

Book of Job

Man's Wisdom versus God's Wisdom and Plan for Man



INTRODUCTION

Setting | Summary | Main Themes



MAN'S WISDOM

Suffering | Man's Justification | Prosperity of the Wicked



GOD'S WISDOM

Incomprehensible | God's Plan for Man | Points to Jesus

Literary Style – Was Job Real?

Prose	Poetry
Chapters 1-2, 42:7-17	Chapters 3-42:6
Is the story of Job an allegory?	

References to Job in Other Books of the Bible

14 even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in their midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves,” declares the Lord God.

20 even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord God, “they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would only deliver themselves by their righteousness.”

11 We count those blessed that 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 is merciful.

19 ...”He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness”

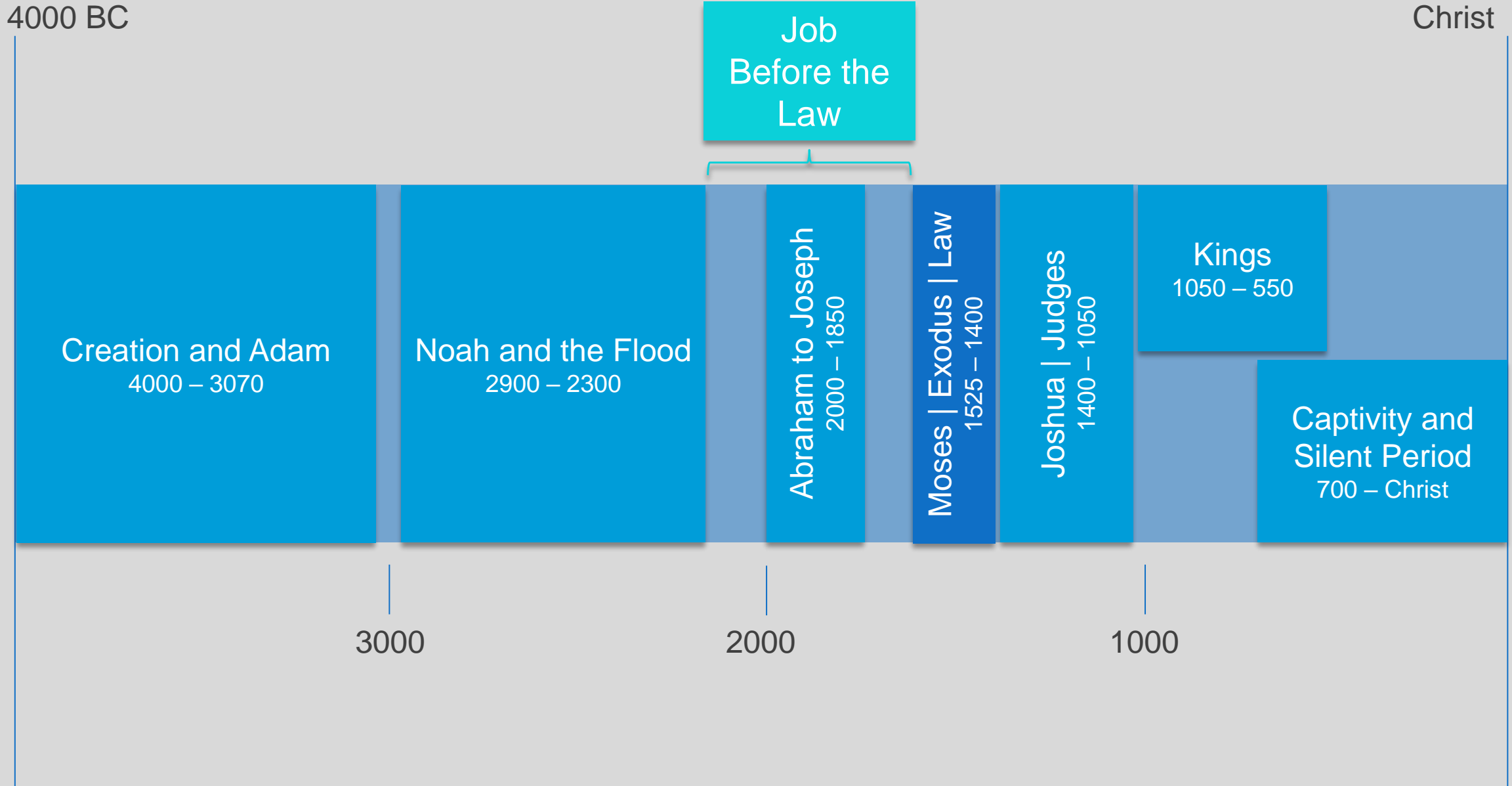
Ezekiel 14:14,20

James 5:11

1 Cor 3:19
quotes Job 5:13

*Passages from Job are quoted 65 times throughout the Bible
(37 in the Psalms, 18 in Proverbs, 9 in the Prophets, 1 in the New Testament)*

Date of the Events



Evidence for and Relevance of the Time Period

Evidence for the Time Period

Wealth was measured in animals and servants, not gold and silver	Job 1:3
Sacrifices made by the head of the family, priests are mentioned but not Israel/law	Job 1:5, 12:19
Job lived to be ~200 years old	Job 42:16
Reference to the flood?	Job 22:15-16
Behemoth and Leviathan (dinosaurs) mentioned	Job 40:15-24; 41 Ps 74:12-14 Ps 104:26 Is 27:1 (symbol)
Reference to Adam hiding his sin	Job 31:33

Relevance of the Time Period – Before God Fully Reveals His Plan for Man

1 The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. 2 Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge .	Ps 19:1-2
God reveals Himself in creation and within the creature	Rm 1:18-22

All of the characters reference creation when speaking about God's wisdom

God's law (from Moses) is not referenced as the basis or authority for their arguments.

Job does make reference to God's laws/words (covenant of works) – maybe understood through the account of Adam.

What is Wisdom – 3 Aspects

KNOWLEDGE facts or information, things that are learned

16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, but a fool displays folly Pr 13:16

