we do not have at this time is much in the way of the Word of God. Whether the first few chapters of Genesis were available as a unit to some believers is unknown. Furthermore, the information concerning sacrifices and days sanctified unto God is minimal at this time. In the spiritual realm, there was the setting aside of the seventh day as a memorial to God's creation and restoration and then to His rest (indicating that He was finished, not tired), which is, for all intents and purposes, almost universal in this world, although few people realize why. When it comes to sacrifices, we only know through Cain and Abel that the sacrifices had to be blood sacrifices and we know that Noah offered burnt offerings to God at the end of the flood period.

We have the verb *to send* in this verse just as we had it in the previous verse. My impression here is that Job did not go out by himself and offer these sacrifices, but that he involved his servants. That is, he would *send* out to bring the sacrifices in. We studied this verb back in Deut. 32:24. The verb is *shâlach* (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAHKH*] and it is often found in association with hands in the Qal stem (Gen. 3:22 8:9 Ex. 3:20 4:4). BDB also gives the meanings *to send forth, to send, to send to inquire, to commission, to send out on a mission* and even *to let go, to set free*. It is possible, and I am only theorizing here, that the subject of the verb is not directly involved in the action but that the use of this verb indicates that the subject commissions someone else to do what they

require to be done. Now this is certainly not the case when it comes to *stretching out the hand* but is very likely the case when formal invitations were delivered to the sisters. Strong's #7971 BDB #1018. To whom Job sent is not entirely clear. However, since it is mentioned that his sons sent to their sisters for these house-feasts, that Job here has sent for the entirety of the family for these sacrifices. There is the additional possibility that Job has sent his servants to prepare for the sacrifices at the completion of the feast days.

And he was caused to rise early in the morning and he caused burnt offerings to ascend a numbering of all them,

Job 1:5b

And he was caused to rise early in the morning and he caused burnt offerings to ascend a specific number of them,

The causal force in getting Job to rise up early in the morning was the doctrine in his soul. The second verb is the Hiphil perfect of *ʿâlâh* (אָלַח) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*] and it means *to go up, to ascend, to rise*. The Hiphil is the causative stem; Job caused the burnt offerings to rise up to God. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. Although our verbs here are very similar (Job *rises* up in the morning and he causes the burnt offerings *to rise*; the Hebrew has two completely separate verbs.

What Job caused to rise up to God was the feminine plural of *ʿâlâh* (אָלַח) [pronounced *go-LAW*]—a word which is related to the word for *climb, ascend* and it can be consistently rendered *burnt offering*. It is what ascends to God; physically, it is the smoke, but spiritually, it is man reaching to God through the means which God has provided. Strong #5930 BDB #750.

This does not give us prescription for offerings in the time of Job; it just tells us that these were burnt offerings and that Job offered them on a regular basis. His offerings were timed in accordance with the circuit of the house-feasts of his children. This implies that there was some spiritual connection to these house-feasts, but this is never stated outright. My reading here, and this is only an educated guess, is that these house-feasts, or gathering of the families, originally was tied to religious activity; but, here we are, only a few generations removed from the flood, and these gatherings became more about a family gathering than about Jesus Christ, their Savior and Creator. Again, there is nothing to indicate that these feasts had slipped into indulgences of the flesh but rather into a marvelous family gathering. Those of us with wonderful families have found that certain holidays have become traditional family gatherings and the spiritual import that they once carried has been minimized or eliminated altogether. I take this as what had happened with Job's family for two reasons: (1) the offering of the sacrifices is something which is carried out by Job and the involvement of his children is not noted; and, (2) God will allow Satan to quickly take Job's family. Job is a great man in the spiritual realm and his children are certainly not drunken hedonists; but God did not see fit to allow any of them to survive this incident. Again, this paragraph is educated theorizing and nothing more.

What follows is the masculine singular construct of *miç^ophâr* (מִסְפָּר) [pronounced *mis^e-FAWR*] means *number, counted, numerical total*. Strong's #4557 BDB #708. What follows this is *kôl* (כֹּל) [pronounced *kole*] and this word means *the whole, all of, the entirety of, all, every*. Strong's #3605 BDB #481. Since *kôl* has a masculine plural suffix, this should read: **a number of them all, a numbering of them all or a number of all of them**. To give you an idea as to what other translators have done, we also have: *the number of them all* (KJV, Owen, Rotherham, Young). The idea here is that Job just didn't go and get a bunch of sacrificial animals and start killing them. For the short time I worked in a restaurant, we had this supervisor-manager, who, when too many orders started coming in, just filled the grill with pancakes, as he knew they would be involved in large numbers. He no longer numbered them. This is just the opposite. Job carefully numbered his sacrifices. He had so many sons and relatives and he numbered the sacrifices to correspond with them.

Interestingly enough, the Septuagint adds the phrase *and one bullock for a sin-offering, for their souls*. You have to realize that the Septuagint did not take phrases like that out of the air. Whatever Hebrew Bible they used in their translation had those words in it. We do not know to what extent they exercised Biblical criticism, but they were closer to the autographs in time and possibly had a better chance at recording that which was most accurate.

Burnt offerings are by no means confined to the Law of Moses. Noah offered burnt sacrifices upon his exit of the ark (Gen. 8:20), as did Abraham when he was called upon to offer Isaac (Gen. 22). The sacrifices of Noah are offered as a matter of routine, indicating that this was a long-term, well-accepted ritual which really did not require Noah to write anything concerning its inception. Since we have no use of the extremely organized system of burnt offerings found in the Law of Moses, we can reasonably assume that Job lived prior to the giving of the Law. However, this does not mean that Job did not operate under an organized system of sacrifices—it was just different than that of the Mosaic Law, which is what we should expect.

Because Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and have cursed [see below] God in their hearts.” Therefore, Job continually made [this] all of the days.

Job 1:5c

Because Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and have cursed God in their hearts while out of fellowship.” Therefore, Job continually offered burnt offerings all of his days.

Many translators have had trouble with this portion of the verse. To give you ideas as to what has gone before:

Albert Barnes¹⁰

...for Job said, It may be that my sons of have sinned, and have cursed God in their hearts.

Dr. Good

Peradventure my sons may have sinned, nor blessed God in their hearts.

The Emphasized Bible

Peradventure my sons have sinned, And have cursed God in their hearts.

Keil and Delitzsch

...for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and dismissed God from their hearts. Thus did Job continually. [or, more informally]: “Perhaps,” says Job, “my children have sinned, and bidden farewell to God in their hearts.”

KJV

It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.

NJB

‘Perhaps,’ Job would say, ‘my sons have sinned and in their heart blasphemed.’

NIV

“Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.”

Owen's Translation

It may be that have sinned my sons and cursed (blessed) God in their hearts.

The Septuagint

Lest peradventure my sons have thought evil in their minds against God.

Young's Lit. Translation

‘Perhaps my sons have sinned, yet blessed God in their heart.’

Obviously we have a problem. As you have well expected, the verb is the Piel perfect of *bârak*^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced *baw-RAHK*^e] which means *to bless, to make happy, to prosper*. This is exactly the same word that we find in Job 1:10, where God is said to *bless* the production of Job's hands. This word will show up several times in the book of Job (Job 1:11 2:5, 9) and receive the rendering *curse* from most translators and *bless* from one or two others. Even the Septuagint had troubles here, rendering this verse not as a translation but as an interpretation. In Job 1:11 and 2:5, the Septuagint will go with the Greek word for *bless* and give two completely different renderings for this verb in Job 1:5 and 2:9. There are several views on this. Most people believe that there are antithetical meanings for this word; that it can mean both *to bless* and *to curse*. Their best argument, from what I can tell, is quoting I Kings 21:10, 13, where *bless* does not appear to be the correct rendering. Others maintain that this should be rendered *bless* at all times. This will be how we will handle the word, as long as the interpretation of the verse will allow for it.¹¹ An additional meaning of this word comes to mind; perhaps it means that you desire for the person who is being *blessed* to get what he *deserves*, so to speak. This usage would allow for an antithetical meaning, depending upon the tone of voice. We have a similar phrase, *thank you*, which, in most cases, is genuine, or, at worst, perfunctory. However, if the next time you and a friend have a \$60 dinner, you tip the waitress \$1 right to her face, there is a reasonable chance that she will also say *thank you* but she won't really mean *thank you*. This is called an antiphrastic euphemism. *This is the use of a word or phrase that usually has one meaning in common speech, but is used to mean the opposite.*¹² Keil and Delitzsch offer that this word has to do with a benediction or a benedictory salutation pronounced at parting (see Gen. 24:60 32:1 47:10 Joshua 22:6

¹⁰ This translation appears to be made by Albert Barnes and is found at the end of *Barnes' Notes*, Vol. III, pp. 283–339.

¹¹ A more thorough covering of this verb can be found in *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books; pp. 97–99.

¹² *When Critics Ask*; Geisler and Howe, ©1992, Victor Books, p. 224.

II Sam. 13:25 I Kings 8:66); and in this verse, render this word, *bidden farewell*. Such a translation would hold up throughout Job but not necessarily in I Kings 21.. Strong's #1288 BDB #138.

However, the likely explanation is that this word was changed from *curse* to *bless* by a later scribe. The Hebrews had this incredible respect for the name of God to a point of legalism. Therefore, when they read Scripture, at some point in time, they no longer pronounce the name of God, hoping not to profane it, but said Adonai instead. This is why the exact pronunciation of Y^ehowah has been lost. So, one explanation is that a scribe came across this passage where God is being cursed and he apparently did not want to want to copy down *curse God*; so instead, he wrote down *bless God*. The *Massorah* is the small writing in the margins of the Standard Hebrew Codices which was done to safeguard the sacred Hebrew text. An emendation is the act of editing a text in order to remove a flaw. One of the notes in the margins of the Hebrew Codices next to several passages is *this is one of the Eighteen Emendations of the Sopherim*. The actual number of emendations varies, some codices listing 10, 11, 17; while the St. Petersburg Codex lists two passages not found on any other list. These emendations were made long before our Lord walked this earth in His incarnate form even before the text had been handled by the Sopherim, the Massorites or the Nakdanim. Generally speaking, as was mentioned, changes were made in the text out of a mistaken, legalistic sense of reverence toward the name of God; but a note was placed in the margin to indicate that such a change had been made. The whole point of this was that no one would read the text and say the phrase *curse Y^ehowah* or some similar *blasphemous* phrase. Unfortunately, since the advent of printing, the Hebrew text is now printed without the Massoretic notes in the margins so now students who own and read and Hebrew Bible do not have the benefit of these emendations. In I Kings 21:10, 13 Job 1:5, 11 2:5, 9, either the word qâlal (לָלַל) [pronounced *kaw-LAHL*] (which means *to curse*) or the word gâdaph (גָּדַף) [pronounced *gaw-DAHF*] (which means *to blaspheme*) was the original word used in the Hebrew, and it was replaced by the word bârak^e in the main text so that no one would ever read the words *curse Y^ehowah* or *blaspheme Y^ehowah*. And there are notes in the margins of the codices to indicate this. Most translators just flat out ignore the bârak^e and render these words *curse* or *blaspheme*. Commentators who are *ignorant of the real fact of the emendations, have laboured to prove that [bârak^e] means both to bless and to curse, which is not the case.*¹³

This is an example of a translation which has confused believers for a long time. One friend of mine has told me that certain books in the Bible were changed and compiled and done over in such a way so that they would be in careful agreement with the gist of Holy Writ. She had been told by a teacher that this is the way the Pentateuch had been put together. Time and time again there are passages, like this one, which would have made no sense to men who have gone before, yet they continued to copy this as it should have been—with the verb *to bless*. Carefully grasp what I am telling you here: most modern translators will not even footnote the proper rendering of this word. Only a small handful either rendered this verb as it is (Dr. Good, Young and Owen) and a couple of others footnoted the actual meaning. The Septuagint translators were so nonplused that they rendered this verb in three different ways. It is not as though one team rendered it one way in Leviticus and another team rendered it a different way in Ezekiel, which is a common occurrence in group works—the same person or persons who translated Job 1:5 also worked on Job 1:11 2:5 and 2:9; and they still gave this word three wildly divergent renderings. Given this, if some group of priests wanted to clean up the Bible and make everything fit into a nice neat package, they would have begun with this verb and changed the word *bless* into *curse*. However, there was such a reverence for God's Word, that the copyists carefully copied it word-by-word, letter-by-letter from the copies they had received, careful not to make an error and reverent enough not to change anything to suit their own theological position.

