

Does the Lord Need to Bribe You?

By Andrew Giles ~ Bowens Mill Convention 2005

I would like you to turn with me to the Book of Job chapter 1.

We have just returned from Africa, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who pray for us who travel because I am certainly very conscious when I am in those places how much I am in need of your prayer, and how much difference it makes. It would be wrong for me not to say thank you to all of you who hold us up before the Lord in prayer. I do not think we always know what the Lord keeps us from. There are dangers that are around and we don't always get to observe them. Every now and again He just lets us see a little bit of what we are being kept from, but we don't know how much difference the prayer makes in terms of our safety and also in regards to the flow and anointing. I am just convinced that your prayer is significantly impacting when we make those journeys, and I want to thank you and to encourage you not to stop.

Let's read a few verses here from Job chapter 1. If you look in the commentaries, you will find that they are all a little uncertain about this, but it is possible that Job lived about the same time as Abraham; some people think maybe this book was written by Moses who would have been about 500 years later, but nobody quite knows. It's one of the older books of the OT so, although it is found somewhere near the middle, we are going back a good 4,000 years or so in history as we read this story. I think that we will find as we read it together that it's not out of date, 4,000 years later or 3,500 years later we're not sure, but it's very, very current.

Job 1:1-12 'There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was

seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, everyone his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus did Job continually. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, "Whence comest thou?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." And the Lord said unto Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." And the Lord said unto Satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand." So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.'

I've become convinced, increasingly convinced through the years that the Bible is for me. It's not really a story book that tells history, or poetry, or even the story of Israel to us; it's about us. It's for us. That doesn't mean I understand it all yet; there's much in here I don't understand, but I am convinced this is God's word to me. So when I read a story like this, there is something inside me that inquires and

says, “God, what have you in this for me?” I was intrigued as I read this story as to how it related to my life.

And I first of all want to show you 5 points from the early part of the book of Job and when I have shown you these 5 things, maybe we can identify who this character Job is really a picture of, because I believe he is a type and a shadow. So let’s see if we can get some pieces of evidence here and when we’ve drawn the evidence together, maybe we can come to a conclusion as to who Job represents. I believe there is something here for us in 2005, so we need to actually identify who he might be.

1. First of all, if you were to get your concordance and look up the meaning of the name Job, you would find his name means ‘hated or persecuted’. I sometimes wonder in my own heart what must have been in the minds of parents when they named their children in those days, but I do believe that this is there so we can understand who this man Job represents. Do you remember when Jesus was talking to his disciples, He said to them, “You will be hated of all men for My name’s sake.” Sister Marie was telling us yesterday that the Apostle Paul said, “We are persecuted, but not forsaken.” *Job’s name means ‘hated and persecuted’*. There’s our first piece of evidence.
2. The Lord says of him, “*He had an upright heart, he feared God, he eschewed – departed from - evil.*” He was a man who I believe had a walk with God. He had been brought into a relationship with God, a relationship that he savored, that he valued, that he desired to continue. He wanted to walk with God – *he did walk with God*. A second piece of evidence.
3. The third piece of evidence is there in verse 5. *He had awareness that a relationship with God was dependant on sacrifice, and the way in which sin was dealt with was by sacrifice*. He said, “It may be that my children have sinned, and

if they have sinned, the way it has to be dealt with is by sacrifice.” So every morning he would offer a morning sacrifice, in case his children had sinned. The morning sacrifice is, as you perhaps know anyway, represents the Lord Jesus Christ. *So here was a man who had an understanding that sin was dealt with by the morning sacrifice.*

4. Here’s the fourth piece of evidence. The Lord says of Job, *“There is none like him in all the earth.”* Do you know what God says about a company of His people? Do you know how much He loves them? He talks about Israel as the apple of His eye. He says such things regarding you and me showing the extent of His devotion to us; in other words, His desire is that we should complete this race. He has invested Himself so that we might have an expected end and a certain end. He has given Himself to this particular project that we call salvation. Not just the salvation that we have experienced, but He has given Himself that we might be those who experience eternal salvation. He has done things for us that He hasn’t done for other people in this world. He has set His heart and His love upon us in a way that He has not done to others. He has been faithful to us in a way that He has not been to others, because He is saying, “This is My people – there’s none like them in all the earth.”

I recently did a study on the love of God and I found that the Bible, without question, concerning people like us—concerning those who are saved—declares that God loved us. He demonstrated that love in a way that makes it indisputable that He loved us, because He did it by giving His son for us.

The Apostle Paul, as he’s writing one of his letters, I think it’s to the Colossians – if you were writing a letter to someone and you were writing about the love of God, you would probably say, “The Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us,” but the Apostle Paul is so excited by the love of God, he says, “The Son of God who loved

me!”—and he couldn’t get over it! I wouldn’t write a letter that way – I’d say, “The Son of God who loved *us!*” The Apostle Paul was so taken up with the fact that God has treated *him* in a way he didn’t deserve, he said, “The Son of God who loved *me* and gave himself for *me.*”

And as I studied this out, I found that the truth of the love of God is declared again and again in scripture. He has demonstrated it!

But as I observed this, and held this before the Lord, I found that every one of the scriptures about the love of God to us that I have so far found is in the *past tense*. And when it comes to the security of continuing in the love of God and how He will love us, I found that then, it was expressed in a quite different way.

Brother Buddy was in the scripture, in the Elder’s time, in John 15 – let’s put a bookmark here and turn to this. When I started to look at the change in tense, and was considering the place of the continuing love of God in the future, I found that which was so certain and aptly demonstrated in the past became spoken of quite differently with regards to its future continuation.

