

## 1. A. Introduction:

<sup>8</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered **my servant Job**, that there is none like him on the earth, a **blameless** and **upright** man, **who fears God** and **turns away from evil?**” Job 1:8

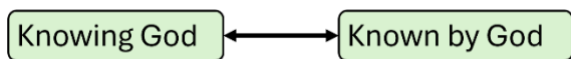
<sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now **I know** in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been **fully known**.  
1 Corinthians 13:12

## Holy Faith:

The Lord God made you to live with him, to know and be known by your God. This original relationship of knowing and being known by God is called *faith*. By faith, our first parents, Adam and Eve, drew near to God to know Him and be known by name.

This faith in God was meant to be unique—unlike any other human relationship. Not simply the mutual *camaraderie* by which a friend places his *faith* in another friend. Not even the *pure faith by* which a child depends

on her father. Rather, to know God and be known by God is a *holy faith*, unique because there is no other person like the Holy, Holy, Holy God. To know this God is to be changed by this God.



So, to know God in His Almighty power and to be known by this great God is to trust in Him entirely for your welfare. To know Him as the Lord of all authority in heaven and earth is to surrender before His Rule in the abject loss of a humbled servant, ready to obey his Lord's will. To know him as the Holy God is to offer to him all your life in *holy sacrifice*. This is how Job lived before the Lord God, in this *holy faith* of knowing and being *known* by God. And, this *mutuality of knowing* one another—was, on the one hand, unlikely in its imbalance. That the Lord God would be known and know such a small creature. Yet, it was also **remarkable**. So remarkable, that God enthused about Job before heaven's greatest

enemy, pinning His own *name* to the genuineness of Job's faith.

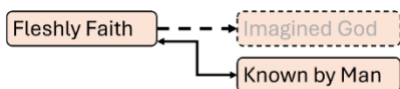
So, as we consider Job's first test, the testing of his faith, let's first learn of the *baseline* of what holy faith was meant to be—the genuine, unlikely, yet remarkable mutuality of knowing and being known as God and man.

### **1.1. Holy Faith:**

*Holy faith* glorifies God in its soundness, because it is the one way that mere humans might know and reflect the glory of God's nature. And, such a faith protects us as humans, for it is the only way that we might live with the living God. As Job discovered, *holy faith keeps us accountable*, for we are not free to simply imagine God as we wish.

Rather, we are *known* by God even as we seek to know God. If we misperceive God, he will correct us. So, *holy faith* is **protective**, because it keeps us in humble dependence in relation to our Lord God. For, our *fallen flesh* entices us

dangerously into the kind of *fleshly faith* which lured our first parents into unwitting rebellion. Fleshly Faith shifts from God to man:



### **Fleshly Faith:**

The Lord God calls his servants to draw near and live with him in *holy faith*. The Lord God dwells in holy splendor in the heavenlies. But, we are earthbound as people in the flesh. Moreover, we are people of *corrupted flesh*, ruined by sin and an original rebellion that *pulls away from the Holy God*.

In the beginning, we were made to dwell on this earth with God in bodies made alive by God's spiritual life, which made our souls come alive! Alive by faith, we shared a holy, spiritual life with God. However, our first

parents chose the fruit of *life apart from God*. Rather than living on this earth by faith in God, they chose to rely on themselves as replacing God (Gen. 3:3-6). So, we all became *naked flesh*—uncovered of spiritual life and deadened to God.

While Job's *holy faith* was proven at the outset, further testing uncovered the *corrupting weakness of his own flesh* and the *fleshly conversation of his friends*, resulting in an inevitable fall into a *fleshly faith* that sought to define God by its own imaginings, being known not by God but by his earthly companions. As a result, Job's *fleshly faith* replaced God with an earthly religion. To understand how this *inevitable* shift occurred and how *fallen flesh* necessitates faith in Mashiach to redeem our flesh with life, let's consider how *faith must involve all of who we are*, yet no part of us is uncorrupted in flesh.

## **1.2. Holy Faith is Holistic:**

Even though Job lived as *naked flesh* before God, uncovered of *spiritual life and deadened to God*, he drew near to God by his *holy faith*. Importantly, Job's *holy faith* is *holistic*. For, drawing near to the One before whom *heaven and earth* are laid bare, Job dares not hide any part of himself but instead lays his life before the Lord as *one who is known*, even as he seeks to know God.

**Heart: Draw near in Faith**  
to **know** and  
be **known** by  
God as  
my servant

**Soul: Stand by Faith** to be  
judged and  
approved:  
blameless &  
upright

**Mind: Walk by Faith:** to  
worship God and  
obey Him as Lord  
in this world.  
Fear God/ Turn  
from Evil

part of you which cherishes and values deeply, the vault storing up your *hidden loves* and *ruling over* what you treasure, value, and cling to. Only by drawing near to God *in heart* can Job seek to *know* and *be known* by God in holy honesty. So, when Job draws near to the *Holy God* in heart, the Lord knows him as “my servant Job” (Job 1:8). The Holy God says to Job, you are “*mine*,” so Job’s heart can do

nothing else but worship—offering God all he has. And, the Almighty Lord calls him “my *servant*,” so Job’s heart responds in humble surrender to obey.

When you draw near to God, you must then be willing to *stand* before your Lord and Judge with the entirety of *who you are*—the collection of your experiences, memories, and future hopes—that is, your *soul*. Job’s entire soul is *laid bare*, as the Lord approves of Job as being “blameless and upright” (Job 1:8). To be *approved* in this way, Job’s soul is subject to the Lord’s *right* to judge him and know him. For, Job is *blameless* before God as *holy to the Lord*, giving himself without reservation in humble worship. And, He is *upright* in soul, surrendering to the Lord’s *right way* and ready to obey His commands.

In this way, Job sets his *mind* to walk by faith in the Lord God in this world. Job’s mind must be set on the Lord by faith, for the world

is Godless and profane, luring *fallen flesh* to live as if there were no God. So, Job's mind must be set to walk with the Lord in this Godless world, choosing to *fear God*, honoring Him as unchanging in His holiness despite what the world says. And, to *turn from evil*, to obey God in righteousness even though he does not see God in the world's chaos. So, the Lord God knows Job as One who "fears God and turns from evil" (Job 1:8) as he walks by faith in this world.

Holy Faith always Hopes in Redemption:

Although Job's *holy faith* was proven to be genuine, further testing showed that it was not *sufficient* in itself—true faith ultimately is perfected when placed in God's promised Mashiach. For, only Mashiach redeems the *souls* of his servants to replace their *sin-deadened flesh* with a righteous and holy life.

This inevitable and inescapable weakness of *fallen flesh* is revealed as Job is tested and is

shown as one needing redemption, until his final restoration at the end. Through testing:

- The ***fleshly heart*** may draw near to the Lord God in faith, but it will eventually withdraw from God in *unbelief*.
- Though the ***fleshly soul*** may briefly stand under the rightful judgment of God, it will inevitably throw off the yoke to stand *apart* from God in religious or self-justification.
- And, even if the ***fleshly mind*** may walk attentively with God for a season, its fleshly interactions in the world inexorably drag it back to human understanding and self-made religion.

### 1.3. Job's Tested Faith:

#### 1. Know by Faith:

knows and known  
by God.

Job 1:8

#### 2. Stand by faith:

God's **right**: give/take  
*Sacrificial worship*

Job 1:20-22

#### 3. Walk by faith:

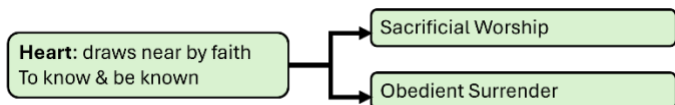
Holy **fear** of Lord:  
*Obedient surrender*

Job 2:9-10

Prior to Job's testing, we see that he had already lived a life pleasing to the Lord, for he was "continually" vigilant over his and his family's hearts toward God (Job 1:5). So, Job's

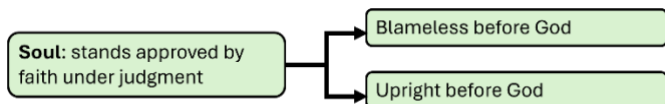
trials tested his *blameless integrity* before the Lord—the *faith synchrony of his heart, soul, and mind*.

So confident is the Lord God that He knows His servant to be *blameless and upright*, that he assures the Accuser that Job will *fear God* and turn from evil (1:8). And, the Lord sees that Job's faith remains steadfast after testing, saying: "He still holds fast his integrity" (2:3). Job's heart remains steadfast in faith despite the loss of his children and possessions, because Job has known God by faith.

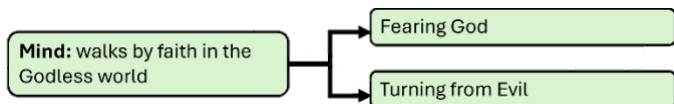


Job's holy faith in the Lord is unshaken because Job's soul stands firm in surrender to the *sheltering rightfulness* of his Lord. Notice that when Job first hears the terrible news that he has lost children, he is still able to worship because he surrenders to the Lord's right to "give and take," realizing that he is *naked*, having as his right and standing only what God

has given (1:21). He remains “upright” because He submits to the Lord’s Right.



unchanging *blessed nature* and holiness of God. This mindset to *see God as blessed* despite his fleshly circumstances proves that Job *fears God*, affirming His blessedness though the world’s losses call for cursing. Thus, Job chooses to hold to the *wisdom of faith*, rejecting the world’s “foolishness” (2:10). Job keeps his mind’s focus on the wisdom of faith, because Job holds to his “integrity” (9) with his heart’s knowledge, soul’s right-standing, and his mind’s focus on the “fear of God” working together.



#### 1.4. Abraham: Israel’s Tested Faith

The Lord tests his servants to reveal that their *holy faith* requires the redemption of their *Selfish flesh*. While Job was tested for a season of life, Abraham and his offspring of Israel have been tested through all their generations!

Like Job, Abraham's *holy faith* was first tested and proven genuine as a model for all his future generations— for the Lord called for the life of Isaac as a holy sacrifice (Gen. 22:2).

In the most *heart-rending of tests*, Abraham revealed that he confidently knew that God would “provide” for the offering, even if it required the life of his son (8). By his actions, Abraham proved that he was “blameless” before God, for his soul *was ever submitted in his resolve to* complete his rightful offering to the Lord, “laying” his son on the altar in submissive, unquestioning obedience and the unquestioned “Right” of the Lord to ask for such a sacrifice (9). Thus, by his unwavering mindset, Abraham showed that he “feared God” (12). Abraham's faith gained him the

*approval for himself and his generations* to be the *servants of the Lord*, a holy nation to know and be known by faith in the Living God. If Abraham passed on to his generations a *holy faith*, we must determine the nature of this faith. Was faith meant to be a Self-justifying act, by which Abraham's piety made him right before God? Abraham's generations did eventually hold to such a Self-justifying faith, relying on their own *Torah-observance* to be Self-righteous. But, from beginning, Abraham's *holy faith* was not Self-Justifying but rather *reliant on a Redeemer*. For, even in his offering of Isaac, the Lord redeemed Isaac's life—substituting an ensnared Lamb for Isaac (22:13). In fact, Abraham's *holy faith* rested never on his own Self-ability but has always rested on the Promised Seed— (Gen. 15:5-6). Job's *holy faith* was meant to rest in its Redeemer (Job 19:25). And, David's holy faith was directed to its future hope of the Redeeming Seed, Mashiach (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

**1. Job's Holy Faith in his Redeemer:**  
restored flesh in future age  
Job 19:25

**2. Abraham's Holy Faith in Promised Seed:**  
multiplied as stars of the heavens  
Genesis 15:5-6

**3. David's Holy Faith for Redeeming Seed**  
Mashiach redeems house, rules kingdom  
2 Samuel 7:12-16

## 2.A. Intro: Selfish Heart

Yet you are **holy, enthroned** on the praises of Israel. Psalm 22:3

Our ***holy faith*** begins in the heart, because it is the *heart* which gives value and regard to the Other, the fundamental pre-requisite of *knowing* and *being known* in a loving faith. So, the Lord God holds Job in His heart, treasuring him as His very own, calling him “**my servant Job**” (Job 1:8).

And, it is in Job’s own **heart** that he gives the place of highest honor to the Lord as his God. Only by relinquishing the *throne* of his heart to God does Job regard God as *Holy* (6:10). For, the Lord God is enthroned as *holy* on the praises of His people (Ps. 22:3).

*Holy faith* draws us near as we cleanse the throne-rooms of our hearts to worship God alone as the Holy One. Because it is in our *hearts* that we cling to the Lord God alone, it is the **hearts** of our first parents that first fell to unbelief and sin by abandoning the Holy God.

By faith, our first parents knew that the Holy God was unmatched, rightfully filling their entire lives with His Lordship. But, the Serpent tempted them to aspire to be “like God”—their human Self could take God’s place to determine “good” and “evil” on its own (Gen. 3:5). So, the Serpent’s *promise* to “be like God” actually lured them to *change their hearts* toward God. By *elevating his Self* to occupy God’s *holy place* of pre-eminence in his heart, Adam *abandoned his holy life with God for a sinful idolatry*. At once, Adam and Eve realized that they were now *stripped naked of their spiritual life with God* (7). Once *covered* by God’s loving Lordship, the humans now had only themselves, alone and orphaned in this threatening world. Thus, the *fleshly heart* is orphaned and uncovered of spiritual life in this *dangerous world*. Trusting in Self and not God, the fleshly heart’s only thought is survival- to cling to life and flee from death. In its self-absorbed rebellion, the *fleshly heart* withdraws from God (10), viewing God’s Lordship as a threat to its own Self-Rule.

For Job, the test of his faith has passed, but the trauma of his loss remains. As Job sits for a week in dusty silence with his friends, can his *fleshly heart* not help but turn inward to its **Self** and ask: “What about **me**?”

### 2.1. Job’s Selfish Heart Tested.

Likely, you have experienced this change of heart which Job now faces: from the self-sacrificing worship of *holy faith* to the withdrawing Self-absorption of a *fleshly heart*. This shift comes upon us naturally, like a drop of rain water re-absorbing naturally into the awaiting lake. For, it is a *spiritually dead* and *entirely earthly* world into which our first-father Adam *orphaned us*. So, our *equally, spiritually dead* and *earth-bound* flesh is naturally at home in this deadness. Banished from Eden, we are born a “people walking in darkness” and in the “land and shadow of death” (Is. 9:2). So, our *fleshly hearts* fall *naturally* into a Self-idolizing *protectiveness* to survive as easily as the tired body falls asleep.

But, Job's *inadvertent shift to a fleshly heart* cascades into a series of missteps which undermine any recovery of his holy faith. And, we see a similar fall in the early history of Israel.

