

# Out of the Storm

## *A Study of Job*

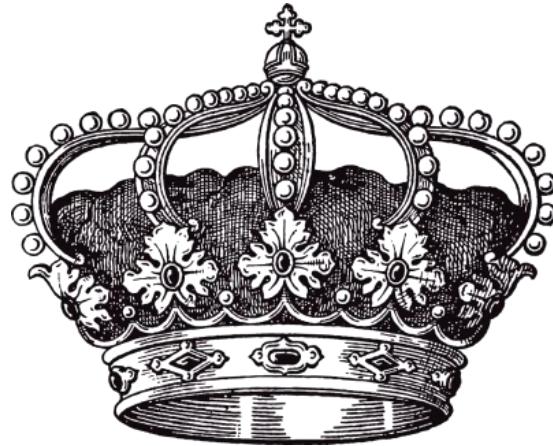
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### Part 2 – “God Holds Court”

#### **Job 1:6-12**

**Main Idea:** God is the Creator and Ruler of everything, bringing to pass all things for His good and wise purposes.

Images of the created order are prominent in the Book of Job. This created order includes both a physical and spiritual realm. An adequate understanding of God's relationship to what He has created is essential if we are to have a proper understanding of suffering and grief. In this sense “worldview” is an unnamed but important feature of the Book of Job.



#### **How the universe works:**

- 1. Monism** – The belief that the universe consists of a single reality or substance. Buddhism is a sort of monism. This (along with the closely related pantheism) is a feature of much modern “spirituality.”
- 2. Dualism** – The belief that there are two equal and opposing spiritual realities in the universe: one good and one evil. Zoroastrianism and Taoism are dualist religions.
- 3. Atheism** – The belief that there is no God.
- 4. Pantheism** – The belief that everything is God and God is everything. Practically, this means that evil is part of the good rather than being fundamentally distinct. Pantheism is a defining characteristic in the popular “spirituality” of the day (what was referred to as “New Age” in the 1980’s).
- 5. Polytheism** – The ancient pagan notion that there are many gods. Polytheism usually carries with it the idea that various gods run or operate within specific regions of the world and in some cases oppose each other. Hinduism is the world’s largest polytheistic religion. Mormonism is also polytheistic.
- 6. Flawed Theism** – This is my term for those beliefs which begin with the “God of Abraham” but ultimately run afoul of the biblical witness. For instance, Judaism and Islam are included in this category primarily because they deny God’s tri-unity and the saving work of the Lord Jesus. But within Christianity (broadly speaking) there are deeply flawed beliefs as well, such as Process Theology and Open Theism which deny or diminish God’s foreknowledge, sovereignty, power, and goodness.
- 7. Biblical Theism** – The belief that God is a tri-unity of persons (Father, Son, and Spirit) yet one in essence. God is the eternal Creator, sovereign, holy, just, and good. He upholds and, in perfect wisdom, brings about all that comes to pass. He also created and rules over the spiritual realm consisting of spiritual beings both redeemed and fallen.

\* **Recommended Reading** – What’s Your Worldview? by James N. Anderson & Christian Worldview: A Student’s Guide by David Dockery.

We must be careful when interpreting scenes such as the one described beginning in verse six. The writer has in mind images of a King holding court. This is language drawn from human experience used to describe a spiritual world that we cannot yet see. We must not press the language too far. For instance, God is not dependent upon His courtiers the way an earthly sovereign is. The point being expressed is that there is a host of beings gathered before the Lord, created by Him and thus bound according to His sovereign purposes. In its descriptions of God's court, the book of Job is functioning as a polemic against the false and pagan notions of a universe in constant turmoil due to the constant conflicts between competing gods.

**Vs. 6** – “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.”

**Two views of the “Sons of God”:**

a) They are angels

- This is the clear majority opinion among scholars. While “sons of God” usually designates God’s believing people, the context indicates that it is used here in an idiosyncratic way to describe angels.
- Angels are sent by God to serve us – (**Heb 1:14**) / God’s people will judge angels (**1 Cor 6:3**)

b) They are God’s believing people

- Throughout the Bible the phrase “sons of God” is used repeatedly to describe God’s people. This makes the satan’s attack all the more insulting as he says in essence to God: “Not only Job, but all these gathered here worship you strictly for utilitarian purposes.”
- **Heb 1:5** – “For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father’? Or again, ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son’?”
- **Matt 13:43** – The “sons of the kingdom” are people not angels.
- Adam (**Lk 3:38**) / Israel (**Ex 4:22-23; Hos 11:1**) / David’s heir (**2 Sam 7:14**) / Solomon (**1 Chron 22:9-10**) / His new covenant people (**John 1:12; 1 John 3:1**).

**Who is “the satan” of Job?**

It is only with hindsight that we understand that “the satan” is almost certainly Satan.

**• Isaiah 14:3-23 / Ezekiel 28:1-19**

1. Satan is “the accuser”

2. Satan is restless

3. Satan is a mocker

4. Satan is a tormentor

“The Holy Spirit meant us to understand, that not only the angels of heaven which obey God willingly, and are wholly inclined, and given that way, do yield account unto Him, but also the devils of hell which are enemies and rebels to Him to the uttermost of their power, which labor to subvert His Majesty, and practices to confound all things; so as they be forced (in spite of their teeth) to be subject unto God...”

- John Calvin

**From the Heidelberg Catechism:**

**Q 28** – “What does it profit us to know that God has created, and by His providence still upholds, all things?”

**A 28** – “That we may be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity, and with a view to the future may have good confidence in our faithful God and Father that no creature shall separate us from His love, since all creatures are so in His hand that without His will they cannot so much as move.”