15 The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge Pr 18:15

UNDERSTANDING comprehension, using knowledge

6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and finds none, but knowledge is easy to one who has understanding. **7** Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge. **8** The wisdom of the sensible it to understand his way, but the foolishness of fools is deceit. Pr 14:6-8

MORALITY distinguishing right/wrong; correctly applying knowledge and understanding

1 just weight/false balance **2** humility/pride **3** integrity/crookedness **4-11** righteous/wicked
12-13 trustworthy/gossip **16** gracious/ruthless **17** merciful/cruel **20** blameless/perverse
24-26 generous/stingy Pr 11

True wisdom is from God and characterized as being gentle, peaceful, reasonable, merciful, unwavering, good fruits, and righteous **versus** bitter, jealous, selfish, ambitious, arrogant, earthly, natural, and demonic James 3:13-18

SOURCE of WISDOM Proverbs 1:7, 9:10 | Job 28:28, 32:8, 37:24 | Proverbs 2:2-11

Summary – Job’s Testing

Who was Job?	Job 1:1-8 Job 29:12-27
Blameless Upright Feared God Turned Away from Evil	
Very wealthy	
Acted as a priest for his family, offering sacrifices for sins (Noah, Abraham, Melchizedek)	
Helped the needy	
No one like him on earth	

God and Satan	Job 1:6–2:9
God asks Satan to consider His servant Job	
Satan says Job fears God because God protected and blessed him	
God allowed Satan to take away all of Job’s wealth and 10 children	
Job did not curse God or lose his faith/trust in Him	
God allowed Satan to physically inflict Job	
Job did not curse God or lose his faith/trust in Him	

Job’s Suffering	Job 1:12–2:13
All of Job’s animals stolen	
All of his servants died	
All of his children died	
Painful and itchy boils all over his body	
Satan, no doubt, did the worst he could do to Job without killing him (God’s command)	

Summary – Debate and Resolution

Speeches Job & 3 Friends	Job 3-31
Job Eliphaz Bildad Zophar 5 3 3 2 Speeches	
Job does not curse God or lose his integrity like Satan said he would	
Job states his innocence, questions life's purpose, God's concern for man, and God's judgment on Job	
His friends insist that Job is suffering due to his sins, but would be restored if he repents	
The friends claim to speak for God, but they state their wisdom is from what they have seen, understood, and from the aged	