Orphaned from God, we all have inherited from our first parents a *spirit-dead earthly life* to which our *fleshly nature* is naturally drawn. This is why *God's call to holy faith* necessarily points to His promised Mashiach, who redeems us to replace spiritual death with new spiritual life and a new Spirit-born nature.

#### Fleshly Heart: Usurps Right to Life

If you are one to feel no need of *redemption*, consider Job and how an *exemplary, holy faith* and by a *fleshly heart*. When Job was first tested, he responded to his painful losses with simple faith, saying: "blessed be the name of the Lord" (1:21). Job holds to the *holy name of God* by faith, maintaining that God is always "blessed" with the Creator's right to "give" and "take."

Notice how *naturally* Job's fleshly heart reverts back to its *original state of self-protective*

*survival*. Sitting helplessly in the *aftermath* of his losses, Job's words shift from *blessing the Creator* to *cursing* His work of creation. Job *calls down curses* on the "day" of his birth (3:3). By wishing that he had "died" at birth (11), Job wrests the *Right* to his life from the Creator to himSelf. *Reclaiming* the "Right" to his own life, Job now *denies God the life* he had earlier *offered up in sacrificial worship to the Blessed God*. For Job blessed God and *offered His life* with his *holy faith*-filled view with the Holy God and his heart responded in worship. But now, Job's *fleshly heart* is now only filled with Self-concern.

To hold to a *holy faith* in God as the *blessed Creator* demanded of Job's heart an unnatural turn—to *rest* in the heavenly reality of God's Holy right to *give* and to *take*. But, Job was of earth, and the experience of his *whole being* screamed that he was alone and *orphaned* in the world. So, Job's *fleshly heart* turns from God to do what feels most *natural*—trusting himSelf and taking back the responsibility for his own life. Rather than *a surrendered*

*servant*, Job was the Self-reliant ruler over his life.

Like Job, we all need to make the choice to worship and give our hearts to the Lord God or to our Selves. The *fallen, orphaned nature of our flesh* insists that we must follow the natural path of survival to love and be devoted to Self-above-all.

But, a deeper reality calls our hearts to be devoted in faith to the One who is most worthy of our trust. Who has the *original responsibility* for our lives and possesses the *blessed entitlement to give and take what is right*? Clearly, there is only one Holy God who is Creator and Lord over all things.

The problem is that our *fleshly hearts* are entangled in the Godless, spiritually-dead and socially sinful *life* of this world, a fleshly life governed by what Paul calls “the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2). The inclination of our fleshly hearts to inevitably choose *Self-first* in this *dying world* and its *decaying life* proves the

need for our fleshly hearts to be redeemed, to be “set free” by a holy spiritual life from God himself, the “law of the Spirit of life” (2).

### **Fleshly Mind: Overcome by Fear.**

Job’s heart choice to *worship* the Lord God *and serve Him* in this world secured him in the Lord’s *blessed right* to “give and receive.” But, choosing to *deny the Lord God* His due worship established Self as the resonsible power in his life. Seizing back the *rights* to his life mirrored Adam’s original unbelief. Abandoning *holy service* under the Lord’s *blessed rule*, Job now stood alone as life-ruler in the wild chaos of this spiritual death and darkness of this Godless world. By faith, the Lord God was enthroned in Job’s heart, so the *fear of God* filled the purview of his mind and *secured his mind in a protective peace*.

Now, as the *anchor* of holy worship and service to the Lord was loosened in his fleshly heart, his fleshly mind sees only fearful threats multiply. Job laments: “For the thing that I **fear** comes upon me, and what I dread befalls

me. I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, but trouble comes” (Job 3:25-26).

Job’s troubled mind reflects the *agitated state of his fleshly life*, as he abandons the true Lord for his own *rebellious Self-rule*. When Adam and Eve originally rebelled, their *fleshly minds* were immediately troubled. First, they realized that they were *naked* (Gen. 3:7)—uncovered of the Lord God’s *spiritual life of blessing*—and now vulnerable; so, they secondly *made loincloths*, using the world’s material to hide their *shameful shortcomings*. Importantly, their *lack of spiritual life* does not draw them back to God in repentance. Rather, in the flesh, they recoil from God in shame. Instead, the fleshly nature seeks to *retain Self-rule* while dealing with worldly shame and fear.

### **Support for the Fleshly Soul.**

When our *fleshly hearts* turn in their worshipful devotion from the Lord God to our own entitled Selves, our *souls* will feel uncovered and exposed without the Lord’s rightful blessing. For, the *soul of a servant* stands under the holy gaze of God, who alone

rightfully approves as “blameless” and “upright” (Job 1:8). So, the *fleshly soul*, liberated from the *Lord’s holy servitude*, must find support. Like Adam and Eve *sewing fig leaves* to cover their shame, Job is offered this *self-justifying support* from the social approval of his friends.

As Job pours out his *heart-felt* Self-pity and the *multiplying fears* that fill his fleshly mind with dread, his friend Eliphaz the Temanite completes Job’s shift from a *holy faith* to a *worldly life of flesh*. The aspects of Job’s *holy faith* in the Lord God which had formerly anchored him in a mutually trusting and knowing relationship with God would be better served as acts of fleshly religion to garner social support and approval. The act of “fearing God” which once positioned *his mind* reverently to walk with God by faith is now a mere emotional support, the “confidence” in this world (4:6). The “integrity” by which the

Lord God had given approval to His servant's soul, is now not conferred by God but made by Job's own "ways" as the source of "hope."

Thus, the pieces for a shift from a *holy faith* in a knowing relationship with the Lord God shifts to the *fleshly world of men*. Rightful rule shifts from God's Lordship to the Self-Rule of man. With this shift into a *fleshly faith*, the fleshly worshipper can *cover* their shameful inadequacy by performing religious acts but still retaining Self-Rule by avoiding the tension of being accountable to the Holy God! Fleshly faith lays the foundation for worldly religion! But, as Job and Israel soon realize, blessed Self-sacrifice is safer than Godless Self-Rule!

**Holy Faith:** knowing and being known by **Holy God**

**Fleshly Faith:** religious acts approved by community.

2:2. Israel's Jewish heart and flight from Egypt.

For both Abraham and Job, *self-sacrificing worship* proved that they *feared God* and had a

*holy faith*. Yet, even the Lord's *proven servant Job* and his holy faith were *undermined* by his *fleshly heart* as it was forced to choose between Self-denying worship and Self-protecting survival.

Likewise, we see that Israel's *early faith* as God's chosen people was similarly undermined by their *fleshly hearts and minds*. Predictably, this *fleshly focus* shaped their faith, creating the conditions for the emergence *for the congregational religion* which we see articulated by Dathan, Abiram, and Korah.

**Israel's fleshly faith: Self-protective heart/mind:**

Abraham heard God's call in the solitude of the wilderness (Gen. 12:1), and He learned the Self-sacrificial nature of worship as he *relinquished control of his prosperity* (14:22-24) and *posterity* (15:2) into the Lord's hands. But, Israel as a nation was born and heard God's call in the midst of Egyptian enslavement and the constant threat of punishment and death. As

death and loss uncovered Job's fleshly heart tendency to withdraw in Self-protection, so Israel's *first faith* was also prone to self-protection and interest, as the fleshly hearts and minds of the people were tested in their flight from Egypt.

The *fleshly nature* of Israel's first faith is seen even when the people first believed. Though the people first "believed" and "worshipped" when hearing of the Lord's care for them (Ex. 4:31), they soon after abandoned this faith as Pharoah's threats *terrorized* their fleshly hearts and *broke* "their spirit" with "harsh slavery" (6:10). Only the Lord God's *physical redemption* "out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (20:2) freed the people to turn in faith to the Lord. Yet, this faith was still a fleshly faith, unwilling to yield in Self-sacrificing worship as seen in Job and Abraham. *Clearly, a spiritual redemption* of their Self-protective *fleshly hearts and minds* is still needed. If Job's *holy faith* focused entirely

on the Lord God and His *blessed and protective* Lordship, his *fleshly heart and mind* undermined this trust in Self-vulnerability. So, we see Israel's *fleshly heart* split its concern between faith and fearful Self-concern. At the sight of Pharoah's pursuit, the people both "cried out to the Lord" (Ex. 14:10) and expected to "die in the wilderness" (11). As Job *questioned* the Lord's right as Creator, Israel doubted the Lord's goodness as Redeemer, saying: "it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness" (12). So, Israel's fleshly heart and mind renders its *faith fleshly*.

### **Fleshly Faith and Worldly Religion**

Fleshly faith seeks the comfort of God's blessing without His holy *terror* and *Self-denying worship*, so it seeks to replace *heaven's holy faith* with a familiar *worldly religion* which allows *the fleshly heart* to retain its right to Self-rule while still giving honor to God. As Eliphaz suggested that the "integrity" establishes one's *religious status* in the community. So, Korah and his associates Dathan and Abiram sought to replace the *holy faith* by which Moses led Israel to a more palatable *congregational religious service* which bypassed God's Lordship, which was beyond human control, for a very democratic and socially accountable religion. Much like the state of Judaism in its branches we see today, Korah *pushed* a fleshly faith that honored God but retained *fleshly Self-rule*, avoiding the discomforts of sacrificial worship. Such a worldly religion was:

- **Self-justifying (16:3):** Not God but the "congregation" calls all its members "holy"

- **Lawless (28):** If Lord is “among” the people, each has license to freely serve by his own accord, as do the 250 leaders.
- **Dishonoring (30):** denying God his *holy worship* is to “despise” the Lord and His name.

But, *holy faith* draws worshippers near to the Holy God with servant hearts to fear God.

To draw near to the Holy God must never be in the flagrant Self-justification of Self-Rule.

Entering the Lord’s presence with an *exalted* sense of Self despises the Lord God’s *blessed name* as the One who tolerates no other gods besides himself.

So, Moses affirms the *holy faith* which draws near to know and be known by God. He says that it is God alone to *choose* and draw near to Himself those He calls to be *holy* (5). The Lord God is the one to *call and send* His servants to serve according to all that is in His own heart, not of their own “accord” (28).

So, the Lord God reveals by His *fire of judgment* the difference between the *Holy*

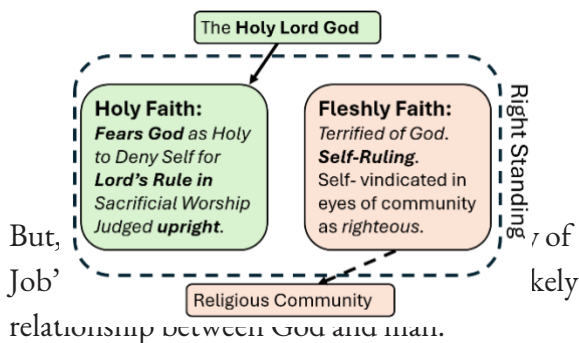
*Faith* of Moses and the *Fleshly Faith* and worldly religion of Korah.

If you are of Israel, consider the Lord's call on your life to draw near to Him with Holy Faith, offering all of your Self in *sacrificial worship* to reject the Self-prerving, fleshly faith of Korah. Abandon *worldly religion* as an affront to God.

### 3.A. Intro: Socially Needy Heart

As Job continues to be tested, his *fleshly heart* proves not only to be Selfish but also Socially needy. When the *heart is filled with its own Self-regard*, it naturally draws near to people and distances itself from God.

Though Job once *drew near to the Holy God by faith*, offering himself as a *holy response* to the Lord God. Now, as his own Self-regard fills his heart, his loyalties shift. God is far away but his friends sit with him in the dust. The Holy God confronts his Selfish heart, but his friends justify its selfish ways.



Creation's great mystery is why the Holy God would call fleshly people to know Him by

faith. For, the Lord God is Holy as a burning fire, and to draw near to Him in *holy faith* goes against every natural impulse of our fleshly beings. So, the only way for the *holy servants* of the Lord God to live with Him is to *worship Him in a holy fear*, denying their fleshly impulse to flee but instead entrusting to Him life itself. This is the redemptive hope of a *living faith*.

At this point, s heart chooses to draw near to Him in *holy faith* is met with the more familiar call of the *flesh* to focus and rely entirely on our Self. It is as if our very being—heart, mind, and soul—affirms that earthly pull of the flesh. So, our fleshly hearts are drawn away from the *Holy Lord God* to find support with other fleshly people. But, our *fleshly hearts* don't merely seek out others for support but for **approval**. Without the *Holy*

God determining we are righteous, we need to prove to self and others that we are right.



### **3.1. Job's Socially-needy Heart Tested.**

As Job continues to deliberate his situation with his gathered friends, a slow creep begins to occur as *his fleshly heart* reimagines the *sanctity of his fear of God* to be an inarticulate terror of God, the one responsible for all his calamity. Job did not *consider* that his *fear of God* actually anchored his view of God to its *heavenly reality*. As this *fear of God* had shifted once his *view of the world* filled up not with the Creator's blessed glory but the terrifying fears of this world's threats. Instead of the *fearful, holy God* filling his vision, he saw only terror, and this terror he pinned to God.

Fleshly Heart: Fear or Terror of God?

In Job, the emerging *theme* that our *fleshly lives* will always jeopardize and desecrate our *holy faith* in God sharpens before us. As we see how quickly Job's *fleshly heart* shifts from a *reverential Fear of God* to a recoiling terror. Yes, the traumatic losses of Job's children and livelihood are indeed terrible. But, Job at first met this trouble with *confident faith*, choosing to *worship the Lord God* as his heart was anchored by his *fear of God* in the *blessed and unchanging Right* of the Lord God to give and to take.

Now, Job views these losses and God himself with a growing sense of dread, saying: "the terrors of God are arrayed against me" (Job 6:4). Why this change of heart?

Remember, Job initially spoke with a *worshipful heart*, filled with the *blessed reality* of the Lord God whose right to give and take in all his creation is unquestioned.

Now, Job's own *clinging* and *pitying* Self fills his heart and seeks to replace God's protective Lordship with its own *naked ambition*. What

Job once saw in God as *life-giving* in His blessed power to “give” and “receive” (1:21) he now sees as *toxic and terrible*, saying: “For the arrows of the Almighty are in me; my spirit drinks their poison” (6:4). This God, to whom Job once drew near in *holy service*, Job now distrusts as One who derives pleasure in “crushing” him (9). The only change to cause such a dramatic change-of-heart toward God is Job’s increasing Self-reliance. However, as Job’s view of God diminishes and his view of himSelf grows, so also grows his *affinity and need for other people*. Job’s *selfish flesh* is terrified by the Holy God, but it is supported among other fleshly hearts.

