

# Ephesians: What's God Saying to You? What are You Going to Do About It?

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## I. Introduction

What's the difference between Christians and non-Christians? Do Christians know something others don't? Essentially, Christians have inside information. The rest of the world (guided by Satan) sees nothing but chaos, misery, and hopelessness in a random universe where some are lucky and the rest get crushed. There may be happy times, but ultimately life is arbitrary, meaningless, and hopeless. Happy endings don't exist. Christians, on the other hand, know exactly why the world is so chaotic and difficult. More importantly, they know how to thrive in the midst of such a mess; they know happy endings exist and how to experience them.

## II. Ephesians: What is God Saying to You and What are You Going to Do About It?

### Chapter 6

In Ephesians, God offers us a brand-new way of living. Instead of looking at life the way we used to, He pulls back the curtain and shows us the truth about life and us. This world is not here by chance, 1:10, 20-22, and neither are we, 1:3-14. There are no accidents and life does have meaning and happy endings, 2:10-22. There are two forces at play, the Lord's and Satan's. We used to belong to Satan but now we belong to God, 2:1-9. We and He have been united forever, 2:5-6, which is why God tells us that it's time to wake up and live accordingly, 5:14-6:9. Satan is powerful and he's always attacking, but he's no match for our Lord, 6:10-18. We don't have to live in confusion, misery, or defeat. Instead, we can live with a crystal-clear mind which is always pointing towards victory because the God of this universe and His power is always by our side, 3:16-20. Therefore, if you see clearly, Satan is but a nuisance.

*How Satan attacks and what we can do about it.* Satan always has a story to tell you. His goal is to tell you who you are and how you should live. He wants you to live his story and, in his story, you are alone, God is nowhere to be found, and your life is abysmal and won't ever change. Therefore, you're a failure and God is not only not coming to your rescue, He's angry with you. In fact, He's the one doing all this to you. Job experienced this reality, Satan's reality for his life, but then the Lord snapped him out of it.

### **How Satan attacks, a case study: Job,**

**Job 1-31**, initially Job, though he'd lost EVERYTHING and didn't know why, continued to trust God. He accepted God's decision to take everything away from him. After all, He's the One who gave it to him to begin with, 1:21. Job's three friends arrive to comfort their friend and they do for a week, 2:11-13. But then Job started to contemplate the depths of his miserable condition and his mind was changed, deceived into thinking that it would have been better off if he had never been born, 3:1-26.

After comforting Job, his three friends accuse him of sin, starting with Eliphaz, 4:7-9; 15:5-6; 22:4-5. We see exactly where Eliphaz got his accusation. Satan whispered it into his ear and convinced him that Job must have sinned, because God doesn't punish the innocent, 4:7, 12-21. Therefore, Job must be rebuked for standing on his self-righteousness, 4:6, 17.

Next, Bildad accused Job of sin and even added that his children died for their sins, 8:4, 5-6, 20; 18:5ff. Where did Bildad get this idea when God clearly said that Job's sons died because He allowed Satan to take their lives, 1:12? Same place Eliphaz did, Satan. Zophar is next, he accuses Job of sin and says that God is punishing Job less than he deserves, 11:5-6; 20:4ff. Satan is using Zophar to do the same thing, provoke Job into cursing God, 1:11; 2:5, 9. How do we know when Satan's talking to us vs. God? How do we know if our reaction is what the Lord wants vs. Satan? Ask yourself this, "If I believe that, if I say that, if I do that, will it get me closer to God or farther away from Him? Will I be accomplishing God's will or Satan's?"

When Job responds to his friends, we see that Satan's ploy is working: through Job's friends, Satan uses his three weapons: Isolation, Deception, and Accusation. Job is now farther and farther away from God, he has now been deceived into accusing God and defending his own righteousness, and Satan has now accused him of sin even though God declared him the most righteous man on the planet. From his responses, we see just how far away from God and how deceived Job now is: he blames his rash words on his terrible suffering, 6:2-3, wishes that God would take his life, 6:8-9, justifies his bitter complaints on his horrible suffering which will end with God taking his life, 7:1-11, questions why God did this to him 7:20, says that it doesn't matter if you're righteous because God will destroy you if He wants to 9:17-35, again questions why God did this to him, 10:2-3, again wishes he'd died at birth, 10:18, demands that God show him what sins he's committed, 13:23, wishes God would put him in the grave until all this passes, 14:13, states that God has wronged him, 19:6-20, says that he'd be vindicated if he could plead his case before God because he's righteous, but he can't find God because God will do as He pleases, 23:1-13, says that God allows the wicked to prosper, 24:2-12, says he cries out to God but instead of answering him, God's been cruel to him, 30:20-21, and says that even though he's been good, God has punished him, 30:22-31.<sup>1</sup>