Elihu Speaks	Job 32-37
Elihu seems to appear out of nowhere – not Jesus because he has a family listed	
Angry at Job's friends - condemned Job without giving a good argument	
Angry at Job - justified himself, questioned God, and spoke without knowledge	
Wisdom comes from God, not necessarily the aged	
God does not need to give an account of all His doings	
God can speak to men through suffering for their refinement	

God Speaks	Job 38-42
God questions Job because he darkens counsel by words without knowledge	
God states that Job is a faultfinder trying to reprove God, annul His judgment, and condemn Him so Job can be justified	
Wisdom comes from God	
God does not answer Job, but only illustrates His sovereignty, judgment, providence, and goodness over all creation	

Main Themes

JOB'S SUFFERING

Man's
Wisdom

Man's faith/trust in God
while acknowledging His

Sovereignty
Judgement
Providence
Goodness

And knowing it's for our good
and His glory (*Job 19:23-24*)

God's
Wisdom

The Debate

Eliphaz | Bildad | Zophar

Result of man's sin

Try to convince Job that he is a sinner

Warn Job about questioning God

Job's Suffering *From God*

Job

Questions the meaning of life

Questions God because he can't reconcile his suffering with his sins, but does not lose faith in God

Warns friends about speaking for God

Eliphaz | Bildad | Zophar

It is very brief

Why do the Wicked Prosper? *Eventually Punished*

Job

It's common knowledge that the wicked prosper and sometimes for a long time

Eliphaz | Bildad | Zophar

If man repents and seeks God, he can be right before God

Can Man Justify Himself Before God? *Men are Sinful*

Job

Confident that he will be justified if he could plead his case before God

Elihu is angry at Job's friends for not sufficiently answering Job, and angry at Job for trying to justify himself and for questioning God

The Basis for Their Wisdom

Eliphaz

Job 4:7-9; 5:27; 15:9-11, 17-18

7 Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright destroyed? **8** According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble harvest it. **9** By the breath of God they perish...

Bildad

Job 8:8-10, 20

8 Please inquire of past generations, and consider the things searched out by their fathers. **9** For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, because our days on earth are as a shadow. **10** Will they not teach you and tell you, and bring forth words from their minds? **20** Lo, God will not reject a man of integrity, nor will He support the evildoers

Zophar

Job 20:3-4, 15

3 I listened to the reproof which insults me, and the spirit of my understanding makes me answer **4** Do you know this from old, from the establishment of man on earth, **5** that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless momentary? **15** He swallows his riches, but will vomit them up; God will expel them from his belly.

Elihu

Job 32:8-9

8 But it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding
9 The abundant in years may not be wise, nor may elders understand justice.

“you (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar) have not spoken of me what is right as My servant Job has” Job 42:7,8

Summary of the Speeches – Round 1

Job 1 Wished that he never existed and wonders why God allows suffering

Wished his birthday did not exist or that he died at birth because of his suffering	3:3, 11, 17
Wonders why God gives life to the suffering and makes life undiscernible	3:20-26

Eliphaz 1 Based on his wisdom, suffering comes from sin and restoration from repentance

Questioning Job's righteousness, he says only the wicked suffer, based on his wisdom	4:6-8
A spirit in a vision told him men are sinners, and sinners perish without knowing why	4:12-21
The source of man's troubles/suffering is their sin	5:2-7
Repent and everything will be fine – they know this to be true as they have investigated it	5:8, 17-27

Job 2 Still fears God in his deep anguish, and begins to defend his innocence

His grief and trouble are too much to bear, and it is from God	6:1-4
Wished that God would just end his life, but still rejoices in his fear of God	6:8-10
His friends have been unkind and as useless as a wadi in the summer	6:14-17
Wished his friends would understand that he is not lying about his righteousness	6:28-30
Wonders what sin he has committed and why God cares about man whose life is brief	7:16-21

Summary of the Speeches – Round 1

Bildad 1 Sinners reap trouble and the upright are blessed – this is a known truth

God doesn't pervert justice: sin = trouble & repentance/uprightness = restoration/blessing 8:3-7

