
Biblical material: Job 1, Job 2, 1 Cor. 4:9, Gen. 3:1–8, Phil. 4:11–13, Matt. 4:1–11, Phil. 2:5–8.

Quotes
- Too little attention is paid to the dark side of incentives. They are anything but a magic bullet... When you rely on incentives, you undermine virtues. Then when you discover that you actually need people who want to do the right thing, those people don't exist because you've crushed anyone's desire to do the right thing with all these incentives. *Barry Schwartz*
- Economists love to talk about incentives, but the bottom line is that people hate being controlled or manipulated, even when done through voluntary institutions. This is one of the most important tensions in capitalism. *Tyler Cowen*
- Religion is a means of exploitation employed by the strong against the weak; religion is a cloak of ambition, injustice and vice. *Georges Bizet*
- Almost all of our relationships begin and most of them continue as forms of mutual exploitation, a mental or physical barter, to be terminated when one or both parties run out of goods. *W. H. Auden*
- If love does not know how to give and take without restrictions, it is not love, but a transaction that never fails to lay stress on a plus and a minus. *Emma Goldman*

Questions
Wasn’t Satan’s accusation at least partially true? Didn’t Job receive benefits? Was it fair for God to call Satan’s attention to Job, and then allow him to suffer? What about the loss of his children? What of Job’s wife—how do you understand her advice to “Curse God and die”? What lessons can we learn about the cosmic conflict here?

Bible summary
Chapters 1 and 2 are written in prose, while the rest of Job (except for the epilogue) are written in verse. This is important to note in the context of the meaning and structure of the book. These two initial chapters are the setting of the scene, and Satan’s charge that Job only follows God because of the benefits he receives. Job’s response is a demonstration of God’s way of truth and right. In the same way we too are a spectacle to the universe: “The way I see it, God has put us apostles on display as the last in the line, condemned to die. We have been made a public show before the entire universe, to angels and to human beings.” 1 Cor. 4:9 FBV. Gen. 3:1–8 recounts the Fall. Paul states that he has learned to be content in all circumstances (Phil. 4:11–13). Matt. 4:1–11 is the story of Jesus’ temptations. Phil. 2:5–8 reminds us that we have to think like Jesus!

Comment
Satan’s basic argument is that Job follows God for what he can get out of the relationship. Job doesn’t really appreciate God, he’s in it for material benefit—for the reward. This is why a focus on the end of Job is counterproductive to the message of Job, for the fact that he has his possessions restored is in a sense incidental to the story—otherwise Satan is proved right!
No: Job’s dedication and trust in God is not based on material benefit. Job identifies with God and stands with him on his side of the Great Controversy. This is not “cupboard love,” as it is called in England (like saying you love your aunt because you want some of her delicious chocolate cake she has in her cupboard!)

Quite the contrary—Job agrees with God that right is right and wrong is wrong. Whatever the situation, he wants to do what is right. Even in times of despair he doesn’t give up his faith—though he certainly still complains! Most of all he rejects the idea promoted by his friends that if he is suffering then he is being punished for his sins. This concept, still common today, puts God in a terrible light and blames him for all the evil of the world! The truth is the opposite—while we do indeed experience the natural consequences of doing evil, suffering can often be part of the “collateral damage” of sin where the innocent suffer because of the actions of the guilty.

How then do we apply these lessons to ourselves? Surely we do (and expect to) receive blessings from God. We often pray for such blessings! Can Satan also accuse us of looking to receive benefits from God? The real question here is whether we would then give up on God if we did not receive blessings. In life we experience both ups and downs, and we need to make sure we don’t give up on God when down in the valleys!

For we too are “on display” before the universe as part of God’s answer in the great controversy. Those who claim to know God are his character witnesses and exhibits of evidence before the whole universe. After the devil’s challenge to God’s very nature, accusing him of being unfair and dictatorial, God has to prove his case before the court of the whole universe. He can’t just say he’s caring and loving, he has to demonstrate he is.

We’re part of that demonstration. Every time a professed Christian acts on the side of the devil his charge against God is supported. But on the other hand, every time we demonstrate the truth about the God who loved us so much he was willing to die to win us back, then we show that God really is as he says! So, go ahead! Make a spectacle of yourself for God, for you never do know who may be watching you. Just be sure that the spectacle is one that puts God in a good light!

**Ellen White Comments**

Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name... Against this man, Satan brought scornful charge: "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?"... {SD 95}

By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels.... not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which “angels desire to look,” and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which “seeketh not her own” has its source in the heart of God...{DA 19-20}