### **Fleshly Mind: Favor of Man or Fear of God?**

Withdrawing from God, Job’s fleshly heart yearns not just for the company but the *approval* of other people. Accustomed to being *seen* as the Lord’s “blameless” and “upright” servant, Job still needs to *prove* that he is *right*. Formerly, he was content to be *approved as right*—as “upright” by God

himself. He was *right* because he was *upright*, *yashar*, walking unswervingly with God).

Remember, Job's *uprightness* was shown in his *fear of God*. In the obscuring and confusing tests of this world, Job held in faith to the *unchanging blessed name of God*. But, as Job's heart withdraws from God as a *toxic power* in his life, Job's fleshly mind relinquishes its fear of God. And, with it, God's approving gaze. God diminishes, but the influence and right of people over his life grows, so Job now equates the *fear of God* with human friendship, saying: "He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty" (6:14). Not only has Job's heart *ceded* the highest place of *honor* to his own Self, but it has also allowed people to share in the *reverence* once reserved only for God.

Why does Job give others this place of *influence* in his life? Eliphaz has already insinuated that his *righteous actions* rather than the person of God himself should be the source of his hope, so that his religious acts of the

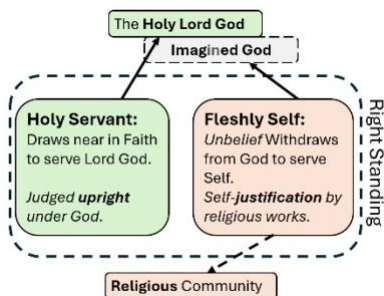
“fear of God” and his “integrity” (Job 4:6).

That is, *religion* has the power to make approve of him as *being righteous*, with the power to judge his soul relocated from heaven to earthly religion.

Now that Job has *equated the fear of God* with *human friendship*, he now looks to this sympathetic community to approve him as right. He pleads with his friends: “let no injustice be done. Turn now; my **vindication** is at stake” (6:29).

With his heart and its *faith* shifting from God to man, Job starts to rely on this religious community to replace the *Lordship* which God had formerly exercised. Now, Job seeks Self-justification, obtaining a *righteousness* apart from God’s approval. We might conclude that the purpose of human religion is the Self-justification of *naked flesh*.

Fleshly Faith:  
Re-imagining  
God.



Initially, Job's *faith* and *fear of God* safeguarded the sanctity of God's name as *blessed* (Job 1:21)—*constant in His holy right* to both to "give" and to "take." However, as Job's fleshly heart withdraws from God and his mind seeks to be *justified* before men, the *faith* by which he knew God becomes *fleshly* as well, and he *imagines an image of God* fashioned from his own fleshly experiences. The Lord God directly warns against such *imaginings in Exodus 20:4*.

As a *servant of God*, Job's mind was quick to "fear God" and to "turn from evil" (Job 1:8). Now that Job's *faith turns fleshly* and his heart has started to distance itself from God, he asks: "If I sin, what do I do to you?" (7:20). Now,

Job's *sin* is his responsibility, as he sees his life increasingly *extricated* from God's holy life. Remember, the *flesh recoils* from the holy God and his demands, so Job now *imagines God* to be a "watcher of mankind" (7:20)—detached and disinterested from human beings. If God is detached and disengaged in human affairs, then the *flesh* should be free to do as it wishes. We shall see that such a "deistic" view of God aligns with later Jewish notions of God as *simply leaving Torah* to Israel that they may devise a religion and a self-righteousness of their own *designs*. How *far* is such a view from the reality of the Holy God who has the *blessed right* to act as Lord of all!

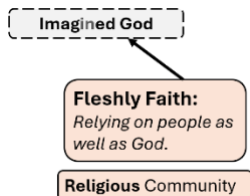
Yet, the flesh needs such an imagined, blameworthy God to justify itSelf. From this point, Job's imagined view of God becomes so distorted and enfeebled that Job eventually views himself as a *bold "prince"* making demands of this *hapless deity* (Job 31:37).

### **3.2 Israel's Socially-needy Heart Tested.**

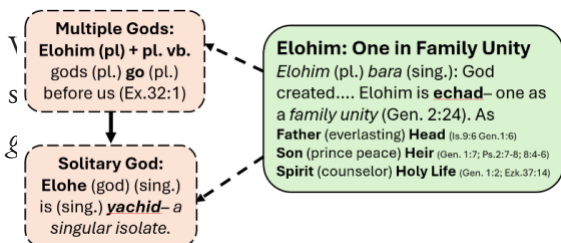
Since Sinai, the beginning of Israel's national life, the *fleshly hearts* of the people naturally *recoiled in terror* at the presence of the Lord God. When the Lord God revealed himself as Israel's only *redeemer* (Ex. 20:2), the people drew back in *terror* from His power and said, "do not let God speak to us, lest we die" (19). As Adam's *fleshly* heart "hid" in fear of the Lord God's presence (Gen. 3:10) with a similar terror, *fleshly hearts* respond in terror because God's Holy power extinguishes all other *opposing rule and rebellion*. The fleshly heart knows that it is *ruined* by God's holiness, so it

has two options: to *repent* and humble itself to be redeemed, as Job would eventually do (Job 42:6). Or, to *hide* and seek to re-imagine God in a safer way that would allow for its Self-rule. Rather than repent, Israel withdraws and seeks a *fleshly faith* rooted in an *imagined God*, hiding in its own man-made religion.

So, they call out to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die” (19).



In the same way that Job’s *fleshly faith* led him to re-imagine God in ways that didn’t threaten his flesh. So, Israel’s fleshly faith also *imagined* God according to its own *fleshly interests*, starting with how *Israel has* re-imagined God as Elohim.



name as God is *Elohim*, which is *plural* in form, saying *ani Yahweh Elohekem*—"I am the Lord your God" (7). So, God rules and acts as a perfect oneness—for example, "I will **redeem**" takes a *singular verb form*. Yet, in name as God, *elohim*, is a plural form. In name and being, God is not a isolated singularity but a plurality of persons. So, he creates *humanity* by saying: "Let **us** make man in **our** image, in our likeness" (Gen. 1:26), an imaged *shared* by God. So God exists and creates as distinct persons of Elohim as the Head who commands "Elohim said, "Let there be an expanse" (Gen. 1:6); as the Heir who *obeys this command*—"so Elohim *made the expanse*" and as the Holy Spirit surveying all that is being done: "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters" (1:2). But, this plurality of persons creates in perfect unity, so it says: "bara Elohim"... God *created* (singular verb). God exists and acts as a *plural unity*, what the Law later reveals as a *oneness, echad*. Such a plural unity is best understood looking at how Adam

and Eve became *one flesh*—*basar echad*—(Gen. 2:24). So, this *plural unity* of God is best thought of as a *family unity* of Head, Heir, and Holy Spirit. This *family unity* is reflected in the very name of Mashiach himself, God's Heir, who embodies the truth of God in His name, which is "Everlasting Father" (Head), "Prince of Peace" (Heir), and "Wonderful Counselor" (Holy Spirit) (Is. 9:6). So, when God reveals Himself as the Lord God, *yahweh* (sing.) *elohim* (plural)—expressed even in *grammatical conundrums* of a plural noun taking a singular verb as *bara* (*singular verb*) *Elohim* (*plural noun*)—He is expressing his *echad*- oneness- as a family unity as Father, Anointed Son, and Holy Spirit. But, Israel's *fleshly heart* cannot accept this, so it re-imagines God's name in their fleshly faith. At Sinai, Israel demands that Aaron "make us Elohim that shall go before us" (Ex. 32:1). However, since Israel says "go before us" as a plural verb—*yelaku*, they are *calling Elohim* "gods" (plural), denying His *oneness*. In other

words, Israel's *fleshly mind* from the very beginning rejects the statement: "*Adonai* (singular) *Elohenu* (plural), *Adonai echad*"—The Lord your God, the Lord is one—the plural unity of God that is *one*. Instead, Israel imagines God as the *pantheon of Egyptian gods*, simply a collection of individual gods to "go before" them. Sadly, even when the Lord God rebukes Israel for this *idolatry*, it shifts to the extreme opposite view that God is not *Elohim as echad*, a plurality of oneness but is a solitary and singular deity. Not Elohim but Elohe. In this way, God is forever alone as *yachid*—a singular and indivisible isolate. In fact, *Jewish teachers* have gone so far as to claim the Bible should have used these words: *eloh* and *yachid* rather than Elohim and echad.

What Israel currently believes now is not what was *revealed* in God's revelation of Himself as *echad Elohim*. Israel's *practical* re-imagining of *Elohim as an entirely singular God—eloh*, who is an indivisible isolate—*yachid* precludes the possibility of a true, *holy faith*. For, faith in

God necessarily requires a *faith* in His Mashiach. To *trust* God for redemption is to necessarily *trust* in His Mashiach as *Redeemer*. As Isaiah promises to Israel, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* (9:6).

#### Redeeming Holy Faith:

##### **Elohim is *echad*:**

God is one as a family unity of Father, Heir (prince), and Spirit (Gen. 1, Is. 9:6).

##### **Holy Lord God:**

The Lord is only God who redeems from sin and spiritual death. (Ex. 20:2; Is. 44:22)

##### **Righteous God:**

Lord confers righteousness to faithful servant Never Apart in Flesh (Gen. 15:2; Jer. 23:6)

##### **Mashiach Redeemer**

God redeems flesh only by atoning sacrifice of promised Mashiach. (2 Sam. 7:14; Dan. 9:24)

By *denying Elohim* as *echad*—a unity of Head, Heir, and Holy Spirit, Israel takes the path of a Self-Redeeming, *fleshly faith*. Without a *redeeming Mashiach*, Israel seeks a Self-righteousness based on Torah-observance.

Not needing an *atoning Mashiach* to redeem its sins, it fashions *Schneerson*, a wizened sage.

Self-Redeeming **Fleshly Faith:**

**Multiple gods/  
Solitary God:**

*Elohim are many.  
elohe is yachid  
Self-centered flesh*

**Man-made/  
controlled God**

*golden calf: portable  
Offerings: appeased  
Self-redeeming flesh*

**Distant Rule-  
giving God:**

*Watcher: not involved  
Torah-observant works  
Self-justifying flesh*

**Scholar  
Mashiach:**

*Schneerson Mashiach  
Harmless Sage to bless  
Self-sufficient flesh*

## 4.A. Introduction:

### Self-Justifying Mind

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27

**God's Image:** Made humanity to do right:  
*"I need to do right"*

When the Lord God made *humanity* in his *image*, *He* shared with us a deep-seated need to do *right*. But, the tree testing humanity's path of knowing "good" and "evil" presented us with the possibility to *seek to be "right"* apart from God—as the serpent put it, to be "like God" (Gen. 3:5). To seize the *right* in the flesh to say, "I am right" apart from God. So, two paths of *being right* lay before humanity—the path of *self-rightness* apart from God, and the servant's path of faith, to recognize that only God is righteous and that there is no *rightness* apart from God.

**Fleshy Mind:**  
In God's place  
*I am right apart from God*

**Mind of Faith:**  
Under Holy Lord  
*He is right/ judges me as righteous.*

Thus, our first parent Eve was the first to show how the *fleshy minds* seeks to *justify the Self*, showing that we are *right* even in choosing to

sin against God. Although Adam and Eve clearly knew that the Lord God had commanded them not to “eat” of the “fruit of the tree” (Gen. 3:3), they were enticed by the possibility of *living a fleshly life* apart from what God commanded. This *fleshly life* was:

- **Rebellious:** To take God’ place to be “like God” to determine *good* and *evil* for themselves apart from God pitted them against God and on the Serpent’s side (5).
- **Self-protective:** The *serpent assured them* they would “not die” (4) but instead thrive and be fed in a world of “food” and “pleasure” (6).
- **Self-entitled:** Rather than relying on God to determine morality, they had the “Right” to know “good” and “evil” apart from God.
- **Self-justifying:** Thus, the *fleshly mind* of our first parents came up with three good reasons to *justify* sinning against God. We were *right* to sin because it would give us “good food,” “worldly delight,” and “wisdom” apart from God. (6)

- **Sinful:** But, *fleshly living*, even if it seems *right* in the eyes of man, is sinful because it *breaks the command of God*.

Thus, the *fleshly mind* is so deceived by the *serpent's enticement* that it conceives of being "right" apart from God, the only Righteous Lord with the *absolute right* to determine "good" and "evil." By His created order, there is no *right*, no *justification* apart from God.

**Need Self-Justification:**

Law used as *Justification*.

*I am righteous by observing Torah.* Is. 64:6

**Need Redeemer:**

God promises *Redeemer*:

*Redeemer makes me righteous.* Jer. 23:6

As Job continues to lament his condition, *his fleshly mind* fervently argues for his own Self-justification. He is *right*, even if it means proving God *wrong*. Job's self-justifying *mind* reveals how far his *holy faith* has become *fleshly*.

#### **4.1. Job's Self-Justifying Mind Tested.**

When Job asks his friends, “But how can a man be **in the right** before God”? (Job 9:3), he seems to be speaking by *holy faith* as a servant of the Lord. Indeed, how could anyone rightfully stand on their own, apart from God, as *righteous*?

But, Job's *fleshly mind* is not seeking to justify God's righteousness but his own. For, Job thinks that he is indeed “**in the right**” on his own merits (15) *apart from God*, whom he views as an opposing “accuser.”

Job's *fleshly mind* is set on his own *rightness* and ignores a reality he once held dear, that it was *the Lord God alone* who had the *blessed right* to “give” and “take” (1:21). Now, Job's mind is convinced that *he is **right** regardless* of what the Lord God judges. Thus, Job denies God's exclusive authority as the Righteous Lord *to determine what is “righteous” and who*

is "*upright*." Job now claims the right to be *self-justified*.

Shockingly, Job is convinced that *no one can stand* "in the right" before God *not* because God alone is **worthy as Lord** to determine righteousness, but because God is simply too "**strong**" and "mighty" to be overpowered (4). Job's *fleshly mind* has already determined that he is "right" but he cannot succeed in "contending" with God (3).

And, in the same way that Job's *self-justifying mind* deems himself "right" before God (9:15), Job also proclaims himself to be "blameless" (21), proving that he has now *emancipated himself* from any dependence on the Lord to *approve him as "blameless" and "upright"* (1:8). Instead, Job assumes that this self-justifying *right* is his as a member of the community. For, it is the very community itself which *justifies Job*.

Self-justifying religious community.

Without the *inherent right* of the Righteous Lord God to judge and approve as "blameless" and "upright" (1:8), Job's *fleshly heart* seeks

another source of *justiication* and finds it in the conversations of his religious community.

As a servant of God, Job knew God and *drew near* by holy faith to *talk to God* directly.