John 15: 9-10 **‘As the father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue** [*the word is used again in the next verse; it’s translated ‘abide’—it’s the same word*] **continue** [*or abide*] **ye in my love.** [*We’re getting into the present tense now*] **If ye keep my commandments** [*you shall continue*] **you shall abide** [*the future of the love of God is dependent on obedience – the past love of God has been demonstrated to us and there’s not one person in this room that can question it. He loved us and He gave Himself for us, but the future continuation in the love of God – what does it say here? He said,] **If ye keep my commandments you shall abide** [*or continue*] **in my love.***

And then something else—I have read this so many times but it must have just slipped past me—Jesus said, “That’s exactly the position that I am in as well.” He said, “The Father’s love to me continues on exactly the same basis as yours does.

He said, “**Even as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.**” No different for you; no different for Him. If we are going to continue to experience the incredible blessing of the love of God, it requires our obedience.

What I am really saying is, ‘There is none like you in all the earth!’ There’s no other people that God has given so much to as us! He has come and He has moved upon us with salvation; He’s come and moved upon us and stirred our hearts in repentance, when we were far off; when we were sinners Christ died for us. We were dead in trespasses and sins!

I have noticed that I don’t respond with action and emotion and passion every time that I hear that somebody has died. Now when my Father died, I responded to that event with emotion – but none of *you* did. Why was that? Because I loved him – and you didn’t know him. A thousand people recently died in New Orleans and I didn’t cry for any of them. I wasn’t moved to do anything about it. Maybe some of you knew some of them; maybe it was different for you, but the thing that moves us when somebody has died, the thing that makes our behavior change, the thing that makes us emotional or responsive, is primarily that there is a love – there is a love relationship.

When we were dead in trespasses and sins, God, for His great love, wherewith He loved us, sent His son and He did something about it. The demonstration was that God had a love relationship with us, even when we were dead, for He would not have moved otherwise. I do not move; I am not moved by every death that there is, but God

was moved even while we were dead in trespasses and sins – so great was His love. *There is none like us in all the world!*

5. *Job had an anticipation of the resurrection of the dead.* Wow! He said, “I know my redeemer lives” – and he also said, “I know that though worms destroy this body, in my flesh shall I see God.” *He had an anticipation of the resurrection.*

All right now; all I am trying to do here is establish who Job represents. Let’s run through that again.

1) His name means “hated and persecuted”. 2) He had a real walk with God; an upright heart. 3) He knew that relationship with God was dependent upon sacrifice. 4) God said, “There’s none like him in all the earth.” And 5) he had an anticipation and expectation of the resurrection.

Do you think he actually might represent “us”? Do you think God wants to raise up a “**Job Company**”? A company that the people of this world will look on and say, “They’re nothing.” They’ll hate them; they’ll despise them; they’ll be a reproach to whom God says, “There’s none like them.” Do you think that people could be here today? It might be so. I think Job is a picture of some part, at least, of the church of Jesus Christ.

Now this is important to remember that as you read this book, because otherwise it is just 3,500 – 4,000 year old history, but it’s talking about us, Saints. This is for us. In just a moment, after we have read these first 5 verses, we will be transported up into a heavenly debate. We will get an insight into something that I am not absolutely sure that Job ever knew. There’s no explanation given to Job at the end of the book of what we have here in the very first scene. At the end of it, I don’t know if he ever knows what’s gone on. But we are given an explanation of the book from the very beginning.

Now, if you were to ask many people ‘What’s the theme of the book of Job?’ I think they’d commonly agree that the theme is ‘suffering’. The Bible establishes many different purposes and reasons why people suffer.

I think God permits people to experience affliction to get their attention. Have you ever noticed how you pray a bit more when you are in suffering? God gets your attention, doesn’t He? I think it’s to purge out faults. The Psalmist said, “Before I was afflicted, I went astray.” It does a work there. “But now I have kept Thy word,” he says, “The affliction brought me back.”

It’s also to build character. In Hebrews 12, it talks about how God is faithful in dealing with us as a father deals with his sons, otherwise we would be bastards, and He says the ultimate purpose in this is that we might be partakers of His holiness. So He chastises us. And sometimes that chastisement, the tool, is suffering and affliction. He wants us to manifest the life of Christ. He knows things have to happen for that to be done. The easy, cushy life is not going to bring forth the life of Christ that needs to be seen and so there is affliction.

This book tells us there is yet another reason, and I think it is a neglected reason. We were praying for Sister Darla this morning so it is obvious that we have people in our midst who have been and are going through incredible things. I thought, as I read the recent email from Tony about Sister Joyce – and it’s wonderful that she’s here today and looking so good—but when I read those emails, I thought, “How much more does a person have to go through?” There is a purpose to suffering that often slips past us unnoticed and it’s because it’s an expression of what is taking place in the heavenly realms, and the purpose of it is to settle an argument between Satan and God.

Satan goes into the presence of the Lord, and God says, “Look Satan, look at my servant Job.” And Satan says, (after God has given a bit of

explanation and amplified it) **“Does Job fear God for naught?”** That’s a very significant question.

Because what Satan is saying is, “God, you can only get people to love you, fear you and serve you by bribing them.” That’s what he’s saying. “You have to pour out all these material blessings, all this strength, all this health, all this prosperity, and all this money. God, when you do that, of course they love you. But try it this way God – just suppose you were to take it away; they would curse you to your face.” How would you resolve that argument? You would put it to the test.