We fully understand what is going on. These sons have fallen out of fellowship through sinning, yet continue in religious activity; in fact, they even *think* that they are in fellowship with God and they *think* that everything is copacetic. We know that when you are out of fellowship that it doesn't matter what you think, do or say, you are no longer in fellowship and it has no spiritual significance. Now, if copyists in the past had sought to *fix* the Bible so that it said what they wanted it to say, they would have changed this verse a long time ago. However, they continued to copy it just the way it stood. Job understood being in and out of fellowship and this was recorded to indicate that.

¹³ *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 by Baker Books; pp1019–1021.

In the era that Job lived, the oldest surviving family member was generally the family priest. This priest had dominion over those in his household and those were immediate family members living outside his household. Notice that Job does not offer a sacrifice for himself; he knows that he is in fellowship. However, he does offer a sacrifice on behalf of his children who may have fallen out of fellowship. Although this is the oldest complete book of the Bible, the topics here are up to date. Families do have problems with their children. We do not know everything that our children do; and we would, in many cases, become quite displeased if we did know. Job was concerned about his children and his primary concern was their relationship to God the Father. So he offered sacrifices on their behalf as the chief priest of his family. He doesn't know of a specific sin or a specific son or daughter who has committed some sin; he just is concerned over his family. You may have a child on drugs, a child who has run away, or even just a child who is living in a dorm or an apartment near a college campus and you are concerned over that child. You spend your life raising the child up in the nurture of God, but once they reach a certain age, their relationship to God is one of their own free will. At that point, you go to God in prayer about your child. When they make all the decisions or a majority of the decisions about their own well-being, that is the point at which you go to God about your child and trust God to oversee and protect him or her. Job was not in the face of his adult children telling them what was right and what was wrong; he took his concerns directly to God.

This verse is important for another reason. Job saw to it that his children were sanctified and set apart to God. One of his *friends*, Bildad, will later suggest that Job's children had sinned against God, and that's why they were all dead (Job 8:4).

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

A Courtroom Scene in Heaven; Satan Speaks Before God

Then the day came to pass and so the sons of God came to take a stand against Y^{ehowah}. Then the adversary [Satan] came in their midst.

Job. 1:6

Then the appointed day came when the sons of God came in taking a stand before Y^{ehowah}. Then the adversary—Satan—came in among them.

This is an important verse, so I want you to see how others have translated it.

Albert Barnes	And there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before JEHOVAH, and Satan came also among them.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now there was a day when the sons [the angels] of God came to present themselves before the Lord, so Satan—the adversary and accuser—also came among them.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Now there came a certain day, when the sons of God entered in to present themselves unto Y ^{ehowah} ,—so the accuser also entered in their midst.
KJV	Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.
NAB	One day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, Satan also came among them.
NASB	Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.
NEB	The day came when members of the court of heaven took their places in the presence of the LORD, and Satan was there among them.
NJB	One day when the sons of God came to attend on Yahweh, among them came Satan.
NIV	One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.
NRSV	One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan, also came among them.

REB	The day came when the members of the court of heaven took their places in the presence of the LORD, and the Adversary, Satan, was there among them.
Owen's Translation	Now there was a day when came the sons of God to present themselves (to take one's stand) before (against) Yahweh and came Satan (the adversary) also among them.
Young's Lit. Translation	And the day is, that sons of God come in to station themselves by Jehovah, and there doth come also the Adversary in their midst.

We obviously have quite a change of scene now. We have gone from describing what habitually occurs with Job to a courtroom scene in heaven. At the time that all this took place, neither Job nor any of his associates realized that this session of court was occurring in heaven. There is this great unseen reality taking place every day to which we are not privy. We have implication that this is a common occurrence in heaven—Satan asks God if he can personally deal with certain believers, like Peter in Luke 22:31. But it is this scene in Job which gives us one of the clearest pictures of the throne room of God and the legal petitions of Satan, which makes Job a very valuable book to us. We do have some related passages, however. We do not have another scene like this anywhere else in Scripture, other than in Job 2, and I Kings 23:19: *And Micaiah said, "Therefore, hear the word of Y^ehowah: I saw Y^ehowah sitting on His throne and all the armies of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left."* (see also II Chron. 18:12–22).

There appears to be a host of angels, both fallen and elect gathered, and Satan, the adversary, has the floor. The wâw consecutive, which begins and peppers this verse, could be translated *now, and then*, or, simply *then*. There are two other wâw consecutives, appropriately translated in this verse. Strong's #none BDB #253.

Following the first wâw consecutive is the Qal imperfect of *to be* along with the subject *the day*. The imperfect tense is a surprise. Prior to this, we have seen nothing but perfect tense after perfect tense. The imperfect tense is either an incomplete action or an on-going action (in general). Literally, this reads: *Then the day came to pass...* This means that the event described in this verse was not an event which occurred at the whim of Satan—that is, whenever Satan felt like taking people before the court of God or expressing himself, he does not just walk in a demand an audience. God set a specific time aside and court was in session during that time period. The nuts and bolts of this are not given to us—that is, does Satan petition for a court date? Does God keep open a specific set of dates to hear Satan? However, it is a specific time and day.

The verb is the 3rd person plural, Qal imperfect of *bôw'* (בּוֹא) [pronounced *bo*] which means *come in, go, go in*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. This is an occurrence which continues throughout time. The sons of God—i.e., the angels of God—gather periodically in God's presence. This is an on-going event, as is indicated by the imperfect tense. *[The]...language [is] taken from the proceedings of a monarch who had sent forth messengers or ambassadors on important errands through the different provinces of his empire, who now returned to give an account of what they had observed, and of the general state of the kingdom. Such a return would, of course, be made on a fixed day when, in the language of the law, their report would be "returnable," and when they would be required to give in an account of the state of the kingdom.*¹⁴ Now, although this is represented by some as poetic license and that this portion of God's Word is a parable really has no basis other than the predisposition of the person making this statement. Other portions of Scripture have been alluded to indicating that Satan has a periodic audience before God; this passage indicates that this audience occurs before fallen and elect angels. There is no reason why we should presuppose that what is herein described is anything other than a factual reoccurring angelic session before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. Satan is real. Angels are real. We do not have to have ethereal experiences in order to confirm the existence of an unseen world or of unseen spirits. If you just give it some thought, you will realize the greatest portion of your being and essence is unseen. Our thoughts, our motivations, our lust pattern, our feelings, our memory, our entire thinking process is unseen and not fully ascertained by the examination of our physical brain. A computer the size of our brain cannot hold the memories, motivations, vocabulary or thought processes. We have a state of being which completely transcends the physical, which is our soul and spirit. Our greatest philosophers recognize this: Rene Descartes said, *I think, therefore I am*; he did not say, *I have a physical body, therefore I exist*. The Greek philosophers related to the world of the physical as

¹⁴ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books; p. 99.

versus the unseen world or souls and spirits through the shadows on the cave wall analogy. That is, what we see and touch is not the true reality of our lives. It is what is unseen that is real. What we can see and feel is analogous to living in a cave. Reality occurs outside the cave and all that we can perceive of this reality are the shadows of what really is as they appear on our cave wall. These shadows on the cave wall is our physical reality. What is real is unseen, occurring just outside of our sensual perception. When it comes to making a friend or developing a relationship, a person's physical being is the least important aspect of this relationship. It is the relationship of the souls; it is the character of the person; it is what is unseen which makes a relationship. My point in all of this is that there is a real world out there which is unseen which we would all acknowledge. Therefore, it is not hard to presuppose an unseen world which is found outside the realm of human experience. This in no way proves the existence of such a world; that is revealed to us by God in Scripture.

We have only seen this phrase, *the sons of God*, one time before back in Gen. 6:2. It will occur again only in this book (Job 38:7) and in Psalm 29:1 89:6 Dan. 3:25. The transliteration of these words into English is b^enêy hâ 'elôhîym, and there is nothing unusual about any of these words; however, together, they refer to angelic creation—to both fallen angels and elect angels. In Gen. 6, if you would recall, this is when angelic creatures came down to earth and fornicated with women, who are, in general, very beautiful, attractive even to fallen angels. Now we know that these are angels because there is nothing to indicate that we have a bunch of saved people hanging around in heaven attending court functions. In fact, that sort of picture is never presented to us. The souls of men are in Abraham's bosom, in the heart of the earth, in a compartment of Sheol. Furthermore, insofar as we know, the first created beings by God were the angels, who do not have bodies (as in Gen. 6) which are material (my guess is that at one time they could manifest a physical body if they so chose to), but are spirit beings, as is God. As Keil and Delitzsch wrote, *further, it is the teaching of Scripture, that these are the nearest attendants upon God, the nearest created glory, with which He has surrounded himself in His eternal glory, and that He uses them as the immediate instruments of His cosmical rule.*¹⁵

What these sons of God did was the Hiphil infinitive construct of the verb yâtsa^bv (יָצַא) [pronounced yaw-TSA^BV], which means to *set, station oneself, take one's stand, stand before*. The latter rendering seems to have the widest application and can fit into most of its occurrences in the Old Testament (Ex. 2:4 8:20 19:17 Num. 11:16 23:3 Jer. 33:5). Here, the verb is found in the Hithpael infinitive construct. The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel. Strong's #3320 BDB #426.

This is followed by the simple preposition 'al (עַל) [pronounced ahl] and it can mean *upon, on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, beside, in addition to, to, towards, against*. The most basic connotation is *upon*, as in *upon the earth*. Strong's #5920 (5921?) BDB #752 It is that upon which an object rests. It can have to connotation of being suspended over something, without being connected to it. It can be used in a hostile sense, meaning *against*. I have translated it in the latter sense, as the attendance of this court session was mandatory, caused by God, and, although it included elect angels, the emphasis was upon the fallen angels. The implication of the preposition 'al here is that these *sons of God* were allowed to stand before Y^ehowah based upon His power and provision. These are fallen angels, whose lives are in total opposition to God. God has allowed them to stand upon Him in opposition to Him. So for those of you who don't understand why God permits people such as Madalyn Murray O'Hair to live for such a long time, it is His policy from the earliest written word to allow those in opposition to Him, who draw their very breath by means of Him, to stand before Him in opposition.

The entrance at this point is by one Sâṭān (שָׂטָן) [pronounced saw-TAWN], a word, because of being used with the definite article, is not really a proper noun, but is a simple designation for one who is *an adversary*. It means *to lie in wait, an adversary, an accuser*. We find such a usage in Num. 22:22, 32 I Sam. 29:4 I Kings 11:14 (among several other passages). It is often transliterated *Satan*, as though a proper noun, in I Chron. 21:1 Job 1, 2 Psalm 109:6 Zech. 3:1–2. Satan has opposed God from the very day that he said, "I will be like the Most High." Sâṭān refers to one who is an adversary or an accuser in a court of law (Psalm 109:6–7). Throughout the book of Job, sâṭān is preceded by a definite article. However, by the time we get to I Chron. 21:1, the definite article is no longer used, as it has become a proper noun designation for the evil one. Strong's #7854 BDB #966. **And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority**

¹⁵ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 273.

of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.” (Rev. 12:10). *He is a malignant being; an accuser; one delighting in the opportunity of charging a holy man with hypocrisy, and in the permission to inflict tortures on him, and who goes as far in producing misery as he is allowed—restrained from destroying him only by the express command of God.*¹⁶ At the end of history, Satan’s absolute evil and the heartache and the pain and the misery which he has caused will fully justify the eternity which he will spend burning in the Lake of Fire. We will completely grasp and be in full accordance with an eternal punishment meted out to such a one, and recognize this as a testimony to the perfection, righteousness and kindness of our God. Even with our old sin nature removed, we will fully expect for Satan and his angels to be tortured day and night forever.

All of this is followed by the simple, common phrase, *in their midst*.