Now, Job *talks about God* to his own religious community. Shifting from a *directly engaged* faith to a *depersonalized* rendering of God as *inert subject of conversation* rather than a viable agent in the conversation is the way that *worldly religion* shields the *fleshly faith* from the unpleasant conviction of the Lord God's holy demands while also rendering the *flesh justified* in the eyes of men.

So, Job talks freely about God to his friends, saying, "I will say to God, do not condemn me" (10:1) while not daring to say this to God directly. In this way, Job's *fleshly mind* imagines God falling short in a number of ways which further *justify Job as* right while God is *fallible*. Job complains that God "oppresses" and "despises" him (3) because he has "eyes of flesh" and sees "as man sees" (4).

Thus, *religious conversation* in community is the primary way that Job and *like-minded*

people of the *flesh justify themselves* before God without having to *rely on the Lord God* nor His righteous judgments. Assuming they are *justified and righteous before God*, Job and his friends now presume to *know and do what is right* simply because they *talk about God* as if they know Him.

Religion's presumptuous familiarity.

Ironically, Job's fleshly heart *prompts Job* to speak in the *religious community* of his friends as one *familiar and close to God*, yet all the while *distancing and diminishing* God's name to achieve its own Self-justifying purpose. So, describing God as a *sadist* who would take *pleasure in crushing him*, Job maintains that he has not "denied the **words of the Holy One**" (6:9-10). In its religious community, Israel itself would *adopt this fleshly strategem*, claiming that it has *kept the "words of the Holy One"* to claim a *self-righteousness* before the Lord God. Torah-observance is Israel's main claim to a Self-righteousness of its own, as its *fleshly mind* rejects its need for the spiritual

redemption of Mashiach and the *atonement for sin* which Jesus secures when He is “cut off” as Mashiach (Dan. 9:24, 26).

Job also presumes to be *righteous* by the *religious claims* his fleshly heart has made in his community, so he also presumes an unwarranted familiarity with God—claiming to know the very *mind of God*. Because the Lord God has “granted” Job “life and steadfast love” in the past (10:12), Job *presumes to know the very mind of God and His righteous purposes, saying confidently*, “these things you hid in your heart; I know that this was your purpose” (13).

Thus, the *web of religious conversation about God deludes the fleshly mind to presume a familiarity with God, thinking it is privy to the very hidden secrets of God’s heart and the purposes of His mind. Yet, these intimate revelations the Lord shares only with his holy servants, a distinction which his fleshly mind and heart have long-since abandoned.*

## **4.2 Israel’s Self-Justifying Mind Tested.**

At Sinai, we have seen that Israel's faith was *dimmed* by its *fleshly heart*, which *lured* its devotion from God to Self and from His Lordship to the social judgments of the community. Israel was freed by the Lord's redemption, yet it still *drew back* from him in *fleshly terror* and *deluded* itself with a false-image denying God's oneness as Elohim. For, *fleshly faith* re-imagines God to make him more acceptable to its *Self-interested heart*. First, Israel imagined Elohim as a *pantheon of individuals*, like the Egyptian gods they abandoned—"gods who will go (plural) before us"—they said (Ex. 32:1). After God rebuked this idolatry, Israel then re-imagined Elohim as simply *elohé*, a singular god (singular) who existed in solitary isolation as *yachid*—a singularity. Such a *fleshly* view of God exists to this day in Judaism, even as Scripture clearly portrays Mashiach as *Elohim*, enthroned on his eternal throne and *anointed* as Mashiach by *Elohim* himself (Psalm 45:6-7). Such glory is only possible if *one understands* Elohim as truly *echad*, a family unity of Head, Heir, and

Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:1-7). But, Elohim's oneness is yet hidden to the one blinded by a fleshly heart and faith.

So, Israel *re-imagined God* by its *fleshly faith*, even after it was furnished with God's Law, His Torah. The Torah did nothing to *redeem* and *restore* Israel's *fleshly heart*. As David, who wrote Psalm 45 understood, only Mashiach as Elohim can *redeem* His people by being *disciplined for their sins* (2 Sam. 7:14).

Because Israel's *fleshly faith* keeps its distance from God to trust in the *safety* of its religious community, its *fleshly mind* seeks its own its own Self-justification— seeking to be *right* before God by its own works. God's *way of holy faith* points to Mashiach as Israel's Redeemer and only source of righteousness

For, *holy faith* hopes in the Redeemer who will *sanctify weak flesh* (Job 22: ) by atoning for sin and securing an “eternal righteousness” for His people (Dan. 9:24; Jer. 23:6).

**Holy Faith:**

Trusting in Redeemer

**Faith in Redeemer:**

Seed of woman, Noah

Seed of Abraham

Seed of God, David

**Counted Righteous**

By **faith** (Gen. 15:6)

**Redeems** from sin (Is.

53:5-6,10; Dan. 9:24-

26) Makes people

**righteous:** (Jer.23:5-6)

But, Israel’s *fleshly mind* seeks to establish a *righteousness* by its own Self-ability. Justifying itSelf before God, whether it is through *Self-led lawlessness* or *Torah-observant* law-keeping.

**Fleshly Mind:**

Self-Justifying

**Self-justification:**

**Lawless**

**Everyone** did what was *right* in his own eyes → Law-breaking *lawlessness* (Judg. 21:25)

**Self-justification:**

**by Law**

**Israel** did what was *right* in its eyes by **observing Torah** → unclean *righteous deeds* (Isaiah 64:6).

In Israel’s history, we see that *holy faith* and its *fear of God* safeguards a constant view of God as holy. Allured by its Self-directed *heart*,

Israel re-imagined Elohim *first as a pantheon*—“gods to go before us” (Ex. 3 ) and then *practically as elohé*, a singular and solitary god existing as a lonely *yachid* rather than in the *echad* of being Elohim (Ps. 45:5-6). Is Now, we see Israel’s *fleshly mind* seeking to be *justified* in its own *right* and apart from God by first, as in the days of the Judges, seeking to do *right* apart from the Law—in lawlessness, as “everyone did what **right** in his **own eyes**” (Judges 21:25). But, its teachers then pursued a *self-justification* through the Law, a Torah-observant righteousness which persists to this day. But, Isaiah warns Israel that such *Self-righteousness* is “unclean” and its “righteous deeds” as a “polluted garment” (Is. 64:6) in God’s eyes. Holy faith *knows Elohim* as *echad*, a family unity of Head, Heir, and Holy Spirit, but Israel’s *fleshly faith* imagines either a golden *polytheism* or a strict monotheism. Holy faith trusts in God’s redemption through Mashiach for an “eternal righteousness” (Dan. 9:24), but *fleshly faith* seeks to secure a righteousness that is Self-achieved, whether by

*individual lawlessness or corporate Torah-observance.* Thus, in the time of the Judges, Israel was convinced that its *standing as God's people* ensured that all it did was "right," apart from the Law. So, everyone did what was "right in their own eyes" (Jud. 21:25): cowardly shamefulness (19:25) and genocidal mass-murder (21:1-11). Israel's faith, at this point, focuses its conversation on God and his plan for the twelve tribes of Israel to inherit the land (21:3). But, it seeks to do what is *right* using its own standard of *right and wrong*, which leads it to make unjust and lawless decisions, such as the slaughter of Jabesh-gilead and the kidnapping of its virgins. Yet, when Israel flips from such *lawlessness* to a Torah-observance to secure its own Self-righteousness, these *nobler* attempts failed as well. For, Israel's problem was in its misguided quest for Self-righteousness, which *bypassed God's* Mashiach as their atoning Redeemer.

## 5.A. Self-Regarding Mind

But I have understanding as well as you; I am **not inferior** to you. Who does not know such things as these? <sup>4</sup>I am a **laughingstock** to my friends; I, who called to God and he answered me, a just and **blameless** man, am a laughingstock. Job 12:3-4.

We have seen that as Job's *fleshly heart and mind* have deminished his once *holy faith*, the growing separation between him and God changes how he stands before God and men. His once *holy relationship is replaced* incrementally by *human religion*. A similar slide into human religion also reshapes how Israel relates to God under the *rule of King Saul*.

Now that Job's *fleshly heart* has been shifting his focus from God to man, his *fleshly mind* and its high-regard for Self is tested next. When Job's faith was squarely fixed on the Lord God, Job's mind was anchored in his thinking as a *servant of God*.

**Servant's Mind:** *Humbled by Fear of God. Holy Standing as Blameless.*

**Standing by Faith**  
*Before God: known as Blameless*

**Human Status:**  
*Blessing God and Turning from evil*

As God's, *holy servant*, Job's *fear of God* filled his mind with *the honor of God*. Now, as Job's fleshly mind pulls his attention from God, he now is very concerned with how he himself is *regarded*.

**Self-Regarding Mind:** Holds Self in High Regard despite **Fleshly Standing**.

**Standing in Flesh**

Before God:  
Self-justified

**Honored Status:**

Before People:  
Religious

Job feels conflicted, because his mind is shifting from its *humble fear of God* to a more precarious Self-regard. While the *closeness of God* once shielded him, minimizing his own Self-concern. Now, he stands alone with his reputation and the *privileged place of his calling* is now gives way to mockery, as his friends find fault with his life. So, Job goes on the defense to prove his *Self-worth*, and this results in a further slide into human religion. For, Job turns his once *intimate knowledge of God* to *religious commodity* (13:1) even as he uses his *calling as God's servant* (12:4) to position himself at the top religion's pyramid. Predictably, Job's religious posturing and inflated Self-regard *corrupts his relationship with God*, as Job harboring the *irreverent desire*

to “argue” his case with God, dragging the Judge of heaven and earth into the court of human affairs to vindicate Job’s *injured Self-regard*. Oddly, Job’s *high* Self-regard stems from his *high calling*, as someone who “called to God and he answered me” (12:4) even though he is blind to the seismic shift in his own *faith loyalty* from God to his own honor. Yet, Israel makes this same shift, most notably with King Saul. Because Saul, from the very start, was no David, not having a *heart* “after God’s own heart” (13:14), his *fleshly mind* was also puffed up by the honor of God’s calling. Though Saul was “little” in his own eyes (15:17) when first called, his own Self-regard as the *Lord’s anointed king* so filled his mind that he was soon setting up “monuments” for himself (12). As with its *king*, so Israel also followed its *fleshly mind* to grow in its own Self-regard as God’s very own people—so that a Jewish Self-regard would overshadow its need for even its promised Mashiach! With both Saul and the people of Israel, this Self-regard would inevitably *hamper* with a burdensome entitlement their relationship with God:

## 5.1. Job's Self-Regarding Mind Tested.

**Holy Faith:** *Knowing  
and Being Known by God*

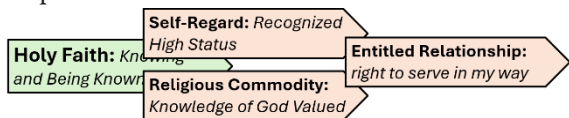
**Holy Standing:**  
*Blameless and Upright*

**Holy Walk:** *Serve God  
Sacrificially/ Turn from Evil*

When the Lord God commended Job for his holy faith, He knew His servant as one whose mind was set to honor God and turn from evil—signs of the mutual relationship between Job and God. Secure in the *fear of the Lord*, Job was *priveleged* to know God intimately by faith.

However, as Job now *stands apart from God* in self-justification, his fleshly mind's Self-regard now *gathers evidence* to support its case that Job is worthy of the highest respect. Job is shamed into this position by his friends, as he protests: “I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you” (Job 12:3). So, to prove that he should be *highly regarded* rather than mocked as a “laughingstock” (4), Job brings up his *godly status* and relationship with God as a “blameless man” and who has the right to “call to” and be “answered” by God. All that was once holy and shared intimately

with God, Job now uses to *buttress* his own reputation.



Moreover, what Job *knows* of God is also repurposed by his *fleshly mind* to strengthen his status among his friends, who are becoming a religious community to position themselves based on their knowledge of God. For, Job says: “my eye has seen all this, my ear has heard and understood it. What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you” (13:1-2). Job’s once *holy and intimate knowledge of God* is now simply a *religious commodity*—an inactive thing of value to be used for human purposes.

As Job’s *holy faith* now gives way to the *religious discussions* of men, these human relationships meet his needs for self-justification and self-honor—religious needs which his religious community now satisfies.

Thus, Job’s *first faith* in the Lord God and his holy relationship has now been

appropriated to buttress his *self-regarding heart*. In the end, Job's relationship with the Lord God has come full circle, as he now approaches the Lord with an emboldened sense of entitlement. Job now boldly seeks to "speak to the Almighty"—not calling upon him in humility (12:4) but to "argue my case with God" (13:3).



Erased is the fearful distance separating the Holy Creator from his *worshipping servants*. Emboldened by the *religious arguments and his esteemed status among men*, Job feels entitled to speak with God as he would any other *litigant* in a human court. Job's religious community has *not just* translated the *holy relationship* between God and Job into a recognizably human thing of religious value. But, it has *deceived Job* into thinking that the same *rights* he enjoys on earth elevate his status before God in heaven! A similar shift happens in Israel under the rule of its first king, Saul.

## 5.2 Israel's Self-Regarding Mind Tested.

Let's be clear. If you are a Jew, you have very good reasons to regard yourself highly, as different. You are different because the Lord God called you to be different. Listen to the Lord's tender memory of your nation's *first faith*: "Thus says the Lord, "I remember the **devotion** of your youth, your **love** as a bride, how you **followed** me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. <sup>3</sup> Israel was **holy to the Lord**, the firstfruits of his harvest. All who ate of it incurred guilt; disaster came upon them, declares the Lord." (Jer. 2:2).

Likewise, your first king, Saul, was legitimately *called* by the Lord God to be the *Lord's anointed*. Because at first, Saul was "little" in his own eyes before the Lord (1 Sam. 15:17). But, the *king* and his *people*, called to live with the *holy* Lord God, proved through time and testing, that *our natural, fleshly minds* betray. The Lord God is *holy*, but we all in the flesh are *definitely not*. And, it is an impossibility for *fallen flesh* to live with the Holy God, no matter how genuine the love or faith at the start. As Isaiah gives words to the fleshly response to the Holy God: "Who

among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?” (Is. 33:14).

The Lord God tests you, Israel, to prove to the world that even the best efforts of the *holiest* of people need desperately the *redemption of their flesh*. To trust in the Lord God is necessarily to trust in His Mashiach as your Redeemer. For, the Lord God has always promised His Chosen Seed to us, Mashiach, as our Redeemer. At the very beginning of our *human lineage*, only the Heir of Humanity, the Seed of Woman (that is, the Son of Man—Ps. 8:4-6) would be the only one to *crush* the power enslaving our flesh, the serpent (Gen. 3:15).