It’s significant, for if it were so that God can only get people to love Him by bribing them, *the sin nature has never been dealt with*. If the only reason people serve God is for what they can get for themselves, and since we had that nature before we came to God, then it follows that nobody would ever be cleansed of the sin nature, so the work of Jesus would have been to no avail.....that is if Satan is right. And that would mean that Satan has corrupted the human race beyond redemption – does it not? Are you following me?

If God has to bribe people to love him; the sin nature is not dealt with; Jesus’ death didn’t accomplish the end of the old and the start of the new -- and therefore, there is no such thing as redemption. Satan has just corrupted the whole human race and when he ends up in the lake of fire he will go there with a laugh and a smirk on his face and says, “I’ve really won this.” And if that is the case, God Himself is in deception. I’m serious; just think it through.

Now, God’s not saying that’s the case, but if it is the case, that God has to bribe the whole of the Job church before they’ll love Him and serve Him, then God sent His Son to no avail. It’s all been pointless. Now, that’s pretty serious. If the godliness of a righteous man is only there for his own benefit, there is a chasm of alienation brought about by sin that cannot be bridged. This is a serious question.

So I want you to hear that question; it's being answered today. Does Job fear God for naught? And I'm not talking about Job. I am talking about the church – I am talking about us. And so this question has to be answered in the test. It is the only way it can be answered.

If God says, "Well it's not true - Job fears me because he just fears me – it's in his heart," Satan would turn around and say, "I don't believe you. Prove it." And so it has to be proven in the test and that is what *has* to happen.

And so Job, there he is – he's sitting there and everything is going really nicely – he can survey all that is in front of him like Nebuchadnezzar did; but suddenly it all changes. Satan had said, "If you touch all he has..." – and so God says, "All he has is in your power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand." And Satan went off to do it.

We've had some troubles here in our midst. I think of Upsala.....that was pretty hard. And you can think of other things, but I don't think we've had anything that quite compares with Job. You can read it through. He lost his children, he lost his servants, he lost his asses, he lost his camels, he lost his sheep, and it was just 'bamm!, bamm!, bamm!, bamm!' – one thing after another, and we read these incredible verses.....

Job 1:20, 21 'Then Job arose, and rent his mantel, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped, and said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'

What is it that Satan said that Job would do? What did he do? He worshipped. Just remember this. Darla, remember this. I don't know what the future is – none of us know what the outcome is. I've

determined that I'm not going to be in the category of 'you have not because you ask not'! I believe in healing; I believe we have a "God Who healeth thee" – I'm going to ask; I'm going to keep praying!

I just love our times in Africa. We were in the Uganda convention – we'd come to the end of the day and the meetings were closing. Suddenly, one person after another came up to me, and these were people who didn't speak English, and so they would come up and point to a particular part of their body. I knew what they were saying that they wanted prayer because there was something wrong just there.....and.....what can you do??? You just pray! So I prayed. And then I was walking out of the hall that we were meeting in, and one of the African sisters was walking out with me. I know her and she speaks English. I said, "How are you?" and she said, "I'm fine." I said, "How are your children?" She said, "My children are not very well." I came out of the church, and there, just sitting on the ground was one of her little boys, David Kiseka, and he was sick. I went over and put my hand on his head and I could feel the burning of the fever. I don't know what it was but it may well have been malaria. Brother Joseph was walking past at that time and I said, "Joe come over here, we're going to pray for this little boy." So, just as simply as could be – a prayer that a child could pray – we laid our hands on him and asked Jesus to heal him. We went home and came the next morning to the meeting. In the praise, I looked across and there were some of these ladies I had prayed for the day before and they were praising. Now, when you say 'praise' in Africa, you're not just talking about standing there and mouthing words and maybe raising your hands, I mean you're talking about.... you haven't seen dancing if you haven't been to Africa! The nearest you've seen to African dancing is like Brother Raymond, but that is only just a shadow! They did say when Raymond was in Kenya, that his was the closest thing to African dancing that they had seen in a 'white man – an mzungu. And these ladies were dancing! Then I looked and there was little David and he was standing there at the front of the congregation, in an area equivalent to this, and he was really going; he was praising; he was

just so full of energy! And I just thought, “Wow!” I took a picture of it;— I thought I just have to take a picture of this because it’s an example of the power of God – God does these things!

But the question is; *‘Do we serve Him because He does that, or do we serve Him because He’s God?’* God has a right to expect to be served and worshipped only for the simple reason that He is God! He has made us! We are the people of His pasture! We are the product of His creative work! We are the purchase of His blood and we have every reason in those few statements to give Him our entire devotion and our complete worship, and we have no excuse if we do not! He doesn’t have to heal us! He chooses at times to heal us! He’s chosen to forgive our sins – if He hadn’t forgiven our sins, He would still be God! And God wants to prove to Satan that He has raised up a people—‘a Job Company’—that will serve Him irrespective! We talk about whether God loves us unconditionally – that is not the question that has to be answered! The question that Satan is challenging God with is, “Can you raise up a people that will love You unconditionally?”

I love the fact that God has put into our hands, into our responsibility, the power to answer Satan’s question. Satan’s a liar from the beginning; a murderer from the beginning – I DON’T LIKE HIM! And you and I have the opportunity to prove him wrong – and to prove that God can do it.