The picture here is of the utmost importance. God is holding court and the angels, even those in opposition to Him, are called into court. Even those who oppose God receive their very sustenance from Him. The adversary appears in court. This all jives with Thieme’s hypothesis that God has passed sentence over Satan a long time prior to human history. This sentence has not been acted upon because Satan has gone to trial and has appealed before God. God has allowed the fallen angels and the elect angels to be witnesses to the content and the natural results of Satan’s appeal.

For those who have read ahead, you may be wondering what Satan is doing before the throne of God as he was thrown out of heaven in Rev. 12. The simple explanation is that the prophecy found in Revelation is future and the book of Job is historical narrative and historical poetry, occurring, as we have seen, very early in the history of mankind.

Then Y^ehowah said to the adversary, “From where have you come?”

Job 1:7a

Then Y^ehowah said to Satan, the adversary, “From where did you come?”

One of the interesting and consistent portions of Scripture is God’s initial dealing with men and fallen angelic creatures. God initiates most contact with His creatures who are out of fellowship with a question. When Adam and Eve were hiding from Him, God knew where they were and why they were hiding, yet He asked them, “Where are you?” When Jesus Christ knocked Paul on his butt, He said, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?” Here, God knows where Satan has been and where all of his activities have been, yet He asks, “From where have you come?” When Elijah was afraid and on the run, hiding in the cave at Horeb, the word of Y^ehowah came to him and God said, “**What are you doing here, Elijah?**” (1 Kings 19:9b). We have no ability to contact God apart from grace. When God asks us a question, there are several key things at work. First and foremost, it is grace—God has initiated dialogue between Himself and His creatures, and we are allowed to return in kind. We foolishly downplay God’s perfection and absolute righteousness and our own depravity, and we simply have no realization as to the barriers which stand between God and us. There is a second purpose of the questions of God. They are to cause us to think; they are to cause us to ask ourselves what we are doing. This is the intention of the questions posed to Adam and to Paul (then Saul). Finally, the question from God, as we find here, is to elicit information for the record. This is not unlike a judge or a lawyer asking a person to state their name and address in a court of law for the record.

On the other hand, when a believer is in fellowship, God does not address him with a question. Examples of this would be Abraham being called by God to sacrifice his son (Gen. 22); Moses and the burning bush (Ex. 3); John on the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1).

God knows where Satan has been—God is omniscient. However, this is for the court record. The angels which are present are not omniscient. They know who Satan is, but they do not know where he has been. Satan’s response indicates that he has complete access to the earth—he has *walked* throughout the earth.

¹⁶ *Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books; p. 101.*

Then the adversary [Satan] answered Y^ehowah and so he said, “From going to and fro in the earth and from walking in it.”

Job 1:7b

Then the adversary, Satan, answered Y^ehowah, saying, “From going to and fro in the earth and from walking throughout it.”

Satan’s dominion is not hell, as hell as we think of it does not exist yet. What we think of as hell is properly the Lake of Fire, which is being prepared for the devil and his angels. Satan’s dominion at this time is earth. He is **the prince of this world, ruler of this earth, the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, going about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour** (John 12:31 14:30 16:11 Eph. 2:2 1 Peter 5:8). Satan is continually moving about his dominion, giving orders to his demon armies, interfering with the lives of men. Many men cling to evolution, feeling as though our world and species is getting better each and every day, despite all the news and current events to the contrary. If we would look at the world in an unbiased way, we would see the massive amount of suffering and pain; the incredible selfishness and self-centeredness of man; the lust and the crime and the viciousness associated with people who need to make a score. In the United States, where modernism in thinking is having its day, our crime has increased per capita; and we cannot build jails fast enough to hold our all of our criminals. The statistic which I heard the other day (1997) was that 1 out of 20 people would spend time in jail. I perhaps misheard that; I don’t know—but I do know that the amount of crime and the pain and suffering which it causes is mind-boggling.

We live in an evil world where Satan is making an attempt 24 hours a day to control our minds and our way of thinking. All these various philosophies of our day and time—materialism, humanism, evolution, new age thinking—are all inventions of Satan. One of the reasons that God’s Word is so important that it is impossible for any of us to out-think Satan. His genius far exceeds our greatest minds; furthermore, he bombards us daily with his thinking, in advertising, in movies and on TV. God’s Word is the only place where we can find the truth; everything else is mixed with error. At this point in time, for those who are unbalanced, who have become confused by this world, the universal cure which is touted is psychiatry; get into some counseling and that will take care of the problem. Why is that solution offered? Well, you have those associated with the movie industry who make 1000 times the money that they ought, have great fame and influence, and are essentially unhappy and in therapy; therefore, such a road would be offered as a solution.

One of the most heavily attacked institutions of our day is marriage. The media has brainwashed us into thinking that the key factor in a relationship is sex; that men and women should experiment prior to marriage. If 1000 couples from the movies and television were brought before you, a very small number of them—less than a half dozen—would represent adults who are virgins who intend to remain that way until they marry. Satan does not want any part of God’s plan to be presented as an option. Most Christian men and women that I have known think that sex is a part of the dating process. They have become brainwashed by our media. The whole point of this is to ruin what is potentially the greatest relationship of a person’s life: marriage.

Family is also heavily under attack. We have marriages dissolving, mostly due to actual or mental adultery, and we have children being raised by one parent, never fully grasping what they should learn from the parent who is missing (generally the father). Women from single parent homes tend to make the worst choices when it comes to men. They have no concept of honor and love, which a man will give to his daughter even if he gives these things to no other woman in his life. Therefore, they marry someone who really turns them on; and, secondarily, has a good personality—the two of the most shallow concepts of a person’s being. Regardless of what women say, two of the things which they find attractive about a man is his confidence with women and the fluid moves he makes on a dance floor; and these are two *attributes* which have nothing whatsoever to do with sustaining a good relationship. You see, if Satan can poison the relationship between man and woman to begin with, then he has poisoned the family. Every effort today is made to see that parents and children are separated for long periods of time. Both parents are often caused to work long hours; and children are involved in a myriad of activities. One of the greatest classrooms in the world is at home, so it is Satan’s intention to separate the child from it mother as quickly as possible. Get the kid into a daycare as fast as is humanly possible so that the influence of the parents become secondary to the influence of his peers. The discipline portion of the family is also under attack. *Time out* to a child is a joke; they don’t fear that. It is the most minor imposition which we can place on a child. A spanking to curb their behavior now and again is frowned upon as being barbaric and out of step.

I recall one study in that regard which I heard the other day. The *researcher* involved stated up front that he knew that spanking was unhealthy and produced children who had less discipline and did a study which verified his thoughts. However, his study dealt with children who were between the ages of 8 and 12 (I am doing this from memory, so I might be a year or so off) of mothers who were in their early twenties who spanked their children three times or more a week. This was the group which *spanked* and those who spanked fewer times were the group who *did not spank*. The former group produced children who were less disciplined. Duh. Spanking three times a week for a child who is around the age of ten is excessive. His indicates that the parents never got control of their child in the first place and now are trying to take up the slack. Furthermore, we are dealing with mothers who were teenagers when they gave birth—children who raised children. We are dealing with parents in general whose parenting skills are wanting. Spanking can be abusive; however, that does not mean that it is. Again, this is Satan attacking the institution of the family.

The first verb to describe Satan's activities is the Qal infinitive construct of *shûṭ* (טוּט) [pronounced *shoot*] and it means *to go, to rove about, to quickly go to and fro*. Dr. Good writes, *the word imports, not so much the act of going forwards and backward, as of making a circuit of circumference; of going round about.*¹⁷ Two things are implied by this verb: alacrity and circuitry; that is, a circuit is kept to and it is done quickly. Strong's #7751 (& 7742?) BDB #1001.

The importance of this particular verb (which you missed in your attempt to read the Bible in one year) is that it means that Satan is not omniscient nor is he omnipresent. He has to continually move about from one place to another to cause and to coordinate his evil plan. He does have a demon army, but don't think for a minute that they are under his absolute control. One of the defining factors of Satan and his angels is rebellion. Whereas God's elect angels are completely obedient to God, there is no indication anywhere that the fallen angels share a similar obedience to Satan. Generally speaking there is one way to do a thing right and there are a myriad of ways to do a thing wrong. Satan's evil forces, while under his dominion, obey him at times and at times exercise some personal choices which would not have been Satan's. This is the nature of the beast, so to speak. The angels fell because of rebellion against God. This does not mean that they would suddenly become totally obedient to Satan. General obedience, perhaps. It is no different than having a company of employees; in general, they will follow the lead of their boss, but not each and every time. This is one reason that you cannot bargain with the devil or with one of his demons. We have no guarantees that they will fulfill their part of the bargain. We can lose whatever it is that we have been promised in a heartbeat because of another demon or because they have been overruled by the plan of God. My point here is that Satan, although he is highly organized, cannot be everywhere at once, nor can any individual demon (although there are certainly billions of them). Therefore, whereas it is possible that you are under demonic attack; it is highly unlikely that you are under Satanic attack. You are just not that important.

Shûṭ is followed by the prepositional phrase *in the earth*, which indicates vertical as well as horizontal movement. There are indications throughout the Bible of some sort of holding area for the dead spirits, both saved and unsaved. The indication is that this is within the earth and it is not completely clear to me the exact parameters of this netherworld, so to speak.

The second verb which describes the movements of Satan is Hithpael infinitive construct of *hâlak*^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK^e*] means *to go, to come, to walk*. Strong's #1980 (and 3212) BDB #229. This is followed by the prepositional phrase *in it*. When man fell in the fall, Satan became ruler over this world and he continually patrols his domain. Satan is always on earth, inspecting his domain, calling attention to believers who are out of fellowship and making a terrible show of their lives. The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel (intensive) stem. Satan has caused himself to go about; that is, God has granted him the free movement over the earth. *So long as he is not finally vanquished and condemned, he has access to God, and thinks to justify himself by denying the truth of the existence and the possibility of the continuance of all piety. God permits it; for since everything happening to the creature is placed under the law of free development, evil in the world of spirits is also free to maintain and expand itself, until a spiritual power comes forward against it, by which the hitherto wavering conflict between the principles of good and evil is decided.*¹⁸ Actually, this has been decided; and as Bob Thieme pointed out, the

¹⁷ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books; p. 102.

¹⁸ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 274.

sentence has been passed against Satan; we are in the appeal trial which God has allotted Satan. This is not to give Satan another chance in any way shape or form, but it gives all angelic creation and all humankind the chance to view how absolutely despicable, vicious and evil Satan is as a result of his rebellion against God.

The Septuagint reads: ...so he said, “From going to and fro in the earth and from wandering about under the heavens have I come.” Satan’s areas of access are on the earth, under the earth and above the earth. Therefore, **be of a sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour** (I Peter 5:8).

Then Y^howah said to the adversary, “Have you set your heart upon my servant Job? Because none like him in the earth—a man integrous [or, blameless] and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.”

Job 1:8

Then Y^howah said to the adversary, “Have you given serious thought to my servant Job? That there is none like him in the earth—a man of integrity [or, blameless] and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.”

God interrogates Satan. What God says begins with a mark of interrogation, a letter, allowing the reader to know from the beginning that this is a question (the Spanish language does the same thing—except they begin and end a question with a question mark). We place our question marks at the end and *usually* have some interrogative beginning. The first verb is *sîym* (סׁיַם) [pronounced *seem*] which means *to put, to place, to set*. It also can mean *to make, to transform into* (Psalm 104:3). Strong's #7760 BDB #962. This is followed by the phrase *your heart*. There is a disagreement about the next preposition even within the Massoretic text manuscripts. Some have *'el* (לְ) [pronounced *el*], which means *into, in, regarding, to*. Strong's #413 BDB #39. However, the preferred reading is *'al* (אֲלֵ) [pronounced *al*], which means *upon, beyond, against*. Strong's #5920, 5921 BDB #752. Satan has spent a great deal of time going throughout the earth, accusing various believers of transgressions for which they are responsible. At that point in time in history, Jesus Christ had not died for our sins and Satan was unaware of what was going to come to pass. Therefore, when God's own transgressed against God, Satan brought that to God's attention immediately. We see this all the time. When I speak to a student about talking too much, once and awhile, he will apologize and we will move on. However, most of the time he will say, *I wasn't the only person talking!* Satan had sinned against God and was a fallen angel. He had been sentenced to the Lake of Fire. However, he was given some time to appeal his sentence, as obviously the sentence had not been carried out and here he was in front of God speaking his piece after spending some time on earth. In our court system, this is the time granted to both parties to gather evidence.