#### **Seed of Woman:**

*Defeats Serpent's  
Enslaving Power as  
Head over Flesh*

Gen. 3:15; Is. 9:2-7;  
61:1-3

#### **Seed of David:**

*Disciplined for sins to  
atone & restore flesh  
with righteousness*

2 Sam. 7:12-14; Is. 53:10;  
Jer. 23:5-6.

#### **Jesus Mashiach:**

*Jesus \*raised up as  
Seed of David by Spirit  
Cut off 33 CE\*\* at cross.*

2 Sam. 7:12, Matt. 1:18  
Daniel 9:24-27

\* Like Perez and Obed, Jesus is *zera* (Seed) raised up by *geullah* and *yibbum*- right and duty.

\*\*70 weeks (490 years) (Dan. 9:24) – 1 week (483 years) (v.27)= 483 years from Artaxerxes' "decree to restore (to repentance) Jerusalem in 450BCE ) (v.25) to Jesus Mashiach "cut off" in 33 CE (v.26) in order to finish transgressions, to put an end to sin, to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness (v.24).

For, if Saul's rule tragically exemplifies the inescapable corruption of one's *fleshly mind* and its *Self-regard*, then only from David will the Lord God *raise up by geullah and*

*yibbum*—redemptive right and duty, the Seed of David, who alone redeems His people as their rightful Heir, the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12) and the Son of God (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7). And, at the appointed time—69 weeks or 483 years from Artaxerxes’ decree to restore Jerusalem to the Lord and His Law (450 BCE) to the crucifixion (33 CE)—Jesus Mashiach was “cut off” to redeem *the flesh* by “putting an end to sin by atoning for iniquity” in order to “bring in everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24). In other words, the only *way to deal with sinful flesh* is to replace it with the Lord’s *righteousness*, won not by “good works of Torah observance” but by the *redemptive atonement* of Jesus Mashiach!

But, Saul and Israel took the path of *fleshly faith* and its Self-protective bent. To live with the “consuming fire” (Is. 33:14) of the Living God, Saul was the first king of Israel to *lay the foundations* of a *flehsly religion* seeking to satisfy the holy demands of God but also preserving the Self-regard of the *fleshly mind*.

As the guiding principle of our first parent Eve's fleshly mind, Self-regard is the assumed *right to live separately apart from God*, which includes the notion that we deserve to *live*, having the right to "good food;" to *be happy*, the right to pursue what is "pleasing to the eye;" and, the right to *freedom of choice*—that is, a *free will*... that sin is "good to make one wise" (Gen. 3:6). So, Eve chose the *freedom to sin*, replacing a blessed family service to the Lord God for a dehumanizing slavery to the Serpent's darkness. For, to live in such a high Self-regard, claiming these rights apart from God and His will, is to be "like God" (5)—usurping God's place to live in idolatrous rebellion.

So emboldened by such a *fleshly mind*, Saul regarded himself highly, seeking honor in his own right. Now that Saul is *anointed king*, his fleshly Self-regard has a national *audience*. So, Saul literally *blows his own trumpet* to let the Hebrews know of his exploits, that he has defeated the Philistine garrison (1 Sam. 13:3-4) and builds monuments to himself (15:12).

Lest we be too quick to judge Saul, consider how over the generations Israeli and Jewish Self-Regard has *trumpeted* its own accomplishments and enshrined its right to the Jewish Life as the most basic of its rights.

But, we see, do we not, how far this strays from the path of *holy faith* first set by Abraham? The mind *controlled by Holy Faith* fears God, recognizing the Creator's right over all so sacrificing all in worship. Abraham feared God, so he did not withhold even *his son Isaac*.

So, the most direct consequence the fleshly mind's Self-Regard is Self-entitlement. Eve, regarding *human life* as her highest priority, seized the right to do as she pleased and sin. Saul, feeling his power fading as the people "scattered" from him (1 Sam. 13:8), seized the *rights of priesthood* for himself and sacrificed the burn offerings and peace offerings to the Lord (9). Such Self-entitlement is even more clearly seen when the Lord gives Saul the clear word to "devote to destruction" all the Amalekites (15:3). Instead, he and his people

“spared the best... to sacrifice to the Lord your God” (15). The *fleshly mind*, so emboldened by its high self-regard and its entitlement to serve God as it pleases, takes the Word of God and *modifies it* fearlessly to suit its human purposes. This Self-entitlement is the basis of fleshly religion—to use the *holy Word* and *knowledge of God* to empower human purposes. In this way, Saul was the first to institute *national religion* in Israel, taking the Word of God and translating it into *political* and *religious power*. Such national religion was different from the *holy faith* by which Israel “followed” the Lord with a youthful devotion (Jer. 2:2). In same way that Saul felt *entitled* to change the Lord’s command to suit his purposes, Israel has taken the liberty to *reject* the *redemptive promise of Mashiach* to design their own national religion which persists to this day, a Judaism which seeks Self-righteousness based on Torah-observance. But, this righteousness is as a “polluted garment” (Is. 64:6). Only Mashiach is *Yahweh Tzedekenu*—the “Lord our righteousness.”

## 6.A. Secular Mind

When our first parents were tested in the garden of Eden, the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* stood as a *crossroads*. To obey God was to continue walking in the path of *faith*, regarding God as Holy and turning from the *evil* He warned against. In this *world*, the Lordship of God covered all life in His *blessing*.

But, the Serpent promised a world *de-centered* of God, where human life would be honored in His place as those “like God” to know “good” and “evil” for themselves. Such a *natural* world we would call *secular*, elevating human life and its survival to the place of reverence *formerly occupied by God*.

As our first parent Eve deliberated at the tree, you might recognize her *secular mind* as natural and common sense to you, for you were *born into the flesh* as your first nature.

**Secular Mind:** Surviving a World without God

**Self- Experience:** *Focus of Mind's Attention*

**Self-Purposes:** *Outcome of Mind's Plans.*

**Self-Protecting Religion:** *Hopeless focus life/death*

If *our first parents' holy faith* focused their minds on God's *commanding word* to help them discern “good” and “evil,” now Eve's *secular mind* focuses on her own *Self-experience* to know the world—seeking what she could experience as “good,” “pleasing,” and

“desirable” (Gen. 3:6). Even before Eve actually eats the fruit, she has already fallen to its allure. Her *fleshly mind* has come up with three good reasons, based on her own *experience in the flesh*, her humanity, to sin against God. These same experiences now are the basis for the *fleshly mind*’s reasoning in an entirely *secular, Godless* world: “What is **“good”** for me, food that will nourish my life?” What is **“pleasing”** to me, experiences that will make me *feel good* and alive? And, what is **“desirable”** to me, acquisitions of the world that will advance my Self and status?”

So, Eve’s *guiding purpose* to which these experiences should lead was *to advance and enhance **human life*** in this world. So, she sought “food” that would nourish her life; pleasures that would *delight her “eyes;”* and “wisdom” to thrive in life.

Even now, the *fleshly mind* still devises its plans and purposes to *advance and enhance* human life in this *secular world*. For, when Eve abandoned God in the garden to sin, she turned her back on the only Holy God *worthy of our sacrificial worship*. All that remained as the highest *good* for her and us was human life.

But, here is the conundrum which our first parents realized as sinned and their “eyes were opened” (3:7). In this *newly secular world* which they chose for themselves, **human life** and its preservation and survival was now pre-eminent. Yet, separated from the Lord God, they only deeply *experienced the death* which God had warned them against (2:17). For, only in the Holy God is there *blessed life*. Their flesh *refused God* to seek *human life*, but in refusing God in sin there is only death. The flesh *keeps God at a distance*, yet only God, who requires the repentant sacrifice of Self in *holy faith*, can give true life. Thus, the natural state of the *fleshly mind* is an existential **hopelessness**—clinging to its *own Self-importance* to be “like God” and so rejecting the Self-denial needed to repent and worship the Holy God sacrificially, as is His due.

There are only two outcomes for us in our *fallen flesh*. First, the Lord God promises the *redemption of our fallen flesh* from death to life, for those who repent and trust in His atoning Mashiach (Dan. 9:24). For, the Lord’s promises *redemption* under the *Redemptive*

*Rule* and Eternal Kingdom of Mashiach, the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Is. 9:2-7).

Instead, Job stayed on the *fleshly path* so that his secular mind sought *life* even as it resisted the Holy Life offered by God.

Commenting on this perplexing *human stubbornness*, the Lord laments: “My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:13).

As we shall see with Job and then with Saul and Israel, the *secular mind of flesh* hews out for itself a *broken* religious arrangement by which human flesh still retains *Control* to determine its own way while still dealing with God in a *twilight arrangement* of knowing His Word but denying the power of its Lordship.

**Secular Mind:** Leads to Hopeless Religion

**Self- Experience:** *Focus of Mind's Attention*

**Self-Purposes:** *Mind's Purpose: Advance Life*

**Survival Focus:** *Sees only Life/ Death*

**Decentered God:**  
*Blames God for  
desolate experience.*

**Distanced Word of God**  
*God's Word advances  
Religious purpose*

**Despairing of Hope:**  
*Secular Mind trusts self  
not God– Hopeless.*

As the *fleshly mind* seeks to survive in this secular world, it is frustrated by desolation, disappointment, and despairing hopelessness!

### 6.1. Job's Secular Mind Tested.

Job described himself by saying he was a man who once “called to God and he answered” (Job 12:4). Rather than call to God, Job now talks *about* God to justify himself before men. As Job's fleshly mind *withdraws* from the *holy presence* by faith and settles into the secular world of humanity, the *name of God* shifts from the *holy person to encounter* to a mere **religious commodity**, defined, assessed, and argued over to advance the *fleshly Self's* unceasing agenda—Self-regard, Self-justification, and Self-importance. So, as we further continue to understand the shifting focus of Job's *secular mind of flesh*, consider how the *secular mind* reasons from the basis of Job's experiences in this desolate world:

#### **Holy Lord God:**

Worthy and Righteous to Judge

**Imagined God:** Seen as desolating and angry **Adversary**

**Experience of Servant:** sacrificial offering in worship

**Fleshly Mind:** Experiences desolation in world

At one time, Job's mind would have been *shaped by his holy service* to the Lord God,

whose glory would have been his main concern. Prioritizing his own experiences and life as secondary, offered in sacrificial worship to the Lord.

Now, Job's *fleshly mind* has shifted its *gravitational center* to the secular world and its *tramatized* experiences. From this vantage point, Job now re-imagines God as *holy and blessed* but something entirely different.

Job *blames God* for all the evil that has come upon him. But, behind this blame is the *affront* Job feels at being deprived of his mind assumes to be his *inalienable rights*—the right to a *full life* being the foremost.

So, Job says that God has “worn him out” and “made desolate” his social relationships (16:7). As an individual, Job views as a personal attack from God all his adversity, for the Lord has “shriveled me up” and raised up his “leanness” as a witness against him (8).

Not only does Job consider these calamities as *personal attacks* from God, but he *re-imagines* God's character based on them, speaking against God's character as “wrathful” and “hateful” (9) and even calling God “my Adversary.”

Importantly, Job shifts *his regard, his faith, that is, the basis of his judgment--* from God to his own Self-experience. With this shift is a change in his *usage of words*. Previously, Job had considered *faithfulness* to the “Holy One” to mean that he not “deny” His “words” (5:10). God’s *words* were imbued with the same *authority* and *sanctity* as the *Holy One* himself, requiring him to *order arright* his own experiences to *keep the Word of God*. Now, his own words and the words of others have great power, expressing the realities of his human experience. So, Job looks not to God’s words but to human words to “strengthen” and to “assuage... pain” (Job 16:5). Dislodging the *holy and indisputable* nature of God’s Words is the fatal step to making the “Word of God” a mere commodity to be used for the purposes of human religion.

**God’s Word:** re-interpreted for human purposes

**Secular Mind:**  
Experiences are the basis for judgment

With Job’s *fleshly mind* so entrenched in the secular world of human life, his *hopes and desires* for a good life apart from God become pre-eminent. And, when *his experiences* don’t

match his *expectations for the good life*, he says “my spirit is broken” and “my days are extinct” (17:1). For, Job’s own “plans” and “desires of his heart” have been “*broken off*” (11).

Notably, these “plans” and “desires” are *purely Self-established*. Previously, both the *planned* and the *unplanned experiences* of Job’s life were subsumed under the *blessed* oversight of God’s Lordship when Job says: “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (1:21). Now, Job’s “plans” and “desires” stand *apart* from the Lord’s “blessing,” so Job is disappointed that they are *crushed and broken off*.

The fact that Job is *frustrated with God* for his broken plans and desires shows that his *will* for his life now diverges from God’s will. The *secular life* which Adam and Eve had chosen at the *tree* is focused entirely on a life of *nourishment, delight, and understanding* of human design. Yet, such a secular life *has little hope* except to cling to life’s desires and avoid death. Having abandoned the *blessings* of the Holy God, all that is left is simple survival. So, when Job’s *life’s desires* were thwarted and all that awaited was death, Job realized: “If I hope

for Sheol as my house... where then is my hope?" (17:15).

Thus, *secular life* and its inherent hopelessness is the womb in which *fleshly religion* is conceived! For, *fleshly religion* seeks to secure God's blessing and advantages in this life while still retaining *human Self-rule* while keeping the *living God* at a distance by translating the *powerful Word of the Lord* into a commodity for mere religious conversation.

**Secular Mind:** Leads to Hopeless Religion

**Secular Basis:**  
**Self- Experience:** *Focus of Mind's Attention*

**Secular Desires:**  
**Survival:** *Mind's Self-Purpose: Advance Life*

**Fleshly Religion:**  
**Justifying Self-Life:**  
*Sees only Life/ Death*

**Distanced God:**  
*Not knowing but knowing about God while keeping distance.*

**Decentered Word**  
*God's Word is re-interpreted to advances Religious purpose*

**Fleshly Hope:**  
*God's blessing without his Lordship by religious words and works.*

## 6.2 Israel's Secular Mind Tested.

Under the *rule of King Saul*, Israel underwent a remarkable shift which would transform into a Jewish *national identity* under David to survive even until this day! If you are a Jew today, consider the *miracle* of how the Lord God has steadily *galvanized* the identity you now share with your *fellow Jews*.