In Isaiah 1:21 it says, “How is the faithful city become a harlot!” Do you know what a harlot is? It is somebody that gives her relationship for payment. Do you know what a bride—a wife is? Somebody who gives herself for no payment but for love. Do you see why the church can be called a ‘harlot church’? Because she says, “I’ll love You if You pay me.”

When we were in Kampala, all over the city were huge billboards and there were great big posters on them of a man from over here (I’m

not going to say his name, it doesn't matter) preaching before a huge black assembly. I don't know if he'd been there before, whether this was one of those cut and paste jobs or whether it was a real photograph. I was a bit skeptical, I have to say. I saw this same man later on because we were in a hotel that had a little television in the room and I switched the television on and he was being interviewed by one of the Ugandan TV presenters. It was a bit distressing actually, just hearing the interview, but at the end of it the interviewer said, "Now, would you like to pray for our TV audience?" He said, "Yes, I'd love to."

So I thought, 'What would you pray in that situation?' I thought, knowing where this man's coming from, surely he will at least take the opportunity to present Jesus, and to pray for the lost and just to say, "If you want to give your heart to Jesus, just pray this prayer with me." I thought something like that might happen, but all he did was pray for the sick. I have found that 'out there' just at the moment – it will be something else tomorrow, perhaps – but there is such an emphasis of physical healing, as if people don't realize that even Lazarus who was raised from the dead, died again! I am more interested at what's going to happen eternally! Job says, "If worms destroy this body, what does it matter? I know my redeemer lives!" Hallelujah.

So, there's a big argument in heaven. Satan's saying, "You can't do it." And God's saying, "Let's see." Those who say that suffering and sickness are caused by sin may be wrong. Those who say that sickness continues because of lack of faith may be wrong. It may be that all things are in place because God is showing Satan, "I've got a people who love Me."

The first test is: Job loses everything he has.

Put a bookmark where you are here, and let's turn over to Psalm 16. This is a Psalm written by David. If you'll remember that David is the

8th son of Jesse. I know it happens in movies; I don't know if it happens that much in real life – I've never actually experienced it – but you know, when somebody dies, in theory what they do is they get the lawyer there and the family gathers and the lawyer reads the will. Well, just suppose that the lawyer happened to be some Jewish lawyer, and the deceased happened to be Jesse. So the lawyer starts to read the will, “ The eldest son of Jesse; Shammah, you get the family home; Eliab, you get the lands to the north; Abinidab, you get the lands to the south; Fourth son, you get them to the east; Fifth, you get the ones to the west; Sixth son, you get the condo on the beach; Seventh son, you get the apartment in town; Eighth son,uh oh – he's the eighth son, and by the time you get to the eighth son, you know, things have been divided up pretty well. This is what David says:

Psalm 16:5 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot (*You keep my portion*). The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.'

The lines are the boundary lines. David is saying, “I am content with everything you have given me, Lord God, I need nothing more.” Why? Not because I've got the condo on the beach, or because I've got the family home or the lands to the north, but because I've got you, Lord God! You are mine inheritance! I need nothing more than my relationship with you Lord God! They can take my camels; the Sabeans can come; the winds can come from the four corners; they can have the asses, they can have the cattle; they can have the camels; I've got you, Lord God!”

God once led my wife and myself and our children into a situation in community, and the financial order in that community was that you put in everything you had. So we put in everything we had. I had been in business; I had some capital that was returned to me out of the business; we sold our home, we had a certain number of

investments, we had a bit of cash in the bank; we put the whole lot in – everything. And we watched it being spent. Three years later, God told us to leave. We had nothing. Some of you have seen pictures of Blessington where we are now. How was that beautiful house acquired? We didn't initially give the money to the community but to God. It had been God who told us to go to the community and giving all was part of the package – we obeyed the Lord. We were walking in His ways; this was what we had to do, it was part of our obedience. And the LORD kept us! And if ever you come to Blessington – some of you have been there, and some of you have yet to come – you'll see, God didn't leave us. He provided magnificently. We live in a place I would never, ever have lived in by myself—I couldn't maintain it. In fact we bought it from people who couldn't maintain it. The Lord is the portion of our inheritance; that's all we need! He says, "Not even a sparrow falls to the ground that He doesn't know it. Of how much more value are you than they?" He'll take responsibility. You can commit your way to the Lord and He'll look after you. I stand here today and I'm a testimony to that.

It's so helpful to me as I go to Africa and see the multitudes today who have nothing and I can say, "I've been there, and your only answer is not the white man", and there are a few, just a few who are beginning to get a hold of this. Your answer is not the white man, and I want to tell you white men, your answer is not your bank balance! It's not the title deeds to your property! The Lord is the portion of your inheritance! And David said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance" and then he went on and said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and my cup." You know what the cup is? Jesus said, "The cup that the Father gives Me, shall I not drink it?" He was heading to the cross. He said, "The Lord is in the cup as well." Darla, the Lord's in the cup. Marcus, you found the Lord in the cup, didn't you? *The Lord's in the cup* – in the suffering. Blessed be the name of the Lord. The Lord gives – the Lord takes away – *but the Lord Himself doesn't go!* Some of the things will go – He's there in the cup too. So we can all say, when we have the Lord there, the

lines are fallen to me in pleasant places. It's okay, the boundary lines are in the right place and I've got the Lord – I have a goodly heritage.