Job is given the exalted station of *servant of God*. Moses attained this (Num. 12:7) and David attained this status (II Sam. 7:5). This is such a station of exaltation, that the coming Messiah will be called God's servant throughout Isaiah. **“Observe, My servant, Whom I uphold. My chosen one My soul delights. I have placed My Spirit upon Him. He will bring forth justice to the nations.”** (Isa. 42:1). **“As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see Him and be satisfied. By His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.”** (Isa. 53:11).

You will recall the beginning of this book. The author refers to Job as a man with integrity, a man who was upright. These again are the words: *tâm* (תָּם) [pronounced *tawm*], which means *perfected, completed, finished*. Sometimes, this word has been translated *innocent*. This word was first found in Gen. 20:5–6, where Abram has lied to Abimelech and Abimelech has taken Abram's wife Sarah as his wife. God comes to him in a dream and God and Abimelech both agree that Abimelech did this in the *innocence* of his heart. A very similar use is found in II Sam. 15:11. We found the plural of this word used for Urim and *Thummim* (Lev. 8:8). This word is found in several places where it describes the spiritual walk of a person (Psalm 26:1 Prov. 2:7). The early use of this adjective indicates that it refers *to integrity in terms of intending to do no evil, innocence, blameless, upright*. The corresponding verb means *to complete, to consume, to finish up*. When you have sinned, you have a defect, you are incomplete before God. Therefore, the adjective has to do with remaining in fellowship without evil intentions. Strong's #8533 BDB #1070.

Yâshâr (יָשָׁר) [pronounced *yaw-SHAWR*] means *straight, right* according to BDB. This is first used to do *what is right* in the eyes of Y^ehowah (Ex. 15:26). This is the other side of the coin. Not only was Job blameless, or innocent, in all that he did—that is, he did not intentionally do that which was evil—but he did that which was correct or right. To know what is right and not to do it is sin. When not referring to one's actions but to a person, we translate this word *upright*, as in this verse. Strong's #3477 BDB #449.

Finally, as we have seen before, the *fear of God* is a reverence and respect attributed to those who have a grasp of Who God is and who man is. **Praise Y^ehowah! How blessed is the man who fears and respects Y^ehowah, who greatly delights in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on the earth and the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house and his righteousness endures forever** (Psalm 112:1–3; see also Ex. 20:20 Psalm 128:4).

This verse tells us a lot. We have churches where everyone *gets the ghost* and it is assumed that everyone is this great spiritual being. Here, in this generation, there is but one Job. God doesn't give Satan a long list of people to go check out. God has a short list of righteous people, of people who have integrity and are upright. His list was the person Job. We do not have an overabundance of great spiritual men. There is Job and that is about it. There is no one else like him in the earth. No man is perfect. **All have sinned and come short of the glory of God** (Rom. 3:23). **If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us** (I John 1:8). A short description of his spiritual life follows.

We have examined what it means *to fear* God. It is not this goofy buddy buddy routine where Jesus appears to us while we are shaving and we carry on a casual conversation with Him. This is not Jesus, our best friend. Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament as well as the New—this is the God which we are to fear and to respect. People have such a casual relationship with God, that it indicates that they have no concept as to His perfection, majesty and righteousness. Moses, a man far greater than you or I will ever be, was afraid to behold God as the burning bush (Ex. 3:6). There is not a man alive who could not use a strong dose of fear of God.

Finally, there is more to the Christian way of life than intentionally avoiding sin. There is also the avoidance of evil, Satan's way of thinking, which includes both sin and human good. This is a corrupt, earthly way of viewing things. These are the social revolutionaries, the rabid environmentalists, and violent anti-abortionists. Satan has a way that he thinks the world should be. He is on a crusade to save this planet and this world, although he changes his mind often as to what would achieve that, and he attempts to get us to do his bidding. Job did not participate in this kind of evil.

So Job intentionally abstains from doing that which is wrong and does not participate in evil. He does that which is right. Job had great fear and respect for God. With these characteristics, there is no one else like him on earth.

As you study this book of Job, you will see many arguments that Job was a man of sin and that his great suffering was a natural result of this. God will even eventually criticize Job. However, always keep this verse in the back of your mind. God holds Job up before Satan as a man of integrity, as an example of a man righteous before God (given the saving work of Christ, of course). So, no matter what is said of Job, either by his friends or by commentary, this representation of his character is certain and stands forever written in God's Word.

Then the adversary answered Y^ehowah and so he said, "[Is it] for nothing Job fearing God?

Job 1:9

And the adversary answered Y^ehowah and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?

God has given Satan an example of piety on earth and Satan denies God's truth. This is the essence of Satan—to stand in firm opposition to God's Word at every turn. Satan answers, beginning with the interrogative particle, as did God, and the word *chinnâm* (כִּינָאֵם) [pronounced *khin-NAHM*], which means *gratuitous, freely, for nothing*. Strong's #2600 BDB #336. Motivation is one of the things which Satan goes to God with. Our world is filled with millions of believers who behave in a religious fashion, who act nice and sweet and moral. Satan questions every man's motivation and God looks upon the inside. We don't get anywhere in the spiritual life by putting up a good

front. This also opens discussion on the relationship of prosperity and the spiritual life. All believers who advance receive blessing from God; however, not everyone's blessing is the same, nor does everyone receive blessing in the material realm. Paul explained to Timothy: **There is constant friction between men of depraved minds and who are deprived of truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain; on the contrary, godliness is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment; for you see, we have brought nothing into this world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we will be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For you see, it is the love of money which is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by intensely desiring for it have wandered away from the faith, and have pierced themselves with many categories of pain. So avoid these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, gentleness** (I Tim. 6:5–11). That is, for the believer today, God does provide us with the basic necessities and with these we should be content. The pursuit of riches can be a temptation and a snare. We should pursue the virtues of the Christian life, not the wealth of the material life. No matter how much we accumulate in this life time, none of our possessions are going with us. On the flip side, this does not mean that we should burn our money nor does it mean that we will not receive material blessings. That is just not to be our driving force.

Satan asks God, before all of angelic creation, if Job is not just responding to the great blessing which God has given him. Job knows which side of the toast is buttered. The implication is that Job has all of these characteristics because he is greatly rewarded for it. There is no greatness in his spiritual walk. He behaves because God rewards him. *Satan denies what God affirms, acknowledges no love towards God in the world which is not rooted in self-love, and is determined to destroy this love as a mere semblance. Where piety is dulled, he rejoices in its obscurity, where it is not, he dims its lustre by reflecting his own egotistical nature therein...[We recognize that] Genuine love loves God...for His own sake; it is a relation of person to person, without any actual stipulations and claim.*¹⁹

Throughout his tenure on this earth, Satan brings out many questions and objections, which, on their face, seem worthwhile. We should first recognize his motivation. Satan does not want to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. His only motivation here is the weasel his way out of that. However, the questions which he brings up are questions which many people have thought or expressed. When human history as we know it is over and when Satan has been banished to the Lake of Fire, every objection raised concerning God and His creatures will have been answered, and God's perfection and righteousness and love will shine through. History is an object lesson for all the elect angels. Angels could fall at any time but exercising their volition against God, as Satan and his demon armies did. The question put before the court is: *is not Job's faith selfish and mercenary?* Isn't Job merely motivated by his prosperity. God gives him great prosperity, so his worship and faith is toward God. Do we trust and show faithfulness in God in order to spend eternity in heaven? Do we put forth some modicum of worship activity in order to gain some rank in heaven? Satan tells God that if you remove Job's prosperity, then Job will remove himself from God.

Furthermore, God will show in this time of human history that He is worthy of our love and devotion; Satan will prove to all that his motivations are strictly evil and selfish; that he acts only in self-interest. Satan only gives if there is a return in it for him. If his orders are not obeyed implicitly, then his wrath is vicious and vengeful. Finally, there is no sacrifice on Satan's part. When it comes down to it, Satan would not lift a finger for anyone. It is every man for himself. If he had to choose between his spending eternity in the Lake of Fire or our spending in eternity in the Lake of Fire, that is a no-brainer to him. Satan would trade us in a second, if he could. In fact, he deceives and leads many into temptation and into harm; with the eventual hope that we will never believe in Jesus Christ and spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

An objection which I have heard from a friend of mine is why does God demand our devotion and why does He demand that we glorify Him? Is God that desperate for exaltation? Is God a man who requires continual praise to get through the day? Certainly not. God requires our devotion and praise and demands that we glorify Him because: (1) He is worthy of our praise and devotion. (2) God is worthy enough to be glorified. We can depend upon His consistency and His perfect righteousness. (3) God has shown that He will sacrifice Himself in order to

¹⁹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 275.

deliver us. (4) Now consider the alternatives: if we do not glorify God, then we are left with glorifying either ourselves or glorifying Satan. If we are honest with ourselves, we know that we are seriously flawed; our hearts are desperately wicked. This book should make a clear point of Satan's character. To make a point, Satan will cause Job to suffer in every way he can. God has allowed this, but Satan performs it. Therefore, when you consider the alternatives, only God is worthy of glorification.

Some people have problems when it comes to worship of God and glorification of God. They feel what is it with God Who requires us to worship Him and to glorify Him? We have but three other alternatives: (1) we can become involved with self-worship, which is foolish egotism. When you exalt yourself above all others, you are a fool. You inhabit a body in which every cell is corrupt. You have an old sin nature which is selfish and vicious. (2) We can worship mankind, which is thinly disguised egotism. If you genuinely worship at the gate of mankind, then you just don't know enough people or you don't know them very well. Or, (3) you can worship Satan. In this portion of Job, we will find out the essence and character of Satan.

“Did you not place [a hedge, a protection] about him and about his house and about all which [is] to him? From every side [of the] work of his hands You have blessed and his acquisition has broken out in the land.

Job 1:10

“Did you not place a protective hedge around him and around his house and around all of that which is his? From every side of the work of his hands You have blessed and his personal acquisitions have seen incredible increased in the land.

What I have noticed about this book of Job is that there appears to be a more limited vocabulary (so far) as opposed to the book of Deuteronomy, for instance. In this short of time in this book, we have had several verbs and adjectives repeated. However, here what I see is a bit of impertinence. God asked Satan if he has *set* his heart upon Job and Satan responds with the same verb *sîym* (סִיַם) [pronounced *seem*], which means *to put, to place, to set*. Strong's #7760 BDB #962.

What follows is a word which is used three times: *ba'ad* (בָּאֵד) [pronounced *BAH-gad*]. This is a substantive of separation and when used as a preposition it means *away from, behind, about*. With the verb *sîym*, it can mean *to seal up, to place a hedge about, to fence about* (Job 1:10 3:23 9:7 Lam. 3:7). Strong's #1157 (5704 with *n*) BDB #126. This preposition is repeated twice more and then Satan begins a new question with the word *çâvîv* (סָבַב) [pronounced *saw^p-VEE^BV*], which is an adverb and a preposition that means *circuit, round about, encircle*. It is affixed to the *min* preposition of separation *from round about, from every side*. Strong's #5439 BDB #686.

The first thing which Satan accuses God of is protecting Job. Satan can't do a thing to Job and the world cannot touch Job, as God has placed a protective hedge about him. Job has been insulated from the normal pain and grief associated with this world because of this hedge surrounding him. Satan forgets to mention that he is the cause of much of this pain and grief; he just notes that Job is protected. Certainly Job is loyal to God; God protects him.

Next, most translations speak of Job's wealth as *increasing*, or words to that effect. This is tame compared to the actual word found here. The last verb is *pârats* (פָּרַט) [pronounced *paw-RATS*] and it means *to break through, to break over the limits, to break out*. Job has so much in the way of ancient world wealth that his possessions are breaking forth out of his space. He just doesn't have enough room for all that he owns and part of this superabundance is land. My feeling is that this word is used as an idiom in the ancient world for tremendous wealth; that, or this is an exaggeration by Satan. This is a pent up quantity of water which has suddenly and forcefully burst forth out of its dam. Strong's #6555 BDB #829.