**Kinship:** *Family Mind as sons of Abraham*

**Tribal Individualism:**  
*Doing right in own eyes.*

**Jewish Nationalism:**  
*Under King in Country.*

King Saul laid the critical *foundation* for Israel to form a *national identity* which would eventually become its sense of Jewishness, for before Saul, “everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25). After, Saul, the Israelite identity would be more than just *kinship—the bonds of belonging as sons of Abraham*. Nor even a fractured tribalism loosely assembling *lawless individuals* “doing right” each in his own way (25). Thanks to Saul and the finishing work of David, you have an *indelibly cast* national identity as a Jew. For, one day, all the nations will stream to the nation of Israel as from darkness to light, and they will seek out its Jewish people, not a collection of lawless individuals. For, the Lord will one day call to the nation:

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. <sup>2</sup> For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you <sup>3</sup> And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising” (Is. 60:1-

3). For Israel to *beckon* the nations to its light, its people themselves need to understand what it is to walk in the *darkness* of this *secular world*, *their minds* enthralled by sin and seeing only a Godless, hopeless future of awaiting death. Indeed, Israel forms its national identity in such a *secular* and *hopeless* darkness. But, just as *fleshly religion* offered Job no hope but the prospect of *life or death*, so Saul's *fleshly mind* turns to fleshly religion to preserve his life and status in this *threatening, secular world*. Consider how Saul's *nationalizing power as God's anointed king* solidified Israel's shift from its early faith to a *national religion* as an attempt to preserve *fleshly Self-rule* in the face of a hopeless, secular world.

#### Distanced from God:

Saul was a king who perfectly *embodied* the people of Israel who distanced themselves from God in *fleshly fear*, saying: "Do not let God speak to us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:19). Clinging to a *fleshly life* and its Self-rule, Israel and Saul *delegated* the perceived threat of God's Lordship to *holy men* such as Moses or Samuel.

So, Saul has an ever *distanced* relationship with God. Not knowing or expecting God's blessing for himself, he says to Samuel, "Blessed be **you** to the Lord" (1 Sam. 15:13). Keeping God at a distance, he repeatedly refers to God as "the Lord your God" (15, 21, 30) when talking with Samuel.

Notably, *Saul's fleshly distance from God* causes him to worship differently. For, *the holy worship of Job, or Abraham, or even David* differs from Saul, whose *secular mind* envisioned worship as an earthly endeavor. Whereas *holy worship* draws near to the God whose Holiness requires total, sacrificial worship. The secular mind only sees this world and its concerns. So, Saul tells Samuel he will only "bow down before the Lord *your* God" if he is "honored before the elders" and "Israel" (30). With such a *secular mind*, God is useful insofar as he can help achieve human purpose. So, Saul "hears" the Word of God *distantly*.

### Decentering Voice from Word:

When Samuel conveyed the Lord's commands to Saul, he literally says, *hear the voice of the*

*words of the Lord—shema lakol divrei Adonai* (1 Sam. 15:1). In other words, the *words* given by the Lord emanate from His *voice of authority as Lord*. To “hear” the Lord’s voice is to *heed* His authority as Lord to obey His words completely. And, the Lord’s words of command—*divrei Adonai--* are clear—“devoted to destruction” all of Amalek.

Instead, Saul spares Amalek and keeps the “best of the things devoted to destruction” for his own *secular purpose*, to “sacrifice” in his own *religious way* (15:21).

Importantly, Saul is convinced that he has *upheld* the “word of the Lord”—*davar Adonai* (13). Here, we see how one’s *secular mind* is convinced but deceived in thinking that *fleshly religion* appeases God. For, in this *fallen world*, the fleshly mind assumes that it entitled to Self-rule, so any competitor, even God, must be *adjusted* and made suitable.

So, when Saul says that he has “upheld” the “word of the Lord” (13) does not mean he has *kept* it but rather, has *honored it* by his efforts. In this way, fleshly religion seeks to *honor* God

but also bypassing the *unyielding holiness of His Lordship*. So, in the ensuing exchange between Saul and Samuel, it is as if they are speaking two languages.

When Samuel asks, “Why did you not *hear* the voice of the Lord”? (19) he assumes that to hear the voice of the Lord is to *bow* to his specific “words,” for Samuel *knows* the Lord as Holy so *heeds His words*. But, when Saul honestly answers, “I *have heard* the voice of the Lord” (20), he speaks as one who *knows God distantly*, and this echo of a voice has no power of Lordship. Saul knows only his own Self-rule, so the *words* he hears from this distanced voice are empty of any true power.



So, the Lord’s words to “devote destruction all that they have” (15:3) are *over-ruled* by Saul’s own words to take the “best” to “sacrifice” to Samuel’s God (21).

Not only has Saul “heard the voice” of the Lord, but he has “walked in the way of the Lord” (20) as well. Though following the initial *direction* to attack Amalek, Saul’s way is *diverted* to achieve his own fleshly outcome, a religious “sacrifice” of his own design.

In the end, Saul’s *secular mind* sees even the *holy things of God*, whether “worship” (30) or the “words of the Lord” (13), as useful objects to advance life and its earthly purposes—in this case, to acquire what is “best” and to consolidate his own power. Because everything is subsumed to the service of human experience, Saul has no hope beyond this fleshly world of life and death. Realizing his “sin” and need to “bow” before the Lord, he cares very little for the *God* he has sinned against but instead is only concerned for the *regard* of his fellow countrymen (30).



### **6.3. National Redemption or Religion?**

for my people have committed two evils: they have **forsaken me**, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Jeremiah 2:13

If you are of Israel, the Lord's words to your people are a two-edged sword. On the one hand, the Lord's calling you *my people* is unmistakable. On the other hand, the choice has always been yours to *draw near* to the Lord for *living waters*, or to *stand apart* to create *broken cisterns* drained of life. We draw near by faith, but only with the heart of a servant. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, and all the prophets drew near with *surrendered hearts*, offering up in sacrificial worship their entire Self, only to be *changed by the Lord*.

But to *stand apart* is to forsake the Lord and to insist on futilely *hew for yourself broken cisterns* that hold no water.

Thus, as Israel shifts from individualistic tribalism, with each person and tribe “doing

what is right in their own eyes” (Jud. 21:25) to the monarchy and a *national religion* and worship as embodied in King Saul, we must ourselves: are you, Israel, drawing near to the *living waters* for life or are you *hewing broken cisterns* that are dessicated with Self-effort?

At this point, consider the **reason** we must ask this question. The Lord God’s call is irrevocable, but his *holiness* is unchanging. So, as we have seen with Job, he will *test* His servants until their *deep-seated* waywardness is *rooted out* to render a deep repentance and a lasting redemption.

So, what Job experienced over a single lifetime, Israel has endured for all your generations. For, you have a *deep-seated* need to rely on your *flesh*, to establish a righteousness apart from the Lord’s life and purpose. And, you have persisted in this pursuit for generations to your hurt. You have endured exile(s), wandering, persecution, and even rejecting the promised Mashiach to pursue your own path of redemption through Torah observance.

Running through your history with the Lord, there seems to be a persistent *view* which leads many in Israel to assume that they are pleasing the Lord and living as *holy* before Him when indeed they are living in danger to invite His judgment. Korah expresses this errant view when he confronts Moses by saying: “You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are *holy*, every one of them, and the Lord is among them” (Num. 16:3).

Like Korah, many in Israel think that the Lord’s *calling* for the people of Abraham to be *his* people imputes on themselves an inalienable *holiness* that is their birthright, regardless of what they do.

However, even in the story of Korah, we see that only *Moses* and *Aaron* are considered by the Lord as holy, for they drew near to the Lord in *holy faith*. But, the Lord was ready to *consume* the entire congregation and up bringing Dathan and Abiram down to Sheol and consuming Korah and his fellows with the fire of judgment (35).

Thus, though all in Israel is called to draw near to the Lord in *holy covenant*, only those who walk by *faith* are considered the Lord's holy servants. Or, conversely, Israel does not have an inalienably holiness that makes every choice of yours righteous. In fact, Israel and the entire *human family* shares a shared nature of *naked flesh* which is by nature corrupt, Godless, and Self-ruling in its idolatry.

In *the flesh*, Adam and Eve chose to elevate the Self to be equal to and "like God" (Gen. 3:5) so naturally *hid from God and His presence* (8).

In the *flesh*, the congregation of Israel recoiled in fear and refused to hear God's voice even after receiving the Law, saying, "Do not let God speak to us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:19). But, Moses *drew near to the fire of God's holy presence by faith* (19:19).

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In the *flesh*, Saul was *Self-justified* to offer sacrifices by his own will and to alter the Word of God according to his own Self-rule and was *rebuked* by Samuel, who served the Lord fully by faith.

Thus, as Saul galvanized Israel to *worship the Lord God* as a nation, this did not abrogate the fact that the Lord has and always will accept only worship offered to Him in faith but will reject sacrifices offered **in the flesh**.

Do you still not see the difference between Samuel and Saul? Yet Israel has continued in its *national religion* on a **path of flesh**, not faith. Somehow hoping that its persistence in coming to the Lord God in the flesh, according to Israel's own terms and religious choices, will eventually win over the Lord.

So, Israel offered to the Lord "offerings" and celebrated holy "Sabbath convocations" but these were in fact "vain" and "abominable" to the Lord, according to Isaiah (Is. 1:13).

Even as Israel headed toward *Babylonian exile*, Jeremiah warned you, O Israel, that you were *hewing out* "cisterns" of fleshly religion,

but this religion of your own design disguised the fact that you had “forsaken” the Lord and the “living water” He would give to you if only you would *repent and surrender your **fleshly** ways for **redemption** by **faith***.

So, Israel, if you would **hear now**, in the midst of your current crisis. If you have witnessed the reality of the Mashiach’s power, having *redeemed a people* and *saved them* from the current testing to come upon the whole world.

Hear and know that the Lord God has made only one demand of your fleshly Self-rule—to surrender it by faith for *redemption*. Abraham offered up his ***fleshly desire*** to protect his heart and Isaac’s life, instead worshipping the Lord in faith to surrender his son to the Lord, only to receive Isaac’s life back, redeemed.

Korah, Abiram, Dothan, and Saul *insisted* that they be able to worship the Lord God according to their own *fleshly will*, only to be rejected. There can only be one Lord, and all, including you, Israel, must surrender to Him in worship. There is only one *cure* for our

wayward *flesh*, stripped of life at the foot of the tree in Eden. We must surrender this *rebellioius flesh-life* that the Mashiach might **redeem it**. For, only Mashiach, the Seed of Woman, *crushes the Serpent's rule over sinful flesh* (Gen. 3:15); *multiplies spiritual offspring for Abraham* (15:5); and *atones for iniquity* (Dan. 9:24) so that He becomes the redemption and the *righteousness* of His people as *yahweh tzedekenu*, the Lord our righteousness (Jer. 23:6).

But, to seek Mashiach as your *redeemer*, you must realize and **repent of** the utter *futility* of your fleshly desire to create a *righteousness* of your own **religioius works**, a fleshly religion of Torah-observant Judaism. Like Job, you are destined to be restoed in the presence of God as a light to the whole world, so understand and reject your fleshly religion.

### **Distanced God: Fleshly Aversion**

And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “**Blessed be you to the Lord**. I have performed the commandment of the Lord” (1 Sam. 15:13).

Holy faith draws near to God in sacrificial worship, knowing that He is unchanging as the Holy Lord God. But, *fleshly faith* worships at a distance. So, Job proclaims without qualification, “blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21), for the Lord God is worthy to be blessed at all times, in all circumstances, for his holy blessing lays claim over all of Job’s life to “give” and to “take away.” But, Saul qualifies, he neatly demarcates his words of blessing as one observing but not participating in this blessed holiness of God: “Blessed be you to the Lord” (1 Sam. 15:13). Holy men like Samuel draw near to deal with God in person. But, Saul is in the flesh, honoring God from a distance. In this way, Saul embodies the first feature of Israel’s national religion—a *distance maintained* through *qualification* and semantic definition, mediating a relationship with God thorough appointed *religious figures*.

In *holy faith*, Job drew near to worship even in traumatic loss, but in *fleshly mind* re-defined God to justify himself, describing God

as *distanced*, being a detached “Watcher of Men” (Job 7:20).

Saul’s mind was from the beginning *anchored* in the secular world and social expectations, so he acted and spoke as one hopeless and alone in the world. Untouched by God’s “blessing” (1 Sam. 15:13); honoring but detached from the “Lord,” Samuel’s “God” (21); hearing and heeding the *abstracted echo* of the Lord’s “voice” but not His clear and specific words of command (20). For, only from a *safe and non-intrusive distance* could Saul’s own *flesh* maintain its Self-Rule to accomplish its own purposes of keeping what is “best” to “*sacrifice to the Lord*” (21) in his own way and building “monuments” to honor himself (12).

Importantly, Saul did not *worship-at-a-distance* because he was unusually immoral. In fact, Saul perfectly embodied the *congregation* as their appointed *head*, for he shared the same nature as all Israel, a *naked flesh* common to all humanity and inherited from our first parents, who “hid” from the

holy presence of God (Gen. 3:8) in the nakedness of their *shameful Self-honor*. It is the same *fleshly distancing* from which Korah, Dathan, and Abiram declared themselves *holy* by their own Self-proclamation apart from God's choice or actions (Num. 16:3). In the flesh, Saul and Israel are *naturally averse* to God's *burning holiness*—crying out, “Who among us can dwell with everlasting burning?” (Is. 33:14).

Thus, *fleshly religion* enables Saul and the people live and serve God at a distance. For, at a distance, Saul and Israel can *define their view of God* to comply with their own Self-rule. Consider how Israel *re-defines* God's revealed identity as Elohim from a *religious distance*.

From the very “beginning,” God reveals Himself as *Elohim*, a noun taking the plural form (elohim) and not the singular form (elohe). Yet, *Elohim* is rendered “God” because he acts in a unified oneness, for *bara—created—is singular* (Gen. 1:1). This oneness of Plurality of person + singularity of action reveals Elohim as a *family unity* of “us” (Gen.

1:26) as Elohim is the Head (Gen. 1:1), Elohim is the Anointed Heir (Ps. 45:7, 2:8), and Elohim is the Holy Spirit (Ps. 51:11; Dan. 9:18).

But, *standing apart* from God in their *fleshly religion*, Israel first re-imagined Elohim as a pantheon of gods, like the nations. Creating for itself a “golden calf,” it re-defined Elohim as *eloheka* (plural) *heeluka* (plural), *gods* that brought you out of Egypt (Gen 34:4).

Now, the Israelite religion has grown into modern Judaism, which has yet again re-defined Elohim *according to its religious demands*. Though God’s Word clearly states: “Eloheni echad”—our God is one (Deut. 6:4). Jewish teachers have brazenly taught that the words should be stated, “elohe” (singular) and “yachid” (an indivisible, single entity). Using the *words of Jewish religion* from a distance, Israel’s teachers have defined Elohim *as singularly isolated*—a *monotheism* more in line with Islam’s view of a solitary Allah than the Godhead which creates as Head (Gen. 1:6), Heir (Gen. 1:7), and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2), a

unity and oneness *shared and passed on as a family resemblance* (1:26) and depicted as a oneness which bring together man and woman as *basar echad* “one flesh” (2:24) and not a horrible amalgam if it were *basar yachid*—“singular flesh.” To claim Elohim is *yachid* and not *echad* claims a similar monstrous blasphemy.