Back to Job chapter 1. God said to Satan, "You can put your hand to all he has, but you can't put your hand to him." Later on he was allowed to touch his body, but you know the one thing Satan can't touch – he can't touch your life. He has no power over your life. God's never going to give *him* the authority to take away your life – I'm talking about LIFE – he can't get there; he's got no authority. Jesus said, "No one shall pluck them out of My hand." He does not have that authority. So in the midst of this, one thing that was not moved was Job's faith in God. He knew that was his life.

Job 2:1-3 'Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, "From whence comest thou?" And Satan answered the Lord, and said, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." And the Lord said unto Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant, Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.'

I love that phrase, "without cause". You know, we are always wanting to know the why? There isn't always an answer to the question, "Why?" There was no fault in Job that made this happen. That was what God was saying. "Satan you did this, you made this happen, you provoked me to do this, you made this test to have to come in place, and the fault was not in Job that made this happen. You know when some things happen, the prayer, the cry that comes up is, "Why, Lord?" You are not always going to know the answer to that question. I want to tell you that if you knew the answer to that question, if you could understand all the ways of God, you would be

god, and your god would be as small as your understanding. You'd have to fit Him inside your head, if you could understand His ways, wouldn't you? He'd have to fit inside your understanding and therefore you would be greater than He was. So He cannot, even if He wanted to explain all His ways to you and me.

In chapter 32 of the book, a man called Elihu comes along. We've identified Job (and I'm jumping over the "Comforters" for the moment) and now Elihu comes along. And you will appreciate that Elihu has sat there from the beginning; he has said nothing; he's heard all that has gone on before, and it's not until chapter 32 that Elihu speaks, having heard everything. If we identify Job, I believe we need to identify Elihu.

Elihu's name means, 'He's my God'. He silences the fleshy voices of the 'Comforters'. He silences Job. He says a few things about himself. He says in:

Job 32:8 **'There's a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.'** *(He realizes that understanding doesn't come from man, but from the 'inspiration' of The Almighty – it's the work of the Holy Spirit.)*

Job 33:4 *(He makes the claim for himself and he says,)* **'The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.'** *(He realizes that the understanding that has to come in this situation must come from the Holy Spirit, and he realizes that the only life that counts is the life of the Holy Spirit – the life of the Spirit.)*
Remember, we are identifying this man.

Job 32:19 **'Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent: it is ready to burst like a new bottle.'** *(He says, "I'm like a wineskin full-up with new wine,)* Okay, we're putting evidence together as to who this man might be.

Job 33:1 ‘Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.’ He is a man Job should listen to.

Job 33:6 ‘Behold, I am according to thy wish in God’s stead: I also am formed out of the clay.’ (*If you read back you will find that Job, in his appeal to God in the midst of his suffering says, “If only there was a daysman, a go-between, a mediator!” And Elihu says, “I’m the one.” He says, “I’m here in God’s place.” And he said, “But I am also made of clay.”*) Do you think we can identify Elihu? Have you got it?

He represents the Lord Jesus who appears in the midst of the suffering and brings the words of hope and life. If you read through what Elihu has to say, you will find that there are two things he has to say. The first thing he says is, “Job, you will not understand the ways of God.” Don’t try to understand the ways of God. God is God!

Job 33:8-13 *Elihu says, ‘Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me. Behold, He findeth occasions against me, He counteth me for his enemy, He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.’ Elihu says, “Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee that God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against Him? For He giveth not account of any of His matters.”*

The first thing that Elihu comes and says is, “God is great.” He establishes the position of Almighty God before Job. Family, if we’re to be the “Job Company”, there is something we have to understand; we have a great God! We come together in these meetings and we start by singing praises to our God. Do you know why we’re doing it? To stretch our legs? To exercise our lungs and our voices? No! It’s to establish that our God is great before our eyes – and worthy to be praised! He is great and greatly to be praised! We need to know that! We’ve got to hold on to that! Our God is GREAT! He does

things in the heavens that we don't understand – His ways are past finding out—His riches are unsearchable – His love is unfathomable - and we need to get hold of these truths!

When Jesus came to earth it was a move that God made, that nobody understood, and if you think you can understand it now, you are a better woman or man than I am because I'm still struggling to understand why God would give His son for me. Why did He do it? I don't know. I don't understand all the ways of God; His ways are not my ways; His thoughts are not my thoughts; He isn't me! God is greater than man. And, like Elihu, the first thing that Jesus declares by His coming to earth is that we have a great God! God is plenteous in mercy.

Why did God save you? Do you understand why He saved you? I can think of a lot better candidates than me if He was going to save somebody – I can think of a lot better people to save than me. And yet I don't believe that God is a bad merchant. You know, if He finds a pearl of great price, you know He's going to do the right thing! He's a very wise merchant. Why then, in the economy of God, would He give the blood of His son for a people like us? I don't understand God! And the first thing the coming of Jesus declares is, "We don't understand God."

I think the coming of Jesus is declared here:

Job 33:14 'God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.' *If you read one of the other versions it says, He speaks this way, He speaks that way; man doesn't understand it -- now one way, now another.*

Job 33:15He may speak when somebody's asleep, in a dream. But if you'll read through these next verses you will find what it is really describing is somebody who is dead in trespasses and sins. That's somebody that's in a sleep of spiritual death. That's somebody

that's just not able to receive the things of God, and He comes in, in the midst of that death, and breaks through and withdraws man from his purpose; He changes his direction; He changes his ways; He changes his ambitions; He changes his goals; He changes his life and He does it and starts off when the man is asleep. Hallelujah!