The verb tenses have interested me. I would have pictured Satan accusing God of continually increasing and blessing Job, therefore using the imperfect tense. However, Satan uses the perfect tense, meaning that this is a completed action—this is a done deal. The fix is completely in; Job has been given maximum blessing and that is how it stands. It is as though he could not be blessed any more.

I have to go on a tangent here—we are surrounded by a wall of fire. In this verse, it is called a *hedge*. We have great protection and blessing which is even extended to those of our household and to the possessions that we have. This is taught throughout the Bible, but quite clearly here. Satan was not incorrect in part of what he has said. Job was given great protection and blessing by God. **The angel of Y^howah encamps around those who revere Him and He delivers them** (Job 34:7). **How blessed is everyone who fears Y^howah and who walks in His ways. When you eat of the fruit of your hands, you will be happy and it will be well with you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house and your children like olive plants around our table** (Psalm 128:1–3). However, the point that Satan is making to the court is that Job is good because of these blessings and this protection. Satan does not impugn Job's actions, but his motivation, and therefore, his very integrity. It is marvelous that God uses Satan's own words to teach divine protection and blessing by association, in this, a book written during the same time as Genesis. Our personal application is that we are protected by God at all times. There is nothing that a demon or even Satan can do to us apart from God's permission, which is not granted lightly or capriciously. An event like this is rare; God does not deliver a mature believer over to Satan for sport. It was done here to make a point to all angelic creation and to believers for millenniums to follow. There will be times when we endure suffering for blessing, but it is not likely that we will go through anything like Job went through (I mention this because you may read this and decide that you don't want to become to mature as a believer, or you might be tested as Job was).

Now, there is a true doctrine of blessing from God for the believer who is growing. God does afford us protection and blessing. Satan's point is that Job's simple motivation is this blessing and protection. McGee: *God's character had been impugned by Satan. I think all the created intelligences in heaven shuddered when they heard Satan cast that aspersion on God. His implication was: You're not worthy to be loved. You have to pay Job to love You and serve You. You have paid lovers.*²⁰

“And but indeed, please stretch out Your hand and touch all which [is] his; if not to your faces he will be blessing you?”

Job 1:11

“But indeed, please reach out and destroy all that is his; then will he bless you to Your face? No, he won't!”

This verse begins with the wâw conjunction and the conjunction ʿûlâm (אֲלֵמָּ) [pronounced oo-LAWM] and it means *but, but indeed*; it is a very strong adversative. The wâw conjunction just moves the action along, so to speak. Although sprinkled throughout the historical books (e.g., Gen. 28:19 48:19 Ex. 9:16 I Kings 20:23), ʿûlâm is found primarily in the book of Job* (1:11 2:5 5:8 11:5 12:7 13:3–4 14:18 17:10 33:1). Strong's #199 BDB #19.

This is followed by two Qal imperatives. The first verb is shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAHKH] and it means *to send, to send forth*; and it means *to stretch out* when it comes to the use of the hand. Strong's #7971 BDB #1018. Next to this verb we have nâ` (נֶאֱמָר) [pronounced naw], which is an exhortation or part of an entreaty that means *please, I respectfully implore [or ask or request] you or I urge you*. Strong's 4994 BDB #609. The second Qal imperative is the verb nâgâ` (נִגַּח) [pronounced naw-GAHḤ], which means *to touch*. Strong's #5060 BDB #619. There is a very similar verb which does mean *to strike, to strike down*; nâgaph (נִגַּף) [pronounced naw-GAHF] which is not found here (Strong's #5062 BDB #619). Satan is subtle. He does not have to speak to God in such a way that his motives are unmistakable. He wants Job to feel pain; for all of his possessions and earthly belongings to be smashed and destroyed. But he does not say that; he requests God to touch all that is Job's. It sounds so Genteel, and belies Satan's intent. Satan does not ask to attack Job himself; he asks for God to do it.

Then we have the hypothetical particle *if* and the negative (which is often used as an emphatic affirmative after an oath). The best way to express these two in the English is to state a question in the negative which requires a strong negative answer.

The last verb in this verse is difficult; it is rendered *curse* (KJV, NASB, NIV, NJB, NRSV, Owens, REV, Rotherham), *blaspheme* (NAB) and *bless* (Young). In the Hebrew and in the Septuagint the word is *bless*. Although Gesenius

²⁰ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 26.

(from whom Rotherham draws much of his information) claims that the Sopherim altered this verse, as well as Job 1:5 2:5, 9, replacing *curse* with the more euphemistic *bless*. I don't know that there is any evidence for that assertion. As was mentioned back in v. 5, Barnes deals with this issue over the space of about two pages and still did not resolve it for me, which is why I have maintained the translation *bless*. However, we will run into a similar situation in Job 2:5. This word along with the negative is probably best rendered by the Revised English Version: **'But just stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and see if he will *not* curse you to your face.'**

We generally do not realize it, but every objection that we have voiced against God, against the world that we are living in, against our own state of sinfulness, Satan has already raised those exact same objections. What has occurred and what is occurring on earth is an answer to all of Satan's objections. Every combination of God's involvement in our lives has been covered in the various dispensations. We have had dispensations where God's Spirit has been provided only for specific spiritual purposes, we have had times when we needed to ask for the Spirit. In this dispensation, every believer is filled with the Holy Spirit. When sentenced to the Lake of Fire, Satan raised a great many objections, and what we see here is a typical day in court where Satan impugns God's character and His righteousness before all angelic creation, and, in written form, before all of mankind.

Here the objection is that when someone is blessed, certainly they will worship and pay homage to their creator. However, if you take away all his material blessings, then his opinion and attitude toward God will change radically. Job is just acting prudently, looking after his own best interests. Satan has challenged his motivation. One of the very consistent topics of the Bible God always looks on the inner man. Although Satan and the rest of angelic creation cannot read our inner thoughts and can only guess at our motivation, God knows where our heart lies and when our heart belies our behavior. Even in the area of slavery, Paul wrote, **Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh and with fear and trembling in the integrity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart** (Eph. 6:5–6). Those who have been related to Thieme's ministry recall hearing innumerable times: **The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of the soul and the spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart** (Heb. 4:12).

You've got to understand Satan's motivation here. If you have ever dealt with questions, as a teacher does, and particularly as a minister does, you find out that some questions have absolutely nothing to do with eliciting information from the *expert*. The person asking a question is really stating his opinion or they are objecting to what you have said, but they do it in the form of a question. Satan does not, in this instance, have a sincere desire to know if Job will remain faithful when his possessions are taken from him. Satan may or may not sincerely buy his own argument here. What he is buying is time for himself and this will allow him time to wreak havoc in Job's life, something which gives Satan great pleasure. To help you understand, there certainly has been in your past life, before you were a Christian, someone that you particularly disliked—they just rubbed you the wrong way like no one else. Now, you may not have wanted to see members of their family struck with cancer, but you felt a certain satisfaction when they stubbed their toe, when some stupid idea that they had been pushing for totally backfired on them—when, immediately after they give you a condescending look because your automobile is pathetic in their eyes, and they can't get their car started. Maybe you have never had thoughts or experiences like this, but just go with the illustration. Satan is far more evil and vindictive than you will ever know. His personal capacity for evil is beyond our imagination. Even if only one person chose God over him, he would be angry and vengeful against that person. So Satan can hardly wait to get his hands on Job. Recall what our Lord told Peter: **"Satan would like to sift you like wheat."**

I want you to note very carefully what we do not find—there is no defense lawyer for Job. Job does not have an advocate to speak in his behalf to object to this test. In relationship to time, he has not yet been paid for and so there is no advocate in heaven pleading Job's case. As John tells us: **If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous** (1 John 2:1b).

As an aside, it has been my personal experience that it is often just the opposite. People who have extraordinary blessings and wealth often tend to expunge God from their lives. They have everything it is that they could possibly want, so they have no use for God. People often have to be beat down before they look to God.

The said Y^ehowah to the adversary, “Observe, all which [is] his [is] in your hand; only regarding him, you will not stretch out your hand.”

Job 1:12a

The said Y^ehowah to the adversary, “Now, Job’s family and possessions are under your control; however, you are not allowed to lay a hand on him.”

God gave to Satan the power over Job’s possessions and over those Job was close to. One aspect of this verse that I would not want you to miss. Satan is not free to attack anyone for any reason. When God gives Satan permission to torment us, He keeps Satan on a tight leash. Here, God has allowed Satan to attack the things of Job and the people in Job’s life; but he is not allowed to touch Job specifically. You see, Satan’s objection was that Job only leads a virtuous life because God has blessed him with so many things. Remove these things and Job will no longer serve God.

God gives Satan precise guidelines with regards to his attack on Job, and that attack is a part of God’s plan and purpose. Therefore, if you are under attack by Satan (if you are egotistical enough to think that he would bother with you), then he has God’s complete permission to do to you whatever it is he is doing to you. However, the majority of our problems in life are self-inflicted, and, generally speaking, you are usually self-deluded about demonic attacks; however, if you are suffering under demonic attack, then said attack has been sanctioned by God.

As you will see, all that was in Satan’s heart will be manifest against Job. The amount of pain and suffering that Job will suffer is inconsequential to Satan. He only wants to make a point, and if someone suffers horribly because of it, the more Satan is pleased with his own work. Note that God does not attack Job’s possessions; He allows Satan to.

We have studied Satan’s motivation in all of this; now what about God’s motivation? *The divine arrangement has not its foundation in the sin which still clings to Job. For in the praise conferred upon Job, it is not said that he is absolutely without sin; universal liability to sin is assumed not only of all the unrighteousness, but even of all the righteousness, of Adam’s race.*²¹ Certainly, it is clear that God is making a point to mankind and to all of angelic creation as to the motives of the mature believer. However, God is also strengthening and purifying Job’s faith. Furthermore, this, one of the oldest books of the Bible—in fact, the oldest complete book, as Genesis had not been completed by the time of Job—testifies as to the person of Satan, to his limitations, to his motivations, and to his evil. This book also reveals to us the legal relationship between God, the fallen angels and the elect angels. The proceedings involved here are very formal; they are not hap-hazard and capricious. Early on, we learn the difference between the character of God and Satan. God presents to Satan a man who is moral and dedicated; Satan immediately desires to hurt this man in any way possible.

So the adversary went out from [being] with the faces of Y^ehowah.

Job 1:12b

So Satan, the adversary, went out from the presence of Y^ehowah.

*Satan retires forthwith. The license is welcome to him, for he delights in the work of destruction. And he hopes to conquer. For after he has experienced the unlimited power of evil over himself, he has lost all faith in the power of good, and is indeed become himself the self-deceived father of lies.*²²

In one of the earliest books of the Bible, we find that Satan has a hearing before God; that these hearings take place on a regular basis, and that he raises objections before all of angelic creation concerning God’s plans, purposes and inherent goodness. It is from this and a litany of other passages that Thieme deduced that Satan is not in the Lake of Fire right now because his case is on appeal and Satan, for all intents and purposes, has been released on his own recognizance. We, the human race, are a part of this appeal trial. We are witnesses for the prosecution, as it were. Our thoughts and actions and motivations are a part of this appeal trial. The jury is all angelic beings who will conclude, at the close of human history, that God is righteous and that Satan’s rebellion

²¹ Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 276.

²² *Ibid.*

against God is damnable to its very core. At the conclusion of the trial, all of angelic and human creation will accept God's judgment against Satan, his demon army and human unbelievers, that they spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Most of us, unless we happen to be very embittered persons, have a difficult time with the concept of hell. We certainly don't want our loved ones there. One of the tenets of some cults is that there is no eternal Lake of Fire; that those who are tossed into it disappear from history as though they did not ever exist. It goes against our very nature for such a thing to exist and that some people that we know and love will spend their eternity there. Therefore, at the termination of human history, God's righteousness and perfection will be vindicated before all angelic creation and before us. What God has chosen to do will not be seen as capricious or arbitrary, but as a demand of His perfect character.