**Devoided Word: Fleshly Repurposing.**

The stark contrast between *holy faith* and *fleshly religion* is highlighted by the very different responses of Samuel and Saul to the Word of the Lord regarding Amalek. Samuel *confirms* the sanctity of God’s *word of command* by saying to Saul, “Thus says the Lord of hosts” (1 Sam. 15:2), for the command is clear: “Go and strike Amalek and **devote to destruction all** that they have” (3). The *unswerving purpose and encompassing scope* of God’s Word is clear: “all” is to be “devoted to destruction.” Instead, Saul *complies* with this command by saying that the “**best**” was **spared** in order to “**sacrifice** to the Lord (Samuel’s) God” (21). How can Saul be so

convinced he has “upheld the commandment of the Lord” (13)—literally, *hakimoti*—“lifted up, that is, **honored**” the Lord’s *Word, debar*?

In Saul’s *oddly revealing* words, we see how he pre-figures Israel’s *fleshly religion* as it seeks to “**honor**” without literally “**keeping**” the *devarim, the Words of the Lord*. As the Lord’s anointed, Saul feels entitled to view *his words* as being as weighty as the Lord’s words. So, *honoring* the Lord’s general sentiment while *co-opting* the words to accomplish his own purposes seems highly appropriate to Saul. The Lord would condemn such presumption through Jeremiah, saying: “the burden is every man’s own word, and you pervert the words of the living God, the Lord of hosts, our God” (Jer. 23:36). So, let’s consider how this *national religion* of Israel *devoided the Word of God*, as we see practiced by Saul, grew into the pre-exilic practice and then the Judaism we see today.

Yes, Israel has been *entrusted* with the Words of the Living God, for the “things that are **revealed belong to us** and to our children

forever” (Deut. 29:29). Israel’s *stewardship* over the very words of God is rightfully seen as its *birthright*. However, these rights do not confer on Israel and its prophets an equal standing with God so that it would regard its own *oral Torah* to equal the God-given Torah in authority and spiritual authority!

Thus, to understand how Saul and also *Israel’s fleshly religion* devoids the Word of God, let’s consider Saul’s rationale in handling the Words of God:

**\*General Voice not Specific Word:** *shamati b’kol adonai*: “I have heard the voice of the Lord” (1 Sam. 15:20). Claiming that he has indeed *honored the words of the Lord*, Saul reasons that he has “heard the voice of the Lord.” That is, Saul generally *acknowledges* God’s *voice of authority* to **authorize** his own words. In this way, the words and actions of Saul are backed by the *voice*, the name of the Lord God, without being committed to keeping the *specifics of the Lord’s words themselves*. It is the *voice of the Lord* which sends Saul against Amalek, galvanizing the

nation behind Saul, but this *general invoking of the Lord's power* gives Saul the place of adding his own words and will.

As a *religious nation*, Israel continues this practice of drawing on the Lord's voice and name to *authorize* religious words even to the time leading up to the Babylonian exile. Jeremiah rebukes the "prophets" of Israel who speak "visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord" (Jer. 23:16) and who recycle the Lord's "words" (30) and who hold up their own *worthless words* as equivalent to powerful Word of God (28-29).

This practice of *invoking the Lord's name* to lend spiritual credence to mere *human ideas and "burdens" on each one's heart* (36) leads the people astray (32). To this day, *the fleshly religion* of Judaism has fractured into a cacophony of voicing claiming to speak for God, whether through *mystical Kabbalah, rigorous Oral Torah and Talmud, creative Midrashim, or strict Halakah*, the teachers of Judaism have hewn for the people many wayward paths to achieve the *righteous life*, a

plethora all leading away from the Lord God's *one way* to righteousness through the "Righteous Branch" of David (Jer. 23:5), who alone becomes the *source of righteousness* for His people through redemption, for surely only *adonai tzedekenu*—only the Lord is our righteousness.

**\* General Way not Specific Outcome:**

*vaelek b'derek*: "I have walked in the way which I was sent" (20). So, not only do Saul and his *religious descendants, the prophets*, devoid God's Word of its *specific commands*, but they also *follow the general way* set forth by the Word but stray from the Word's specified Outcomes.

So, Saul *follows the Lord's way to an extent*. At Gilgal, he does rally Israel to attack Amalek and to strike all that belongs to the nation. However, after Amalek is defeated, Saul's desires diverge from the Lord's direct *word to* "devote to destruction all that they have" (15:3). Such a total demand does not serve Saul's *fleshly purpose*. As Saul's *fleshly mind* operates within a secular world of human

values and goals, he *agrees with the popular consensus* to take the “best” of Amalek to “sacrifice to the Lord your God” (15).

In this way, the *fleshly mind* always chooses the way which is Self-serving and preserving, even if it means directly *ignoring or disobeying the Lord’s commands*. Eve’s original *fleshly mind* concluded that there were three advantageous reasons to *sin against the Lord God* (Gen. 3:6). Saul’s *fleshly mind* reasons that to devote “all” of the spoil to the Lord God would be an unacceptable loss, so he *saves* the “best” to “sacrifice” to the Lord God (21). So, it is this *disobedient sacrifice* which is at the heart of fleshly religion. Saul and *all subsequent followers of fleshly religion* believe in vain that fleshly actions taking the *acceptable form of sacrifice* will appease God. But, Samuel corrects Saul by saying “obeying the voice of the Lord” is what is accepted, not mere “sacrifices,” for “rebellion is as the sin of divination” (22-23). To *follow in the way of the Lord’s word* but to diverge to *fleshly Self-rule* is still vain rebellion.

Yet, Israel's prophets *heading into Babylonian exile* still persisted in partially following the way of the Lord God but diverting this way to *serve their own fleshly purposes*. For, not only did these prophets *follow the "deceitful" desires of their own hearts* (Jer. 23:26) but they also entice all Israel to "despise the word of the Lord" and to "stubbornly follow (each) his own heart" (17).

And, we have seen that the *fleshly heart* seeks to be Self-righteous *before* the Lord God, so Israel pursued a "righteousness" according to the *devarim of the Lord*, the *mitzvot* of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17) but rejecting the Lord's original path to this *Torah-observance*, a holy faith in the "Lord God" who alone redeems and delivers from this world's "slavery" (2).

So, pursuing a *Self-righteousness* based on the fleshly religion of *Torah-observance*, Israel through its generations through the waning monarchy only achieved "righteous deeds" that were "polluted garments" and uncleanness (Is. 64:6) and to this day, a "hopeless" life in the

“dried bones” of *dead flesh* without God’s Spirit and life (Ezek. 37:11-14). For, God’s path of “righteousness” first begins with faith in His redeeming Lordship (Ex. 20:2) through Mashiach, the Branch of David, who alone is *yahweh tzedekenu*—the Lord our righteousness, the only one who “atones for iniquity” to bring “an everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24) when He was “cut off” (26) at the appointed time on His cross of sacrifice in 33 CE, 69 weeks (of years) after the decree of Artaxerxes in 450 BCE (24).

Israel, your *fleshly offering* to the Lord God of your Self-righteousness attained by generations of Torah-observant Judaism is truly your “best” effort, but such a “sacrifice” does not abrogate His command to *let Yahweh Tzedekenu*, Mashiach, be the one to redeem you!

**\*General Honor not Specific Obedience:**  
*lizboah l’adonai*: “to sacrifice to the Lord” (21). So, Saul was the first to offer to the Lord God the sacrifices of Israel’s *fleshly religion*, as the “best” of its efforts. And, Israel has been

presenting to the Lord its “best” efforts of a Jewish *Torah-observance*, a *shamar mitzvot tzedekenu*—a command-keeping as our righteousness. But, the Lord God asks of you simple obedience—for you to receive your Mashiach as *yahweh tzedekenu*, the “Lord our righteousness!”

For you, O Israel, are appointed to call the whole world to the *light* of the Lord God’s salvation in the redemption of His Mashiach. But, unless you can testify of the Lord’s righteousness as *your* righteousness, what right do you have to speak? Give up your own Torah-observant Self-righteousness to take hold of the Lord your Righteousness, for Mashiach is your true *birthright*, the Son given to you (Is. 9:6) who will one day rule in His righteousness, not yours. Yes, the Lord God gave you His Torah, which you can *keep* once you come to Him as the Lord your righteousness to free you from the secular “house of slavery” of this world (Ex. 20:2).



### 6.3. National Redemption or Religion?

for my people have committed two evils: they have **forsaken me**, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Jeremiah 2:13

If you are of Israel, the Lord's words to your people are a two-edged sword. On the one hand, the Lord's calling you *my people* is unmistakable. On the other hand, the choice has always been yours to *draw near* to the Lord for *living waters*, or to *stand apart* to create *broken cisterns* drained of life. We draw near by faith, but only with the heart of a servant. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, and all the prophets drew near with *surrendered hearts*, offering up in sacrificial worship their entire Self, only to be *changed by the Lord*.

But to *stand apart* is to forsake the Lord and to insist on futilely *hew for yourself broken cisterns* that hold no water.

Thus, as Israel shifts from individualistic tribalism, with each person and tribe "doing what is right in their own eyes" (Jud. 21:25) to the monarchy and a *national religion* and

worship as embodied in King Saul, we must ourselves: are you, Israel, drawing near to the *living waters* for life or are you *hewing broken cisterns* that are dessicated with Self-effort?

At this point, consider the **reason** we must ask this question. The Lord God's call is irrevocable, but his *holiness* is unchanging. So, as we have seen with Job, he will *test* His servants until their *deep-seated* waywardness is *rooted out* to render a deep repentance and a lasting redemption.

So, what Job experienced over a single lifetime, Israel has endured for all your generations. For, you have a *deep-seated* need to rely on your *flesh*, to establish a righteousness apart from the Lord's life and purpose. And, you have persisted in this pursuit for generations to your hurt. You have endured exile(s), wandering, persecution, and even rejecting the promised Mashiach to pursue your own path of redemption through Torah observance.

Running through your history with the Lord, there seems to be a persistent *view* which

leads many in Israel to assume that they are pleasing the Lord and living as *holy* before Him when indeed they are living in danger to invite His judgment. Korah expresses this errant view when he confronts Moses by saying: “You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are *holy*, every one of them, and the Lord is among them” (Num. 16:3).

Like Korah, many in Israel think that the Lord’s *calling* for the people of Abraham to be *his* people imputes on themselves an inalienable *holiness* that is their birthright, regardless of what they do.

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Thus, *fleshly religion* enables Saul and the people live and serve God at a distance. For, at a distance, Saul and Israel can *define their view of God* to comply with their own Self-rule. Consider how Israel *re-defines* God's revealed identity as Elohim from a *religious distance*.

From the very “beginning,” God reveals Himself as *Elohim*, a noun taking the plural form (elohim) and not the singular form (elohe). Yet, *Elohim* is rendered “God” because he acts in a unified oneness, for *bara—created—is singular* (Gen. 1:1). This oneness of Plurality of person + singularity of action reveals Elohim as a *family unity* of “us” (Gen. 1:26) as Elohim is the Head (Gen. 1:1), Elohim is the Anointed Heir (Ps. 45:7, 2:8), and Elohim is the Holy Spirit (Ps. 51:11; Dan. 9:18).

But, *standing apart* from God in their *fleshly religion*, Israel first re-imagined Elohim as a pantheon of gods, like the nations. Creating for itself a “golden calf,” it re-defined Elohim as *eloheka* (plural) *heeluka* (plural), *gods* that brought you out of Egypt (Gen 34:4).

Now, the Israelite religion has grown into modern Judaism, which has yet again re-defined Elohim *according to its religious demands*. Though God’s Word clearly states: “Elohenu echad”—our God is one (Deut. 6:4). Jewish teachers have brazenly taught that the words should be stated, “elohe” (singular) and “yachid” (an indivisible, single entity). Using the *words of Jewish religion* from a distance, Israel’s teachers have defined Elohim *as singularly isolated*—a *monotheism* more in line with Islam’s view of a solitary Allah than the Godhead which creates as Head (Gen. 1:6), Heir (Gen. 1:7), and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2), a unity and oneness *shared and passed on as a family resemblance* (1:26) and depicted as a oneness which bring together man and woman as *basar echad* “one flesh” (2:24) and not a

horrible amalgam if it were *basar yachid*—“singular flesh.” To claim Elohim is *yachid* and not *echad* claims a similar monstrous blasphemy.

**Devoided Word: Fleshly Repurposing.**

The stark contrast between *holy faith* and *fleshly religion* is highlighted by the very different responses of Samuel and Saul to the Word of the Lord regarding Amalek. Samuel *confirms* the sanctity of God’s *word of command* by saying to Saul, “Thus says the Lord of hosts” (1 Sam. 15:2), for the command is clear: “Go and strike Amalek and **devote to destruction all** that they have” (3). The *unswerving purpose and encompassing scope* of God’s Word is clear: “all” is to be “devoted to destruction.” Instead, Saul *complies* with this command by saying that the “**best**” was **spared** in order to “**sacrifice** to the Lord (Samuel’s) God” (21). How can Saul be so convinced he has “upheld the commandment of the Lord” (13)—literally, *hakimoti*—“lifted up, that is, **honored**” the Lord’s *Word, debar*?

In Saul's *oddly revealing* words, we see how he pre-figures Israel's *fleshly religion* as it seeks to "**honor**" without literally "**keeping**" the *devarim*, the Words of the Lord. As the Lord's anointed, Saul feels entitled to view *his words* as being as weighty as the Lord's words. So, *honoring* the Lord's general sentiment while *co-opting* the words to accomplish his own purposes seems highly appropriate to Saul. The Lord would condemn such presumption through Jeremiah, saying: "the burden is every man's own word, and you pervert the words of the living God, the Lord of hosts, our God" (Jer. 23:36). So, let's consider how this *national religion* of Israel *devoided the Word of God*, as we see practiced by Saul, grew into the pre-exilic practice and then the Judaism we see today.

Yes, Israel has been *entrusted* with the Words of the Living God, for the "things that are **revealed belong to us** and to our children forever" (Deut. 29:29). Israel's *stewardship* over the very words of God is rightfully seen as its *birthright*. However, these rights do not

confer on Israel and its prophets an equal standing with God so that it would regard its own *oral Torah* to equal the God-given Torah in authority and spiritual authority!