Basis for his wisdom is the understanding of past generations 8:8-10

Job 3 Job feels frustrated and helpless to plead his innocence before almighty God

Man can't be right before God, even if he's innocent, because God is too wise and mighty 9:2-4, 14-15

He feels helpless before God to defend his innocence, and wished for an umpire/mediator 9:28-35

In his anguish, Job questions why God rejects His creation and allows the evil to prosper 10:1-3

Whether he is evil/righteous doesn't seem to matter to God, so why was he given life? 10:15-18

Zophar 1 If Job had God's wisdom, he would know he's a sinner & the solution for his trouble

He wished that God would reveal His wisdom to Job and tell him his suffering is from sin 11:4-6, 12

Repent and everything will be fine again – his wisdom attributed to God 11:13-19

Summary of the Speeches – Round 2

Job 4 **God's wisdom is not simple, but believes he can justify himself and questions God**

His friends' wisdom is not new; but God may allow the just to suffer like the wicked prosper	12:3-4, 6-9
God's wisdom can make important people look foolish	12:16-25
Tells his friends they are useless physicians and warns them about speaking for God	13:3-9
Still fears God, but believes he can vindicate himself if he could plead his case before God	13:15-26
Since life is short, he wished God would just let him rest in death until He calls him again	14:1-6,13-15

Eliphaz 2 **Warns Job about questioning God, and reiterates that the wicked suffer**

Warns Job about questioning God and that men wiser than his father are present	15:1-14
What he has seen and heard from others affirms the truth that the wicked suffer	15:17-20

Job 5 **Useless friends and the suffering from God still do not break Job**

Worn down by his friends and God, but still trusts in God and wished to appeal to Him	16:1-7,16-21
Knowing his friends are wrong he only trusts God, and remaining righteous is beneficial	17:1-4, 9-10

Summary of the Speeches – Round 2

Bildad 2

Getting angrier, he tries to convince Job again that his sin has caused his trouble

Tells Job he is not that important, and describes the fate of the wicked, implicating Job

18:1-6

Job 6

Frustration is growing, but Job knows he will be vindicated and see God after death

Fed up with his friends and frustrated that God has wronged him and will not answer him

19:1-7

He still trusts in God and looks forward to a resurrection, but warns his friends again

19:25-29

Zophar 2

Gives Job more of his wisdom, attributed to God, about the fate of the wicked

Irritated, he tells Job that all of mankind knows that the prosperity of the wicked is brief

20:1-5, 29

Job 7

Sometimes the wicked prosper for a long time, but God allows it

The wicked do prosper and sometimes for a long time, but they will ultimately be judged

21:7-15,27-30

Job said his friends were trying to teach God their wisdom about how to judge the wicked

21:22-26

Summary of the Speeches – Round 3

Eliphaz 3 **Falsely accuses Job of great sins, and claims to speak for God about repentance**

Tells Job that he is a great sinner, and gives examples of his sins without proof **22:4-6**

Claiming to speak for God, he says repentance will make everything right again **22:21-23**

Job 8 **Trusts God's wisdom, but still questions God about things he can't make sense of**

Job's confident he can plead his case before God, but does not know where to find Him **23:3-8**

Understands his suffering can be for good, trusts God's plan but still can't reconcile it **23:10-15**

Questions why God does not make his wisdom clear, as the wicked prosper for a while **24:1-4,12**

Bildad 3 **Tells Job to stop trying to justify himself before God**

God is much greater than sinful man, so Job cannot question God **25**

Summary of the Speeches – Job’s Final Speech

Job 9 His friends do not speak for God and holds to his righteousness and fear of God

Sarcastically praises Bildad’s great wisdom	26:1-4
Proclaims God’s wisdom through creation, but it cannot be fully understood	26:14
Refuses to concede to his friend’s wisdom, and holds to his innocence in the suffering	27:2-6
Agrees that the ultimate fate of the wicked is destruction, but it’s not that simple	27:11-12
Man only understands a portion of God’s wisdom, wisdom for man is to fear God	28:12,20-28
Job longed for the way his life used to be, and defended his righteousness	29:2-4,12-13
Job then states how miserable his life was now, and how worthless people mock him	30:1,8-9,27-31
Defends his righteous ways, because he fears God	31:21-23
Willing to accept the punishment that fit the sin	31:35-40