We are about to begin the actual sufferings of Job. People are confused about this. This book does not tell us that mature believers will suffer great loss. All believers will suffer in this life; we are in the devil's world, we live in a body of corruption—we will endure some suffering. However, we will not necessarily be subject to the kind of pain and degradation that Job suffered. On the contrary, we will be blessed in this life and in the next because of our spiritual growth. **Godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and for the life to come** (I Tim. 4:8b). **“Let him who means to love life and see good days refrain his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking guile. And let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous and His ears attend to their prayer. However, the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”** (I Peter 3:10–12 Psalm 34:12–16). Job will endure great suffering and pain; however, let us not forget that (1) God has blessed Job in the past beyond any other person; (2) God will also bless him beyond all that he loses in the first two chapters and (3) Job is blessed forever in heaven beyond our wildest imaginations.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

Satan Removes Job's Possessions and His Children

So it came to pass the day and his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their brother the first-born;

Job 1:13

So it came to pass the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their oldest brother;

We return to earth. One of the popular notions, particularly in the past century, is life on other planets. Even Christians give credence to this, as though God has all these different experiments going on, like so many petri dishes scattered throughout a laboratory. Although I do not rule out life on other planets, scientists who believe in this often base this generally believe in evolution, and think that somewhere else in the universe, life has evolved from non-living matter, as the universe appears to be infinite. However, there is nothing in the Bible to indicate that life on other planets exist. Furthermore, this thinking shows a distinct disappreciation for our planet earth. Not only is H₂O an extremely rare compound in the universe, but the rarest form of H₂O in the universe is its liquid form. Between 0° and 100° C is a very small temperature range. Absolute zero is -273° C and the upper limit of temperature is unknown, and even thought by some not to exist. However, the center of the sun is estimated to be around 15,000,000° C. We have absolutely no appreciation for the temperature range of 0° and 100° C. A 100° temperature range is approximately 0.00066% of this overall known temperature range. If we were to examine every cubic mile of universe with respect to temperature, we would find that less than 1/1000th of one percent of this universe falls within that temperature range. Change the orbit of the earth or the spin on its axis only very slightly, and we would see the mass destruction of life on earth. Yet water is essential to our very being and to the life of all living creatures. It is not coincidence that 2/3rds of the earth's surface is covered with water. This just didn't happen by accident. So thinking that it is reasonable that we are the only planet in the universe with life is not a function of egotism, but a function of scientific rationalism and empiricism. I am not saying that life on other planets does not exist nor am I saying that God is not capable of creating another planet with the same conditions as we find here on earth. The first thing which comes to my mind is *why would He?* Now we know, through Biblical revelation, that God can and does create beings which do not have the same requirements that we do—all of angelic creation can function apart from food and water.

What we have here is a family gathering of the brothers and sisters. Because Job was a great believer, his family was greatly blessed. Through Job's excellent role modeling and through God's blessing, Job's family all got along great, they enjoyed each other's company, they enjoyed spending time together, they laughed, they talked. Whereas we often associate drinking wine with alcoholism, the Bible often associates it with laughter, fellowship and fun (there are definite exceptions to this—the incident with Lot and his daughters, for one). Without going off into the doctrine of drinking, there is absolutely nothing wrong with a person who is not alcoholic from drinking a glass of wine. And there is absolutely nothing wrong with a person abstaining from wine for their entire lives. Wine is often a symbol in the Bible for human happiness. **And wine which makes man's heart glad, so that he may make his face glisten with oil. And food which sustains man's heart** (Psalm 104:15). **On the seventh day when the heart of the king was merry with wine** (Esther 1:10a). The problems come in when someone drinks alcohol to excess (to a state of drunkenness, which occurs long before what is considered legally drunk). However, that is not the subject here. In this verse, the family is having one of their many family get together and they are all having a marvelous time. One of the blessings which some people enjoy as believers is great family blessing. Their family may or may not been well-off financially, but they have great family fellowship as part of Job's blessing from God.

We also have a scene where sudden death will fall upon them. **Moreover, man does not know his time; like a fish caught in a treacherous net, and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men are ensnared at an evil time when it suddenly falls on them** (Eccl. 8:12). At this particular family gathering, Job was not present. He was at home, sitting in his easy chair, and suddenly, several servants and messengers burst through the living room door, having been let in by his wife or the house servant.

**And a messenger came to Job and said,
“The ox—they were plowing and the she-
asses feeding beyond their hands;**

Job 1:14

**When a messenger came to Job and said,
“The oxen were plowing and the (female)
donkeys were feeding in their vicinity;**

For whatever reason, the person(s) responsible for dividing the chapters and verses went from two or three sentences per verse to a third of a sentence per verse. The last phrase in this verse reads: **beyond (upon or against) their hand**. This is obviously idiomatic. It has been rendered in several ways: *beside them* (*The Amplified Bible*, NASB, NAB, NRSV, Owen, Rotherham), *at their side* (NJB), *near them* (REB) and *by their sides* (Young).

Mal^əâk^ə (מַלְאָכִים) [pronounced *mahl^ə-AWCH^ə*] means several different things. It can mean a simple messenger, as we have in this passage. It can stand for prophet (Isa. 42:19), a priest (Mal. 2:7), an angel (Gen. 19:1, 15), a messenger sent specifically by God, but not necessarily an angel (Job 33:13) or as a theophanic angel (i.e., Jesus Christ) (Gen. 17:21 31:11 Ex. 14:19). This is typical of the verse separation of the Old Testament—mid-sentence, this thought is broken up. The messenger comes to Job and his family and reports that, during a time which should have been uneventful. Strong's #4397 BDB #521.

Saint Jerome, Dr. Good and the Septuagint thought it necessary to indicate that the donkeys referred to her are specifically female donkeys. Females, because of their milk, because they bore the young and because they were preferred for traveling, were considered to be more valuable than the males.

**“Then Sheba fell then she took them. And
the young men [i.e., the servants or slaves],
they struck down with a mouth of a sword;
then I slipped away—only I by myself—to
tell [this] to you.”**

Job 1:15

**“Then the Sabeans raided them and they
took the livestock. Furthermore, they
violently killed the young men in charge;
however, I alone escaped to tell this to
you.”**

Let me first give you a few other translations:

Albert Barnes

And the Sabeans rushed upon them, and took them away, and slew the young men with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped by myself to tell thee.

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And the Sabeans swooped down upon them and took away [the animals]; indeed, they have slain the servants with the edge of the swords; and I alone have escaped to tell you.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...when the Sabeans swooped down, and took them, and the young men smote they with the edge of the swords,—and escaped am only I alone to tell thee.
NKJV	“when the Sabeans [lit., Sheba] raided [lit., fell upon] them and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”
NAB	“...and the Sabeans carried them off in a raid. They put the herdsmen to the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”
NEB	‘...when the Sabaeans swooped down and carried them off, after putting the herdsmen to the sword; and I am the only one to escape and tell the tale.’
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	‘...and Sheba doth fall, and take them, and the young men they have smitten by the mouth of the sword, and I am escaped—only I alone—to declare it to thee.’

The verb is actually the 3rd person feminine (the noun, Sheba, is feminine in gender), Qal imperfect of nāphal (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*] and it means *to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply*. Strong’s #5307 BDB #656. Usually this is accompanied by *upon them* or some such similar phrase, but that is not found here. The proper noun is next.

The feminine proper noun Sh^{eb}vâ’ (שֶׁבַע) [pronounced *sh^{eb}-VAW*]. By examining the groups of people the book of Job mentions might help to place this book in time. Unfortunately, we will get no help from this group of people. (1) The first Sheba mentioned was a son of Raamah, who was a descendant of Cush, son of Ham (Gen. 10:7 | Chron. 1:22). Since we are dealing with a raiding party of Sheba, this takes us at least four generations (and more likely at least five or six) out from the flood. (2) The second Sheba is a son of Joktan, a descendent of Shem (Gen. 10:28 | Chron. 1:9). (3) The third Sheba that we will mention was a son of Jokshan, a descendant of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:3 | Chron. 1:32). I believe that this third Sheba places us too far past the time of Job. ZPEB mentions that the three named here could be one, two or three persons. All three are associated with Arabia; (1) and (3) have brothers with the name of Dedan; (2) and (3) are in the line of Shem.²³ It would be my logical guess that (3) is too far removed in time to be identical to the other two. Furthermore, it would seem strange to mention the same person twice in the same genealogical portion of Scripture, meaning that (1) and (2) would not be one and the same. What all of this means is that using this name to determine the time of Job is a wash, except that it takes us at least four to six generations away from the flood. We find Sabbeans (She^bva) everywhere from Gen. 10:25 to Ezek. 38:15. Strong’s #7614 BDB #985.

The first verb is followed by another wāw consecutive and the Qal imperfect of the verb *to take*. This has a 3rd person masculine plural suffix, referring to the livestock. One of the easiest, but most boring jobs to have is that of tending sheep. The young men were given this job in order to develop their sense of responsibility.

Job associates the Sabbeans with Tema, a city 350 miles to the south of Jerusalem and calls them traveling merchants further on in Job 6:19. Comparing the two passages indicates that many of them operated in traveling caravans and some traded and some were predatory and some were both. Given the right opportunity, some, rather than trade, would plunder and then trade the things which they stole. The queen of Sheba is mentioned in the time of Solomon, two millenniums later, was apparently rich in spices, gold and precious stones, a result of trading and plunder (see I Kings 10:1–13). It is possible that these refer to the same peoples.

The next verb is the 3rd person plural, Hiphil perfect of *to strike down*. This surprised me, as I expected the feminine singular again. However, this is the active voice and this verb does not come in the Qal stem. So the first tragedy is that one of Job’s great herds was taken by the Sabeans and all of the men who were contracted out to watch these animals were killed.

Those who were killed were na’arîym (נַעֲרִים) [pronounced *nah-ġah-REEM*], which originally meant *young men*. It is applied to infants in Ex. 2:6 Judges 13:5, 7 or to a youth in gen. 34:19 41:12. It can also refer to a slave or a

²³ Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible; ©1976; Vol. V, p. 379.

servant, as in Gen. 24:2 || Kings 5:20. This is much like the word *boy* in our language, which, in the South, was applied both to young men and to slaves and later to descendants of slaves. It is unclear in this context as to whether we are referring to *young men to servants* or to *slaves*. Strong's #5288–5289 BDB #654.

The next verb is the Niphal imperfect of *mālaṭ* (מָלַח) [pronounced *maw-LAHT*], which means *to slip away, to slip through, to slip past, to escape*. This messenger was all out of breath and the passive seems to imply that he was allowed to escape. Strong's #4422 BDB #572. Although the messenger may not have thought of it in that way, Satan saw to it that this information got to Job immediately. He savored the look on Job's face when he found out. However, Satan is merciless. All of Job's young men, his hired help and servants and grand children—all those involved with the livestock—were slaughtered, except for one man to bring the message to Job.

With this verse, we begin the testing of Job. One of the things which I feared in the Christian life was the testing just as Job faced. This is because the book of Job is often poorly taught and we do not fully grasp the significance of it. (1) First of all, believers and unbelievers both suffer in this world. (2) Secondly the very best, most wonderful unbeliever spends eternity apart from God in great suffering and the worst, scummiest, sloppiest believer spends eternity in the presence of God, and although he has minimal blessings, he is blessed beyond his wildest dreams and blessed beyond anything that we know on this earth. (3) The suffering of Job is a special case. Not every believer is allowed to participate in suffering as Job will have in this book. He was a great believer whose testimony will stand throughout eternity. He was given the opportunity to suffer for righteousness sake and, from Abraham's bosom, he would tell us that this was the greatest moment of his life here on earth. (4) We believers are blessed here on earth and can expect to be blessed as well in heaven. **For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and for the life to come** (I Tim. 4:8). (5) Finally, what is often ignored is the fact that, prior to this challenge of Satan, Job had greater riches than any man on earth and, following this brief month or so of suffering, Job's wealth was restored to him in a greater amount than what he had at the first. So even temporally, although a small fraction of his life was spent in intense suffering, he both possessed the ability to deal with it through the strength of God the Holy Spirit; and he was blessed greatly before and after, as his love and devotion to God came from his soul.

In addition to this one speaking and this one came in then he said, "Fire of God fell from the two heavens and so it burned in the flock [of sheep] and in the servants then it consumed them and then I slipped away—only I by myself—to tell [it] to you."