There's another reason Jesus came. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Hallelujah! And Elihu comes and he says, "We've got a great God and I've come to declare He's come to seek and to save that which was lost." And you read on and you find another thing - and Jesus declares this too. He says, "God is not only great, but everything He does is righteous and just."

I think of that time when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, and there he's praying, "**Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will but Thy will.**" What do you think He thinks about that prayer today? Don't you think He says, "Father, I'm just so glad You didn't change plans; I'm just so glad that You knew things I didn't know and You kept the course; You didn't change direction just because I said, 'Father, please'." I think He's now saying, "Oh Father, I'm so grateful you took me to the cross! The cross is now my people's cause of rejoicing, it's their boast, it's their glory! I'm glad You didn't change plan Father. I just want You to know, You were right!"

I think of when Paul had the thorn in the flesh, and I don't know what the thorn is. I've got my own speculations - you've probably got yours. I have the feeling that if God really wanted us to know, He would have put it in the Book. But what Paul said is, "I sought the Lord that He would take it away, and He didn't." And he said, "I've learned I'm just going to rejoice in my infirmities that the power of God may rest upon me." And I think he came to the place where he said, "God, I don't understand, but Your ways are right. And I think Jesus came to declare, "God's ways are right. Not only that He is great, but that He's right."

And Elihu comes and he says to Job and he says to you and to me, “Whatever happens, God is right! The integrity of God stands intact! It is not dependent on our understanding; it is not varied by what happens; things that are catastrophes – *apparently* -- may happen, though I do not think there is truly any catastrophe that can happen to those that are walking with God. It may *appear* that everything is going wrong, but nothing is going wrong if you are walking with the Lord – attribute integrity to our God! Our God is good (the audience answers, “All the time”) and all the time (audience – “God is good!) ...and that’s easy to say in a convention. Hallelujah.

As we were in chapter 2 we were reading how Satan came back to before the presence of the Lord and he said, **“You haven’t touched his body. If you made him sick; if you made him really hurt, then he would curse You.”** And so Job was smitten in his body and he had the boils, he had the potsherd and he scraped himself and he sat down there and his wife said, **“Curse God and die.”**

There is a ‘company’ that God has that are not going to listen to the woman. Adam listened to the woman, but God’s raising up a company that will not listen to the woman.

Job 2:11 ‘Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came everyone from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent everyone his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.’

It doesn't actually say it, but I believe Elihu was there as well all this time. I don't think that in all that went on that Elihu wasn't there because he said later that he'd heard the words. You know, in the midst of it all, *Elihu's always there* but we don't always perceive it. **'I will never leave you nor forsake you – I'll never leave you nor forsake you.'** These three, who were later on called by Job, "miserable comforters", came to bring him comfort.

Their names are significant. Eliphaz means: 'god of gold.' He was a Temanite. Temanite means: 'the south, or right hand', and if you'll just think about it, if south is on your right hand side, you are facing east. So you know what sort of 'gold' he was offering. You know what sort of word was going to come forth from him. "Job, it's meant to be an easy life; it's meant to be comfortable." – I would say a *'prosperity preacher'*.

Bildad: 'Confusing by mingling love.' Confusing love, caused by mingling – soul and spirit – a mixture. He was a Shuhite [that's not talking about his stature!], it means: 'to sink, or, a valley' – it's going to take you down because it's not a pure word – *it's a mixture; soul and spirit – confusing*.

Zophar means: 'Departing'. Something that takes you out. He was a Naamathite; that means: 'Pleasantness' – it's a feminine word; the feminine of pleasure. He was a descendent of Cain.

As I read these names I thought of **James 3:1**, where he says, **"The wisdom that comes from beneath is earthy, sensual and devilish."** You just think about it:

- Eliphaz offers them the gold, the natural: *earthy*;
- Bildad means 'confusing soul and spirit'; *sensual*;
- Zophar, 'taking you out – making you depart'; *devilish*.

And from chapter 3 to 31, they are sitting there with Job. Why? Why? Why? Why would God give 29 chapters to that? Could it be – could it perhaps be, ‘these miserable comforters are around a long time’? Hmmm.....they’re around today.

I was in England recently and I took my Bible with me, but I didn’t have access to my Strong’s Concordance. The Lord said to me, “Read the First Book of Kings” and I started reading it and went straight into the story of David when he’s an old man and he can’t get warm. The servants think, ‘What can we do about this?’ They search for a fair damsel up and down the land, and they find the fairest they can find. Her name is Abishag, and they bring her to him. They say, “**Let her cherish him and let her lie in his bosom.**” We read that she did come and she cherished David but he did not lie with her.

I noticed that, and I’m reading on the premise that this Book’s for me, and I said, “Lord, why did You put that in there? I don’t like reading other people’s medical records. They’re private; they’re personal! When my father died, the last time I saw him he was comatose; he was lying on the hospital bed and he was in weakness, but if you were to come and ask me about my father, I would not first of all remember that particular time. There were so many good times we had together! He was a man who taught me the ways of the Lord; he was a man who loved the Word; he was a man who prayed for me. I would tell you all about those things – I wouldn’t tell you about him lying in the hospital bed. Why do they put that detail in the scriptures about David? We know about David, King of Israel; we know about the wonderful things he did – why does the Bible tell us this personal stuff? That was my question, and I felt the Lord say to me, “Find out the meaning of Abishag.”