Summary of the Speeches – Elihu

Elihu 1 Angry at Job and his friends, he claims to have the answers they did not have

Angry at Job for justifying himself & the friends for not answering Job yet condemning him 32:1-3

Wisdom may not come from the aged/elderly 32:7-9

His wisdom is from the uprightness of his heart 33:3-6

Job was wrong for justifying himself and asking God to give an account of Himself 33:8-13

God does speak in many ways to man to keep him from sin, ultimately for spiritual benefit 33:14-30

Elihu 2 Answers Job's statement about unjustly suffering and God's judgment

Calls on Job and his friends to choose what is right/good – to be wise 34:1-4

Job questioned his suffering and God's judgement - God is just/sovereign/good 34:5-15

Elihu 3 Glorify/exalt the sovereign and loving God, and do not question Him

Tells Job not to question God, but exalt Him and illustrates God's power in creation 36:24-33

Illustrates, through the weather, how God does things for correction, nourishment, or lovingkindness; He is the Almighty and cannot be questioned. 37:2-13, 22-24

God Speaks

To Job and His 3 Friends

God does not answer Job's questions or reveal His dialogue with Satan, but only reveals His:

Sovereignty – Ch.~38

Providence/Goodness – Ch.~39

Judgment – Ch.~40

It's enough to trust Him – Ch.42

In His Plan for Man

Through Jesus

Jesus, truly righteous, suffered

God is slow to anger

Jesus is the only way to be justified

Jesus is our wisdom from God

In Suffering

It is temporary

It is for our good

It is for His glory

To Job and His 3 Friends

Job is shown he is unfit to question God's judgment/wisdom over His creation, because he severely lacks knowledge and understanding about creation. He is incapable of justifying/saving himself.

God reveals His **sovereignty** over creation

Asks Job why he's giving counsel/wisdom without knowledge	38:2
Asks Job a series of questions and tells Job to instruct Him, if he has understanding	38:3
God asks to Job to instruct Him about creating and/or commanding the: earth's foundation waters morning/evening darkness/light weather constellations	38:4-35

God illustrates His **providence/goodness** over creation

He provides for man by giving him wisdom and understanding	38:36
He provides for the animals: lion, raven, goat, donkey, ox, ostrich, horse, hawk, eagle	38:39-39

God illustrates His **judgment** over uncontrollable creatures

Behemoth – cannot be controlled or brought to judgement by man, but only by God	40:15-24
Leviathan – made without fear; no one dares to arouse it, so who can stand before God?	41

“you (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar) have not spoken of me what is right as My servant Job has” Job 42:7,8

God Spoke Through Jesus

**Suffering is Not Only
for the Wicked**
From God

Jesus was perfect yet suffered for our sins

“Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; Yet **we** ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” *Isaiah 53:4*

**Why do the Wicked
Prosper?**
Eventually Punished

“The Lord is gracious.. merciful; slow to anger.. great in lovingkindness.” *Ps 145:8*

“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” *2 Pet 3:9*

**Can Man Justify
Himself Before God?**
Men are Sinful

Only by a perfect sacrifice – the exact representation of Himself

God spoke to us in these last days in **His Son**, the exact representation of Himself, the **creator and sustainer**, who **made purification of sins**. *Heb 1:1-3*

Before the foundation of the world, in love, God chose us to be adopted as His children through the blood of Jesus and sealed with the Holy Spirit, all for His glory.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is our wisdom from God. *Eph 1:1-14, 1 Cor 1:18-31, 2:6-9*

God Speaks Through Suffering

Whether the suffering is in discipline, trials, or testing; it is ultimately **for our good** and **His glory**

8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

10 After you have **suffered for a little while**, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, **will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.**

11 **To Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. *1 Peter 5:8-11***

His wisdom is incomprehensible – it is enough to trust His plan for Israel and all men ***Romans 11:33-36***

33 Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?

35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM, THAT IT WOULD BE PAID BACK TO HIM? ***[Job 41:11]***

36 For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. **To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**