Job 1:16

While this one was speaking another one entered and said, "Fire of God fell from heaven and it burned up the sheep and it consumed the servants; however, I escaped—only I by myself—to tell [it] to you."

This verse begins with the adverb *ʿōwd* (עוֹד) [pronounced *gohd*], which means *still, yet, again, besides, in addition to*. Strong's #5750 BDB #728. The demonstrative pronoun *zeh* (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*] occurs twice in this verse. By itself, it means *here, this*. Strong's #2063, 2086–2088, 2090 BDB #260.

He first thing that the second messenger said was *ʿesh* (עֵשׂ) [pronounced *aysh*], which means *fire* (Lev. 1:7) or *lightning* (Gen. 19:24 Ex. 9:23–24). Strong's #784 BDB #77. As we have seen in Genesis, fire from God is not a ball of fire that flies down to the earth—it is simply a way of denoting lightning. Apparently, there was a thunder and lightning storm, and the lightning killed the animals and the men who watched them. Fire is in the plural, indicating that there were several bolts of lightning; this was not just one huge bolt which wiped out an entire flock.²⁴

ʿEsh is in the construct and is followed by *God*. Interestingly enough, the second messenger then uses the same verb as the first one did: the Qal perfect of *nāp̄hal* (נָפַח) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*] which means *to fall*. Strong's #5307 BDB #656.

²⁴ I should mention that Keil and Delitzsch differ, preferring this to be fire and brimstone rained from heaven ala Sodom and Gomorrhah, rather than lightning. Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 277.

A question which should come to mind, at the reading of this verse so far, is did God actively participate in the suffering of Job. The phrase *fire (or, lightning) of God* is the quote of the messenger. That is, man of that era commonly referred to lightning as coming from God, as it originated in heaven; this does not mean that God took an active part in the suffering of Job. We have a similar wording when the fire was sent down from heaven by God upon Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 19:24 (see also Lev. 10:2 Num. 11:1–3 I Kings 18:38 II Kings 1:12). It is interesting that the messenger told Job that the lightning consumed the sheep and the young men; we don't know if this was actual or whether it was an exaggeration on the part of the messenger, who was apparently quite troubled by the incident himself. God did, as Scripture clearly reveals, allow Satan to inflict Job, which would result in phenomenal good for many believers in all ages to come, as well as a testimonial of God's blessing to a man whose love and service to God is motivated from the heart.

I have to quote McGee at this point: *"The fire of God." That is interesting. I kid a friend of mine who is an insurance agent. You know the policy always states they are not liable if your house is destroyed by "an act of God." We always blame God if something is destroyed. They were saying the same thing that that day. Why didn't he say, "The fire of Satan"? Who did it? Why, Satan did it! Why don't the insurance policies say, "If God permits Satan to destroy my house"?*²⁵

The second portion of what the messenger has to say is somewhat convoluted. It reads, literally, word-for-word: **in the flock [or, sheep (in the singular)] and in the servants [or, the young men] and then it consumed them.** He finishes by saying word-for-word what the other messenger said. We have several other messengers to come to Job and they will all end by saying the same thing. In each case, something will *fall* upon the group that he is with and *the young men* (or, *servants*) will be killed; and, finally, he will say, **"...and then I slipped away—only I by myself—to tell it to you."** I must admit that at this point I am somewhat nonplussed. Did Satan this carefully choose the men so that they would all approach Job and almost eerily say the same thing? Did a demon indwell each one to then say almost the same thing? Or, are we getting the essential synopsis of what was said by each person, but not a direct quote? Since nothing is said about demons indwelling anyone here, I would dismiss that hypothesis. Now there are enough differences from quote to quote to cause me to think that these are direct quotes. What is most likely is that these messengers entered and lined up, being able to hear what was said by the previous messenger, which then influenced the vocabulary that they employed. The effect of the similarities of the messengers is chilling. Satan hits Job hard with several tragedies, one right after another, so that Job hears them all at once; and furthermore engineers this so that what the messengers say sound quite similar.

In addition to this one speaking and this one came in then he said, "Chaldeans transformed into three heads and then spread out against the camels and so they took them and they struck down the young men with the mouth of the sword then I slipped away—only I by myself—to tell [it] to you."

Job 1:17

While this one was speaking another one entered and said, "The Chaldeans separated into three companies then raided the camels and took them; furthermore, they struck down the young men with the mouth of the sword then I slipped away—only I by myself—to tell [it] to you."

What the Chaldeans did was *sîym* (סִיַם) [pronounced *seem*] which means *to put, to place, to set, to make, to transform into*. Strong's #7760 BDB #962 & 965. What the Chaldeans transform into is three *heads*. The word used here is *rô'sh* (רֹשׁ) [pronounced *roshe*] and it means *head, top, company, chief, choicest*. It is used for the division of an army (Judges 7:16, 20 9:34, 37). Strong's #7218 BDB #910. The Chaldeans apparently separated into three companies and then attacked from three sides and took all of Job's camels, killing the youthful servants who guarded the camels. It is also possible that Job's 3000 camels were kept in three different areas and they Chaldeans broke into three groups in order to take all 3000. I personally would think that they would have struck each group one at a time; however, they did have enough men into three groups. In either case, they took all of Job's camels. Also, the use of camels would indicate that we are probably somewhere in the Arabian desert, Egypt or the mid-East.

²⁵ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, pp. 20–21.

In the KJV, they translate different verbs *fell upon*; and the NKJV tries to fix this by rendering these two different verbs as *raided*. The verb here is *pâshaṭ* (פָּשַׁט) [pronounced *paw-SHAHT*] and BDB gives the meanings *to strip off, to make a dash, to make a raid*. Strong tells us that this comes from the ancient root *to spread out* (i.e., to deploy in a hostile array) and therefore *to strip, to flay, to plunder, to unclothe*. This verbs use in terms of an army coming and *spreading* itself out in a hostile array can be found in Judges 9:33, 44 I Sam. 27:8. The relationship to removing one's clothing is that when clothing is put on, it is bound together and when it is removed, it is *spread out*. This word can also be used *to flay* a victim; that is, the remove their skin (Lev. 1:6 ii Chron. 29:34 35:11). Strong's #6584 BDB #832.

Inexplicably, the Septuagint renders *Chaldeans* with the Greek word for *horsemen*. Other older translations, such as the Syriac and the Chaldee, render this *Chaldeans*, as it should be. We don't know why the Greek translators chose to do this. However, it makes perfect sense for the Chaldeans to be horsemen, as Habakkuk tells us that they had horses which were faster than leopards (Hab. 1:8): *Their horses are swifter than leopards and keener than wolves in the evening. Their steeds paw the ground; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swooping down to devour.*

Several generations later, we read of Abraham as coming from Ur of the Chaldeans, which we believe to be the Euphrates Valley area; this would indicate that the Chaldeans from the Mesopotamia area would have had to have been relatively close to Uz. Early references to the Chaldeans are quite rare. We find them mentioned only incidentally in Gen. 11:28, 31 15:7, here, and then not again until the book of Kings and they play a big part in the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah. My guess is that we have here a reasonable sized tribe of rather aggressive Chaldeans. Although the NIV Study Bible tells us that they were a nomadic Arab tribe until around 1000 BC, this does not make any sense, as Abraham is said to have come from Ur of the Chaldeans. That is roughly 2000 BC, so they would have to have settled that area at least 100 years previous to that. Interestingly enough, they are not mentioned under the table of nations in Gen. 10, although by the time Abraham is on the scene, they have carved out a definite territory for themselves.

Barnes indicates that Abram and his family may have had ties to the Chaldeans, if not an alliance, at one time, as indicated by the name of a son of Nahor, Chesed; however, this is insignificant, as the word means *grace* in Hebrew. It is possible that Abram's line extends back to the Chaldeans, but it is my thinking that the territory occupied by himself and his ancestors, called Ur of the Chaldeans, does not automatically indicate that Abram was descended from the Chaldeans, but that he and his family lived in an area occupied by the Chaldeans.

In addition to this one speaking and this one came in then he said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in a house of their brother the first-born;

Job 1:18

While this one was speaking another one entered and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother;

This is the family gathering that we spoke of back in v. 13. Interestingly enough, the drinking of wine was not mentioned back in vv. 4–5 but it is mentioned in v. 13, making me think now that it is more significant. Whereas I do not want to launch out on some tirade against drinking at this point, it is true that some young people, when they discover drunkenness, tend to want to repeat the situation often. It is possible that most of Job's family was out of fellowship because of drunkenness here. They began with these feasts, which may have had some religious significance and the feasts have become a bit looser as time went on. I don't see this as some drunken orgy, but rather as a family meal wherein the people began to drink more and more.

“Then, observe, a great wind came from over [or, across] the wilderness and struck the four of the corners of the house and it fell upon the young ones and so they died; then I slipped away—only I by myself—to tell [it] to you.”

Job 1:19

“Then, observe, a great wind came from out over the wilderness and it struck the house from all sides and the house fell upon the young people resulting in their deaths; then I slipped away—only I by myself—to tell this to you.”

There was an incredible mid-western-type storm which ripped through the desert, casting lightning upon the livestock that Job had; this storm also spawned at least one tornado which destroyed the home of the older brother and all those who were dining inside. The verse sounds as though there were four tornados which all converged upon the house from all four sides—I don't know if that sort of thing is possible. This tells us that Satan has some control over the weather, as these catastrophes were all engineer by him. Again, this is simply because God granted him this control.

The word for *fell* here is the same as the one found in v. 15; and the word which I rendered *young ones* or *young people* is the same one found in vv. 15, 16 and 17 and rendered *servants* there. The noun could go either way; and again it is striking that the accounts of the four messengers is so similar. However, what is found here in the Hebrew is probably pretty accurate as to the exact words of the messengers. Whereas the first second and fourth messengers used the word for *to fall upon*, the third did not, although what occurred could easily call for the use of this verb. My point being that if this were simply a poetical recollection (or fabrication), then all four messengers would have used the same verb.

Just as the tornados struck the house of the oldest brother from all four sides, four messengers came in and struck Job from all four sides. His three greatest forms of wealth, his livestock, his sheep and his camels, were all destroyed or taken away by raiding bands; and his sons and daughters were all killed. This was the greatest tragedy. It was difficult to hear that he had lost all of his wealth in a day, but then to hear that he lost all of his sons and daughters was tragic beyond belief.

You will notice that Job's children are bit players, none is mentioned by name. They are introduced and dispensed with. People who have no spiritual impact are not used extensively by God. Some are kept alive to trip up other believers, some are taken out quickly, as were Job's children, and some are allowed to just meander around for their seventy years.

Satan's true character is revealed in what he has done and what he will do. Satan, by his self-will, brought sin upon this earth; and with sin, incredible, intense suffering. And, whenever necessary, he personally inflicts pain and suffering on others. This is the result of sin. This is why Satan, and all those who fall with him, including man and including angels, must be thrown into the Lake of Fire. They must be separated completely and forever from God's works. His only interest is self-justification and he cares little what pain and suffering that he causes others in order to get it.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

Job Blesses God Despite the Tragic Circumstances of His Life

Then Job got up then he tore his robe; then he shaved his head and then he fell [on the] ground and he prostrated himself.

Job 1:20

Then Job got up and tore his robe; then he shaved his head and then he fell [on the] ground and he prostrated himself.

It is said here that Job *arose* or *got up*. According to Barnes, this does not mean that Job was sitting and now he is standing, but that this word indicates that he is about to do something or that he is about to begin to do something. Strong's #6965 BDB #877.

For about the fifth time, we have the word *fell* again. One of the things which Job does is the Hithpael imperfect of *shâchah* (חָנַף) [pronounced *shaw-KHAH*], which means *to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to*. The Hithpael is the reflexive stem. Strong's #7812 BDB #1005. [Job] *does not, however, act like one in despair, but, humbling himself under the mighty hand of God, falls to the ground and prostrates himself, i.e., worshiping God, so that his face touches the earth.*²⁶

Clothes were difficult to come by and very expensive in the ancient world. Therefore, the practice of tearing one's clothing indicating that one was in the midst of great personal tragedy. We find this overt action as far back as Gen. 27:29, 34 when Jacob thought that his son, Joseph, had been killed. It was an ancient world expression of intense grief and personal suffering (Joshua 7:6 Ezra 9:3 Esther 4:1). We have historical documents indicating that not only did the Jews do this, but so did the Romans, the Greeks, the Egyptians and the Persians.²⁷ Later this act became a sign of great impassioned speech, as well as mourning (Mark 14:63).