So I came home, it was about 10 or 11 o’clock at night, quite late. I said, “Hello” to Kathy and she said, “I have a meal for you” and I said, “I need my Strong’s Concordance.” I got my Strong’s Concordance and Abishag means,... wait for it... ‘father of deception’. I read it

several times just to be sure I hadn't got the wrong Strong's number. But right at the end of King David's life, the deception was there. The time of the transfer of the Kingdom to Solomon, the change of the age, – there was Abishag.....deception right there! And what did they say about her? The fairest damsel in the land! Are we in peril? Are these 'perilous times'? Is it hurricanes that are the problem? No. Is it mudslides? Is it terrorism? No, it isn't. It's deception. And it says, regarding David, although she cherished him, he did not lie with her. The servants had a plan that they should lie together but he never took her to his bosom. He never took her to his heart.

Just remember, a relationship with Abishag killed Adonijah. Deception is a killer. Because he wanted relationship with her, he lost his life. We are not going to come to a time in this dispensation where there is no deception around. The 'lie' is around, just as King David was not in a position where he could stop Abishag from being there in the room with him wiping the food off his beard and attending to his bed sheets, and whatever needed to be done for this old man. He couldn't stop that, but he did not receive her to his heart. So next I considered why it was that David never took Abishag into his heart.

If I were to say to you, "What is your favorite Psalm?" (I did this down in Hollywood just a couple of weeks back) I would get all the answers....Psalm 91, 23, 133 and 84 – there's some beautiful, beautiful Psalms. But nobody, and I've tried this twice, *nobody* has ever said, "Psalm 119." I say to people, (I've done this too) "What do you know about Psalm 119?" They'll say, "It's LONG." Some people might say, "I like Psalm 117 (and the reason behind it is because 'it's short!'), but Psalm 119 is so long!" There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet and there are 8 verses for every one of those letters, for every one of those 8 verses begin with that Hebrew letter. Eight 22's are 176 and there are 176 verses in the Psalm.

But that's not what it's about! It's about a man who was sold out in love for the word of God! He says, "Teach me Your way; with a whole heart, I want to walk in Your ways!" What kept him when he was there in the last days of his life was that through the walk of his life, he had said, "Lord I want You to teach me; show me the way I should go; I don't know how to walk this walk, *teach me Your way, Oh God!*" And when the test came at the end, and the deception was *right there* as it is *right here in our* house; the thoughts coming to *our* bedroom; the thing that will keep us is a cry to God; "God, give me a heart that loves Your voice – teach me Your way, Oh God!"

These comforters stayed with Job for 29 chapters, but Elihu was there all the time – he was there all the time. At the end of the book God appears. Do you know what God talks about? He talks about His creation. He loves His creation. He gets so excited by the creation. I think one of the nicest parts of it is where He's talking about the stork. The stork is a 'stupid bird'. It lays the eggs in the ground and people walk on them and it forgets where it has laid them and God loves the fact that He made the stork so stupid! (Laughter) You check it out – God loves His creation. And He takes Job's attention at the end of the suffering and at the end of this dealing and He turns his eyes to the creation, because God's got more to do than just *this stage* of the operation.

And at the end, Job comes forth, and you've read those verses at the end – even if you've not read the chunk in the middle, you've read those verses at the end and you find that he is treated by God as a son. And a double portion comes to him, just like it fell on Elisha after Elijah was taken. God is raising up a Job Company. They may be persecuted; they may be despised; they are in great challenge because of deception, because of voices that are speaking to them from all directions, telling them to compromise, trying to bring confusion; telling them to go after the things of this world, but God brings Job through and at the end He establishes that Job is a first born son.

God's going to do this. Family, God *is* going to do this. It *may* take some situations and circumstances; some suffering that we will not think to be very pleasant. I don't know why I said the word 'may' – *it will!* When I first saw these truths, the following week was terrible! God doesn't let you 'off the hook' just because He shows it to you in the word. I had a dreadful week – everything went wrong the next week, and people started to say, "That just what you preached on Sunday." I hold my hands up now - "I'm guilty" if you have a bad week next week – but remember the purpose! You're answering the challenge of Satan to God.

And the challenge is, 'God You can only raise up people who will serve You because You bless them'. And we're here to prove, "God You have a people who love You unconditionally."

God, You have blessed us. God we declare You have loved us and given Yourself for us. Lord, we're already blessed above all the people that are upon the face of the earth. We're blessed to have this calling on our lives, God! We're privileged!

But if it takes suffering and a path of the cross and heavy loads to bear, if it takes crying out in the night hours, remember what you are doing – you are establishing before the principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God – "God, You can do it. And I want to be one of those You do it through."

Hallelujah! May God bless you.

Buddy Cobb's closing remarks:

The book of Job is a very interesting book, alright. While God tells Satan, "You move Me without cause", He wasn't allowing Satan to do what he was doing to Job without purpose because there was a fault in Job and it wasn't a fault that Job was even conscious about. It's

called a “hidden thing of dishonesty”. I’ll tell you what it was; it’s written in the book. Job told those comforters, “I have not done a thing to deserve what is happening to me.”

Did you ever have something happen to you that you didn’t think you deserved it? What God was out to do was to get Job’s thinking right. God wouldn’t just allow one that had no fault or blemish in him to go through something with no reason. **The curse causeless does not come** and Job was under a curse. When you’re sick, you’re under a curse; sickness is a curse of God. When there’s no more curse, there’s no more sickness.