Whose voice is Job listening to now? How did he go from not knowing exactly why this was happening but nonetheless trusting the God who did it to him, to questioning everything, even his birth? Did Satan's whispers work their magic through Job's three friends? They drive Job farther and farther away from God and into more confusion about who God is, why this is happening, and how God owes him his day in court to show God that he doesn't deserve this—before, Job knew God gave him this and was willing to serve Him in this task of suffering. But now, he's questioning God, sitting in judgment of Him according to Job's standards of just vs. unjust, right vs. wrong, innocent vs. guilty, etc. But Job's got the wrong map; he has no idea where he is and Satan led him there via his three friends. How does Satan get us to believe these things? For example, in 23:1-13, how did Satan get Job to sit in judgment of God, that he deserves his day in court, that God owes him this, and that his righteousness would vindicate him but it's useless since God does whatever He wants?

Easy, it's what he does to all of us: gets you to look at your terrible circumstances and then interprets them for you: "All your wealth is gone. Your entire family is dead. And you're covered in boils, what?!" Then Satan says, "And where's your God? How could He do this to you?!" Then he gets you to look at your own righteousness and asks, "Does a righteous individual like you deserve this? NO!!" You can tell what Satan told Job by everything that comes out of his mouth. Likewise, you can always tell what Satan told you by what comes out of your mouth and by your response. Job's looking at his horrendous suffering, his

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<sup>1</sup> But even though Job said all these things, he still knows the truth, e.g., he knows that God does indeed punish the wicked, 31:3 and he knows that even though God takes his life, he must trust Him, 13:15-16.

righteousness and God and he's adding it all up and Satan's holding the calculator! When Satan's voice is guiding you, your thinking will be completely twisted (Ephesians 4:17-19).

**Job 32-37**, Elihu speaks and rebukes Job and his friends, his friends for condemning Job without any evidence and Job for justifying himself rather than God: he addresses Job's claim to righteousness and tells him that he's not righteous since he questioned God, 33:8-13.<sup>2</sup> He corrects Job's contention that God doesn't answer him; God does answer, in fact, God's constantly talking to man but man often refuses to listen, 33:14-30. He rebukes Job for saying that it profits man nothing to delight in God, 34:1-9. He tells him that God does punish the wicked but He sets the terms not us, 34:10-12, 21-33. He rebukes Job for saying that it doesn't profit God or man if a man is righteous, 35:3. He tells Job that if he calls on God without acknowledging who He is, God will not answer him, 35:9-13. And instead of thinking that God can't be found, he must realize that He's there and he must wait for His answer, 35:14. He tells Job that God would have delivered him but Job chose iniquity, 36:16-21. Finally, he concludes by pointing to the many marvels and wonders of God's creation which are beyond man's comprehension, 36:24-37:24.

How do we know that what Elihu said is from God not Satan? First, Elihu claims that God gave him the wisdom to look at Job's situation correctly, 33:3-4; 36:2-4, and by all accounts God did, i.e., Elihu is pointing to Job's current sins against God not the imagined sins of Eliphaz & Co. Therefore, Elihu tells Job not to doubt God but to wait on God, 35:14, which is not what Eliphaz & Co. told him. Second, Elihu's remarks are similar to God's (32:2; 35:2 compared to 40:8 // 34:35; 35:16 compared to 38:2 // 36:24-37:24 compared to 38:1-39:30; 40:15-41:34). Third, Elihu wanted to see Job cleared of all charges, 33:32. Eliphaz & Co. wanted to see him convicted, i.e., they wanted Job to accept God's conviction and punishment for sins Job never committed, 1:8 and 2:3; 4:7; 8:3-6; 11:2-6.

### III. Conclusion

*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

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<sup>2</sup> Notice how cunning and deceptive Satan is: what Elihu said in 33:12 is very similar to what Eliphaz said in 4:17. What Satan tells you sounds so righteous, so godly, yet it's a lie from the pit of hell. Now, why is Elihu right and Eliphaz wrong? What Eliphaz said came straight out of the mouth of Satan not God, 4:12-21, which is why it was completely wrong, i.e., Eliphaz was 100% certain that Job had sinned prior to his suffering but Job hadn't, 1:8; 2:2.