The shaving of the head was performed in the Law, but it's meaning here was somewhat different. In the Law, it was a part of their many cleansing or purification rites, and here, again, it is an overt sign of grief over serious personal tragedy. The tearing of the robe and the shaving of the head were both symbols in the ancient world for deep grief and mourning; the falling on the ground is a sign of helplessness and of worship toward God. Job is terribly grieved and has fallen upon the ground, placing himself under God. There are times and circumstances where you will be completely devastated by life and your only option is the throw yourself before God. This is what Job did. Peter wrote: **Humble yourself before the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you at the proper time** (I Peter 5:6).

The fact that some of us are mature believers does not excuse us from normal grief. The death of loved ones should spawn a natural sense of loss and of grief. People who are not grieved at the death of those who are close to them are callous, not spiritual.

Then he said, "Naked I came out from a womb of my mother and naked I will return there. Y^ehowah gave and Y^ehowah took away; a name of Y^ehowah keeps on being blessed."

Job 1:21

Then Job said, "I came out from a womb of my mother naked and naked I will return to God. Y^ehowah has given me and Y^ehowah took away; the name of Y^ehowah keeps on being blessed."

This particular verse is written in poetry—a poem which is familiar to almost all of us:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb;
And naked will I return there.
The LORD has given and the LORD has taken away;
Blessed be the name of the LORD."

This reveals marvelous doctrinal orientation on the part of Job. He has received great material and familial blessing throughout his entire life. However, on this day, all of this blessing was removed. Job recognizes that he was born having absolutely nothing. God gave him these great blessings—Job did not earn or deserve them. Now God took back these blessings.

When expressing one's thoughts in poetry, we cannot always take the meaning entirely literally. When Job emerged from his mother's womb, he was literally naked. However, he will not return to his mother's womb. The word translated *there* is *shâm* (שָׁם) [pronounced *shawm*] and it can mean *there, thither, whither*. However, in poetry, it can point to *a spot in which a scene is localized vividly in the imagination.*²⁸ Strong's #8033 BDB #1027. What Job returns to naked is to God and he will be without a body. His body returns to the ground. **From dust you**

²⁶ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, pp. 278–279.

²⁷ *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books; p. 109 has the pertinent secular references.

²⁸ *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon*; Hendrickson, ©1979, p. 1027.

are and to dust you will return (Gen. 3:19b). The womb of the woman and the earth are both associated in Psalm 139:13–15. Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God Who gave it (Eccl. 12:7).

There are some who try to see reincarnation in this particular verse. However, we have, on the one hand, shown poetically what is being said: that is, the spirit *returns* to God, who gave it, and the body *returns* to the earth from whence it came (the body is made out of the chemicals of the earth). Even the most literal reading of this Scripture does not allow for reincarnation, but for the physical return to the womb of one's own mother, which is silly. Job himself did not believe in reincarnation. He said: "And as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives and at last He will take His stand upon the dust. Even after my skin is removed, yet from my flesh I will see God." (Job 19:25–26). Our corrupted flesh will put on incorrupted flesh, as Paul taught in I Cor. 15:42–44: **So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown perishable; it is raised imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.** The concept of reincarnation is that, with each lifetime, we improve, we learn, and our next lifetime is ostensibly better. And if we screw up, we are reincarnated in a lower station of life. This is flawed from an empirical standpoint, as our world has not gotten better morally nor can we point to any individual as being perfect (although certainly some appear more moral than others). Most of those that reincarnationists point to as being *highly evolved* are people that they really don't know very well—some Indian who sits in a cave, for instance. The concept of reincarnation also fails when examined by Scripture. It is the clear, unmistakable teaching of Scripture that we have but this one life, and during that life, we either choose Jesus Christ, at least for an instant, and live; or we push God away for every single waking moment of our lives, and spend eternity in separation from Him. **It is appointed for men to die once and after this judgment; so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many shall appear a second time for deliverance without sin, to those who eagerly await Him** (Heb. 9:27b–28). **"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."** (John 3:36). There is nothing in the Bible that indicates that we are to improve ourselves in order to gain salvation from God. In fact, it states quite the opposite: **For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast** (Eph. 2:8–9). **He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit** (Titus 3:5). Any improvements made in our lives are as a response to being eternally delivered, not a means of eternal deliverance.

Job recognizes that he has been the recipient of great wealth and blessing given to him by God. Since none of this will go with him when he dies, the loss of these material things is immaterial to his spiritual life. Certainly you have had a dream where you have amassed some material possessions which were important to you and when you awoke, they were all gone. There might have even been a dream where you lost some important material possession and then you awoke, and you still had it. Insofar as life goes, what we are given and what is removed from us is simply material objects which will not travel with us to heaven. We may experience great grief and sorrow, but upon our entrance into the presence of God, what we retained and what we lost during our lives will mean little or nothing. What will count is the doctrine which we have amassed in our souls. That will go with us. Although we begin our Christian lives from ground zero, when our life has terminated on planet earth, we might have possessions of value and we might have possessions which mean nothing. No matter what possessions you amass during a dream, they are meaningless when you wake up. Much of what we accumulate over the lifetime we are given is meaningless; however, what you accumulate in your soul in the way of God's Word will stand forever.

One of the themes found continually throughout the Bible is our birth and our death. **Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich; when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dies, he will carry nothing away; his glory will not descend after him** (Psalm 49:16–17). **As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand** (Eccl. 5:15). **For we have brought nothing into the world, and so we cannot take anything out of it either** (I Tim. 6:7).

...all the relatives were standing outside the bedroom door of the patriarch of a very wealthy family. They were waiting for the old man to die and for the family lawyer to come out. When he came, he announced to them all that the father had died. Immediately one of the more greedy ones asked, "How much did he leave?" And the lawyer

replied, "He left it all. He didn't take anything with him." That is the way it will be with all of us. It makes no difference how many deeds you have or how strong your safety deposit box may be, what you accumulate or how much insurance you have. When you go and when I go, we're going just like we came into this world. It is very important for us to get this into our philosophy of life. You may be living today in a \$150,000 home, or you may be living in a hovel. You may have a big bank account, or you may not have anything to count at all. You may have a safety deposit box filled with stocks and bonds, or you may not even have a safety deposit box. It makes no difference who you are. We're all going to leave the same way we came into this world. Whatever you have, you are simply a steward of it. Really, in the final analysis, it does not belong to you, does it?²⁹

All that is good has been given us by God. **Everything good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow** (James 1:17). Since all things were given by God, God has the right to remove it as well. "Y^ehowah causes death and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and He raises up. Y^ehowah makes poor and rich; He brings low, He also exalts. He raises the poor from the dust and He lifts the beggar from the dung heap to make them sit with the nobles and inherit a seat of honor." (1 Sam. 2:6–8a). **In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity consider—God has made the one as well as the other so that man may not discover anything after him** (Eccl. 7:14). Our possessions and family are merely temporal things, owned for a portion of the short time we are here on earth. The time that these things are in our grasp is not unlike a dream in which some possession vanishes or is lost at the end of the dream. There may be a feeling of loss and sadness in the morning; but that leaves quickly upon awakening. Also note that Job did not blame this upon a patch of bad luck; a group of terribly unlucky circumstances. His losses may be attributed rightly, but without bitterness, to God the Father as a result of His perfect plan. We may not always grasp what this plan is; but we know that nothing happens in this life by accident or misfortune—not to believers. As Barnes points out, Job did not vent his wrath upon the Sabeans or upon the Chaldeans. He did not curse the line of storms and the tornadoes which took his family. There is no confusion here. God removed these things and no one else. But Job does not speak out of bitterness. He just recognizes that God has a perfect plan and that this plan involves sometimes the removal of the things which God has given.

The last phrase begins with the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of the absolute status quo verb *to be*. This is in the cohortative jussive; the cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with a *let*; properly, this might be rendered: *let there be*. The subject of this verb is *a name of Y^ehowah*. This line ends with the Pual (passive intensive) participle of *blessed*. Literally, we have: **Let be a name of Y^ehowah being blessed**. Therefore, this could be rendered: **Let the name of Y^ehowah be blessed; Let the name of Y^ehowah stand continually blessed**. Most translations go with "Blessed be the name of the LORD." (KJV, NKJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV, REV). However, Rotherham goes with **The name of Yahweh be blessed!** and Young renders this '...let the name of Jehovah be blessed.' Job recognizes that all of his blessing has come from God and that God has allowed the removal of these things from his life. He does not know why, but his first reaction is "Let Y^ehowah's name stand being blessed." Therefore, **always give thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father** (Eph. 5:20). **In everything, give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus** (1 Thess. 5:18). **Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and He is merciful** (James 5:11).

There is no fatalism expressed by Job's words. He obviously does not grasp why these things are happening to him, but he knows God's character. Through God's Word, we learn about God's perfection and righteousness and love. Therefore, regardless of the immediate circumstances, we know that God is in charge, He is in control, and that we can trust Him in every respect. We can trust His character and we can trust what He has allowed in our lives and we can trust what He causes to occur in our lives. A properly brought up child has faced physical discipline at one time or another (and some of us faced it many times). At that time, we did not see being spanked as any sort of a great blessing; nor, did we even grasp that our parents did this out of great love. However, it was through this pain that we learned right from wrong and it was through this pain that our parents expressed their love and devotion to us. God is much greater than our parents and His character and motivations are even more trustworthy; therefore, it does not matter what heartache and pain that we face in this life—God is in control and

²⁹ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 22.

we can trust that. Job, although he will later waver somewhat as his temporal suffering increases, reveals his trust and confidence in God.

In all of this, Job did not sin and he did not place inordinate malfunction to God.

Job 1:22

In all of this, Job did not sin and he did not ascribe inordinate malfunction to God.

The second verb is the very common *set, place* followed by a negative and and the feminine noun *tiph^lâh* (תִּפְלוֹת) [pronounced *tif^l-LAWH*], which is given the meanings *unseemliness, unsavouriness* by BDB and *folly* by the KJV, are only slightly antiquated renderings. This word, found only in Job 1:22 24:12 Jer. 23:13, should be rendered *inordinant malfunction, inappropriateness, malfeasance*. Strong's #8604 BDB #1074. In other words, Job does not impugn the character of God. What is almost humorous, if it weren't so tragic, is the atheist or the agnostic who curses God when his life is in shambles. Even more tragic is the believer in Jesus Christ who does the same. Job, in in some people's minds had every right to curse God, did not but trusted God in what He had done. *Throughout the whole book, [Job]...does not go so far as to deny God, and thus far he does not fall into any unworthy utterances concerning His rule.*³⁰

I should mention that the Septuagint and the Vulgate read: **In all this, Job did not sin with his lips, nor did he place inordinate malfunction to God.** David wrote: **I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue. I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle while the wicked are in my presence** (Psalm 39:1). Therefore, when we are struck by tragedy and affliction, we should not swear at the weather or various circumstances; we should not look toward man upon whom to vent our wrath; we should not necessarily even go to the court system to get what is rightfully ours. All that we are given and all that we lose is a function of the plan of God—and that is a perfect plan, where God knows all the knowable. This does not preclude going to the police over a criminal assault; nor does it preclude your testimony at a trial. What it does preclude is your hating the person who has violated you. He is a person for whom Jesus Christ died. Although your first instinct is intense hatred for this person, recall that they are functioning under their old sin nature, which sin nature we also possess. Most of us will never see the great evil of which we are capable; however, we should be able to forgive the evil done by others toward us regardless of the impact upon ourselves and our family. All our hate does is to keep us out of fellowship and to allow Satan another opportunity to point to us as total failures as believers in Jesus Christ. No matter what happens to us, if we have believed in Jesus Christ, we can trust God. He is perfect and His love for us is perfect.

[<<Return to Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

[<<Site Map>>](#)

[<<Return to the Job Homepage>>](#)

[<<Return to Beginning of this Chapter>>](#)

³⁰ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 279.