You can see that this is another thing we want to understand about God. He is a just God. He will never lay upon man more than is right. He’ll never do anything that He’s doing without purpose and without cause. Satan didn’t have anything to accuse Job of; it wasn’t anything outwardly that he had done, but it was a thought in Job’s own mind that had to be straightened out. That is, when he was telling his comforters, “I’ve done nothing to deserve what is happening to me. If I could just find God, He would tell you that.” That’s what he said. He said, “If I could find God, He would tell you that I’ve done nothing to deserve what is happening to me.”

How many of you have ever had something happen to you and you didn’t think you had done anything to deserve it? You see, truly Job hadn’t done anything. That’s why the devil didn’t have any cause to do anything to him. Job hadn’t done anything, but under that kind of a test, he was holding a thought that Elihu picked up. Elihu said, “I hear the voice of your words and here’s what you were saying, Job, ‘God is unjust to allow something to happen to man’ because you said that you didn’t do anything to deserve what is happening to you. That means that you are ascribing righteousness to yourself and unrighteousness to God.”

There are a lot of people who are caught and they can't get their deliverance because they believe they were a victim of circumstances. They are ascribing themselves righteousness; "I've done nothing to deserve what happened to me! I'm innocent!" And if you ever make that statement, you are saying that God is unjust.

Elihu said, "I want to tell you something, Job. God is righteousness; not you." He is not unjust to allow any man to go through anything without purpose and without cause. You may not see it until God shows it to you. God says, "You may not understand it, but when you come into My sanctuary—when you have come into the fullness of light—then you will know that I have not done anything that I have done without purpose and without cause."

The great question that people have is, "If God is so good and He is God and He is control, then why does He allow all these terrible things to happen?" That's the great question. "Why were all those terrible things happening to Job? Why would God allow that to happen, if God is good?"

Well, I can tell you this: there is nothing that is happening that's going to prove that God is unjust. Whenever the light is turned on, just like it was when it was turned on for Job, Job said, "Woe is me; I spoke in my ignorance! I'm getting hold now of what God was really after this whole time, which was to reveal this hidden thing of dishonesty in me where I would claim I did not deserve—I was righteous—and by my own thinking I was accusing God of being unjust to allow me to suffer something without purpose and without cause."

There are a lot of people caught there. They will never get deliverance until they see, as the book of Job reveals, how deliverance comes. It says, **'If there could be a messenger in the midst, one among a thousand, who can show unto man God's uprightness so that man will stop accusing God of being unjust, then**

I have found a ransom and it will deliver that soul from going to hell.'

Do you know that if God had not done what He did to Job that he would have been on his way to hell? But because there was a messenger, Elihu, who could hear the voice of Job's words—he could put his finger right on the fault—and as soon as he did, because he was a man who was filled with the Spirit of God, God showed up and confirmed the word of Elihu to Job. Then Job said, "Wow!"

I was sitting here this morning during Brother Andrew's word and several times I said, "Wow! I see it now, Lord, even clearer than I've ever seen it before!" This is God moving to straighten up our thinking. We have to not only offend Him in deed, we also have to not offend Him in word so that we're perfect in word and in deed.

As a matter of fact, we cannot get to perfection by offending in word. **'He that offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.'** And Job was on the way to perfection. And he was made perfect by the things which he suffered. Can you say, "Amen!"?

Will you ever complain and murmur again about the things which you are suffering or will you give Him thanks in ALL things? I guarantee you, when we get it right, Satan will be silenced.

One of the things that just dawned so clearly to me this morning when Brother Andrew was ministering; I had never seen it this clear before or maybe even in this dimension before: I've always seen—and you know the way you think about a thing sometimes even causes you not to see the full truth of it—but, I've always seen that Satan is an adversary; that he was always there to accuse me of what I had done wrong. But, Job hadn't done anything wrong; it was **just a thought** he had. He thought what happened to him was unjust because he had done nothing wrong. I see the great accusation of the devil is not to accuse us of what we've done wrong; we have to admit

that! The great accusation of the devil is, “Do they love You for naught?” That is the accuser of the brethren: “Do they love You for naught?”

If you want people to come to your meetings, just have a god who will perform the miracles, make them rich, increase them with goods, and now you know you are being blessed of God. No, no. It’s when you are suffering the loss of all things and you count it all dung. He can take you through fire and water and you’re still counting it all joy and there’s no murmuring, no complaining because you know this is the will of God for you. That is 100% deliverance! That will deliver anybody when they wake up to the truth that God is righteous.

Wake up to the fact that no matter what you’ve gone through and what you’ve suffered, that God is a just God and ascribe to Him righteousness and say, “God, I may not see why all this is happening, but I know one thing about it, You are righteous and You would never take anybody through anything without purpose and without cause and You’re working it altogether for the good of those who love You and are keeping Your commandments.” Hallelujah!

Would you ever murmur or complain about anything again? (*Brother Bill Grier responds, “We shouldn’t!”*)

Bill Grier comments:

There is something else that I had never seen to this extent. I thought I saw it and I know I’ve known it. It’s the absolute awe that ***I don’t have to be on a quest to find the purpose; I have to wait until He shows it—wait until He reveals it.*** I’ve known that, but there’s still that aspect of wanting to pursue and there’s a holy help for all of us in that, because we’re looking around all the time—why, God? Why?

I tell people all the time, don't ask God, He'll show you. I think God has settled some things inside us today with this word. Didn't you feel that?

Buddy Cobb comments:

It's not our part to reason why, just simply do and die. So Brother Sam got hold of the message and said, "If you've got a problem, I've got an answer for you: die!" Then all your problems are over. If you no longer live, then what kind of problems could you have?