Thus, to understand how Saul and also *Israel's fleshly religion* voids the Word of God, let's consider Saul's rationale in handling the Words of God:

**\*General Voice not Specific Word:** *shamati b'kol adonai*: "I have heard the voice of the Lord" (1 Sam. 15:20). Claiming that he has indeed *honored the words of the Lord*, Saul reasons that he has "heard the voice of the Lord." That is, Saul generally *acknowledges* God's *voice of authority* to **authorize** his own words. In this way, the words and actions of Saul are backed by the *voice*, the name of the Lord God, without being committed to keeping the *specifics of the Lord's words themselves*. It is the *voice of the Lord* which sends Saul against Amalek, galvanizing the nation behind Saul, but this *general invoking of the Lord's power* gives Saul the place of adding his own words and will.

As a *religious nation*, Israel continues this practice of drawing on the Lord's voice and name to *authorize* religious words even to the time leading up to the Babylonian exile. Jeremiah rebukes the "prophets" of Israel who speak "visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord" (Jer. 23:16) and who recycle the Lord's "words" (30) and who hold up their own *worthless words* as equivalent to powerful Word of God (28-29).

This practice of *invoking the Lord's name* to lend spiritual credence to mere *human ideas* and "*burdens*" on each one's heart (36) leads the people astray (32). To this day, *the fleshly religion* of Judaism has fractured into a cacophony of voicing claiming to speak for God, whether through *mystical Kabbalah*, *rigorous Oral Torah and Talmud*, *creative Midrashim*, or *strict Halakah*, the teachers of Judaism have hewn for the people many wayward paths to achieve the *righteous life*, a plethora all leading away from the Lord God's *one way* to righteousness through the "Righteous Branch" of David (Jer. 23:5), who

alone becomes the *source of righteousness* for His people through redemption, for surely only *adonai tzedekenu*—only the Lord is our righteousness.

**\* General Way not Specific Outcome:**

*vaelek b'derek*: “I have walked in the way which I was sent” (20). So, not only do Saul and his *religious descendants, the prophets*, devoid God’s Word of its *specific commands*, but they also *follow the general way* set forth by the Word but stray from the Word’s specified Outcomes.

So, Saul *follows the Lord’s way to an extent*. At Gilgal, he does rally Israel to attack Amalek and to strike all that belongs to the nation. However, after Amalek is defeated, Saul’s desires diverge from the Lord’s direct *word to* “devote to destruction all that they have” (15:3). Such a total demand does not serve Saul’s *fleshly purpose*. As Saul’s *fleshly mind* operates within a secular world of human values and goals, he *agrees with the popular consensus* to take the “best” of Amalek to “sacrifice to the Lord your God” (15).

In this way, the *fleshly mind* always chooses the way which is Self-serving and preserving, even if it means directly *ignoring or disobeying the Lord's commands*. Eve's original *fleshly mind* concluded that there were three advantageous reasons to *sin against the Lord God* (Gen. 3:6). Saul's *fleshly mind* reasons that to devote "all" of the spoil to the Lord God would be an unacceptable loss, so he *saves* the "best" to "sacrifice" to the Lord God (21). So, it is this *disobedient sacrifice* which is at the heart of fleshly religion. Saul and *all subsequent followers of fleshly religion* believe in vain that fleshly actions taking the *acceptable form of sacrifice* will appease God. But, Samuel corrects Saul by saying "obeying the voice of the Lord" is what is accepted, not mere "sacrifices," for "rebellion is as the sin of divination" (22-23). To *follow in the way* of the Lord's word but to diverge to *fleshly Self-rule* is still vain rebellion.

Yet, Israel's prophets *heading into Babylonian exile* still persisted in partially following the way of the Lord God but

diverting this way to *serve their own fleshly purposes*. For, not only did these prophets *follow the “deceitful” desires of their own hearts* (Jer. 23:26) but they also entice all Israel to “despise the word of the Lord” and to “stubbornly follow (each) his own heart” (17).

And, we have seen that the *fleshly heart* seeks to be Self-righteous *before* the Lord God, so Israel pursued a “righteousness” according to the *devarim of the Lord*, the *mitzvot* of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17) but rejecting the Lord’s original path to this *Torah-observance*, a holy faith in the “Lord God” who alone redeems and delivers from this world’s “slavery” (2).

So, pursuing a *Self-righteousness* based on the fleshly religion of *Torah-observance*, Israel through its generations through the waning monarchy only achieved “righteous deeds” that were “polluted garments” and uncleanness (Is. 64:6) and to this day, a “hopeless” life in the “dried bones” of *dead flesh* without God’s Spirit and life (Ezek. 37:11-14). For, God’s path of “righteousness” first begins with faith

in His redeeming Lordship (Ex. 20:2) through Mashiach, the Branch of David, who alone is *yahweh tzedekenu*—the Lord our righteousness, the only one who “atones for iniquity” to bring “an everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24) when He was “cut off” (26) at the appointed time on His cross of sacrifice in 33 CE, 69 weeks (of years) after the decree of Artaxerxes in 450 BCE (24).

Israel, your *fleshly offering* to the Lord God of your Self-righteousness attained by generations of Torah-observant Judaism is truly your “best” effort, but such a “sacrifice” does not abrogate His command to *let Yahweh Tzedekenu*, Mashiach, be the one to redeem you!

**\*General Honor not Specific Obedience:**

*lizboah l’adonai*: “to sacrifice to the Lord” (21). So, Saul was the first to offer to the Lord God the sacrifices of Israel’s *fleshly religion*, as the “best” of its efforts. And, Israel has been presenting to the Lord its “best” efforts of a Jewish *Torah-observance*, a *shamar mitzvot tzedekenu*—a command-keeping as our

righteousness. But, the Lord God asks of you simple obedience—for you to receive your Mashiach as *yahweh tzedekenu*, the “Lord our righteousness!”

For you, O Israel, are appointed to call the whole world to the *light* of the Lord God’s salvation in the redemption of His Mashiach. But, unless you can testify of the Lord’s righteousness as *your* righteousness, what right do you have to speak? Give up your own Torah-observant Self-righteousness to take hold of the Lord your Righteousness, for Mashiach is your true *birthright*, the Son given to you (Is. 9:6) who will one day rule in His righteousness, not yours. Yes, the Lord God gave you His Torah, which you can *keep* once you come to Him as the Lord your righteousness to free you from the secular “house of slavery” of this world (Ex. 20:2).



## 7.0. Tested Redemptive Faith & Hope: Introduction.

From the very beginning, the Lord God reveals His plan for the *family of Man* as a family story, for the Lord creates Man in his *image and likeness* (Gen. 1:26) that we all might share a *family resemblance* as the *heirs of His household*.

As both Job and Israel illustrate, there are two very different views of how God would relate to man—in a *holy, family relationship* or a distanced, *fleshly arrangement* in which man relates with God at a distance through religion. Alternately, Job and David affirm that the Lord God makes Mashiach the Heir of Heaven and Earth, an inheritance He shares with those *redeemed as members of His family, His Household*. The Lord God is most honored by the *sacrificial worship* of those brought near, that is, redeemed, to *abandon their hopeless* life in the flesh for a *redeemed life* as members of His House!

However, as we have seen with Job, the *holy faith* by which we should know and be known by God is *inescapably corrupted* by our common nature of *fallen flesh*, which in its insistent Self-rule recoils from the Lord God. But, in a moment of *insight*, Job realizes that true faith is placed only in a *living Redeemer* who will restore dead flesh into a lasting life to see God face-to-face (Job 19:25-26).

Ever since our first parents *orphaned our generations* from God in our *fleshly rebellion*, the Lord God has promised a redeeming Seed to *crush the enemy* and restore His people to life (Gen. 3:15). This redeeming Seed would be of the line of the eldest brother Shem (Gen. 9:27) who alone would remember *Elohim* and the holy language (26), through the line of Abraham, in whose “Seed...all the families of the earth would be blessed” (Gen. 22:18). But, the clearest promise of this Redeeming Seed would come from the *family of David*, whose ancestors Perez and Obed were Seed *raised up* by the *right of redemption* to be the sons of two

fathers—the deceased and the one *raising up Seed* (Gen. 38:8 and Ruth 4:10).

So, the Lord God promises David Mashiach as the Redeeming Seed (2 Sam. 7:12), *raised up* long after David is dead and the line is destitute (Jer. 22:30) to build an eternal *house(hold)* for David and God by redeeming His people. Not simply from an earthly captor, Pharaoh. But, a *spiritual destitution and death* in their fallen, sinful flesh by atoning for their sins and being *Yahweh Tzedekenu to them, the Lord our righteousness!*

So, let's consider here the way in which the Lord God restores life to His people through a *raised up Redeemer* to belong to His household. This redemption is revealed in the story of Ruth and Boaz, which is a clear rebuke of *fleshly faith* and its self-empowered works to achieve *salvation and righteousness*.

Redemption is for people who have no hope, who have come to the *end* of human ability and relying on their own *flesh*. Naomi calls herself *Mara*—for she has lost everything. Job laments, “my hope he has pulled up like a tree”

(Job 19:10). And, David knows that he is *insignificant* before the Lord God, before whom he asks, “Who am I?” (2 Sam. 7:18). To these self-destituted poor, the Lord God provides a *family redemption*. For, those who are hopeless *gladly surrender their impoverished lives* to receive a *redeemed life*. To those alone and powerless, a life-giving Redeemer comes to bring them into a lasting home.

So, Boaz *raises up* Obed as the family’s *redeeming Seed*. But, this redemption is a final picture of God’s long-standing promise to the *human family* that a Seed would come to Redeem Adam’s *family* back home to God! And, this Redeeming Seed would be the Jewish Mashiach, *raised up as the Seed of David* (2 Sam. 7:12) to be both the Son of David (12) and the Son of God (14), the Heir of an eternal household who rules as “the Lord their God” and also “David their King”—for he is raised up to embody his fathers’ name (Jer. 30:9). So, the story of Ruth and Naomi reveals these

truths about redemption and the Mashiach, the redeeming Seed:

1. **Kinsman-Redeemer:** As a relative, the Redeemer takes the *right of redemption* to restore life to the household members.

Normally, *redemption* is a right but also a responsibility, for the Redeemer raised up by the Redeemer becomes the Heir of the household and the one responsible for giving it life (Ruth 4:8).

In this way, the Lord God himself is David's Redeemer (Ps. 19:14) for He makes Israel his firstborn son (Exodus 4:22) and raises up Mashiach as the Seed, the Redeemer to be the Heir of God and David and the One to restore life to the family.

1. **Life-saving Purchase:** Naomi was destitute and *dead* so she gives all she has to the redeemer to inherit a new life. (Ruth 4:9)

Repentance is sacrifice of Self: from death to life. In the same way that Naomi's life was bitter in her *helplessness*, we all are enslaved by our *fallen flesh* to this Godless world. But, if we

repent and forsake this *hopeless and Godless life* in the flesh the Redeemer *takes all that is broken and dying* and gives us back new life, a life with God by the Spirit's restoration (Is. 63:1-3).

**2. Raised-Up Redeemer:** The Kinsman-Redeemer *raises up* the dead household line by *raising up a Seed* (Gen. 38:8; 2 Sam. 7:12), an offspring, who will embody the *name* of the deceased to carry on his line. (Ruth 4:10) *Raised up Seed—Mashiach is the Seed of David to embody his father's name* (God & David) as “the Lord their **God**” and “David their **king**” “**whom** (singular- same person) I will raise up for them” (Jer. 30:9). In the same way that Perez (Judah and Er) and Obed (Boaz and Mahlon) are the *offspring* of redemption, being *raised up as Seed* by a redeeming relative for the sake of a deceased father, each is the son of two fathers (since the One *redeeming* is not a brother). By *redemption*, a Seed must be “raised up” (Gen. 38:8) when a line is degraded or deceased. So, when the *line of David* comes

to a cursed end in Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), David has no heir. So, the Lord God himself promises to be David's Redeemer (2 Sam. 7:12), raising up Seed (Jer. 23:5) using David's own body (i.e. genetic material) so that this *Redeeming Seed* would be the Son and Heir of both God (2 Sam. 7:14) and David (2 Sam. 7:12), to *raise up* and rule in the presence and power of their names, as "the Lord their God" and "David their King" (Jer. 30:9).

**3. Redeeming Seed builds House:** Raised up from a *woman of the House* (Ruth 4:12), the Redeeming Seed "builds up the house"—that is, the family and its continuing line.

*Raised up from a woman of David's House (Mary), Jesus Mashiach builds up an eternal household for David and God.*

Because Mashiach is the Heir of two fathers, David and God, He fulfills His duty as Redeemer to build an *eternal household* of sons *redeemed* from this dark and Godless world to live under His rule and inheritance (Is. 9:2-7). David recognizes that it is not an *earthly house*

*of cedar* that the Lord God is promising him but the “house of your servant” that will “continue forever before you” (2 Sam. 7:29).

What God promises to David and Jesus Mashiach secures for Him is a *Household*—generations of sons who are *redeemed* to live before the Lord God in *righteousness*, for their Redeemer is *Yahweh Tzedekenu*—the Lord our Righteousness.

#### **4. Redeemer restores and nourishes Life:**

In place of hopelessness and impending death, the *Redeeming Seed*, Obed, is the child who brings life and provision to Naomi as he continues the broken family line by building a household whose “generations” are blessed.

*Mashiach the Redeemer restores a Spiritual Life* in God’s Household. From the very beginning, the *family line of Man* was meant to be the “generations” to inherit the “heavens and the earth” (Gen. 2:4), but only the “Seed of Woman” (Gen. 3:15) is the Redeemer to restore this *household*, dead in their *flesh* due to sin (Gen. 3:6-10). So, when the Seed of

Woman crushes the Serpent's head, he also defeats *death* to give His people a *righteous eternal life*, for He alone is for He alone is to be *Yahweh Tzedekenu—The Lord our Righteousness* (Jer. 23:6). In this way, Shem, through this Seed of David, Jesus Mashiach, builds a spiritual house by which all the families of the earth come home to God and His blessing (Gen. 9:27). As the *firstborn family* of all families, the Sons of Abraham through the House of David *have the Redeemer's right and responsibility* to restore the family to life. Now that the Gentiles have returned home through Jesus Mashiach, it is now time for the Jews to return to God through their Mashiach, Jesus (Zech. 12:10).

Thus: Mashiach is to be the Redeemer who is the Seed raised up by God to embody the names of His fathers: not Boaz + Mahlon but “the Lord their God” and “David their King”

(Jer. 30:6) as the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12) and the Son of God (2 Sam. 7:14). He alone *redeems His repentant people* to restore dead flesh with living Spirit, making them *righteous* sons of David and God's eternal household by atonement for iniquity (2 Sam. 7:14; Dan. 9:24).

### **7.1. Job's Future Hope and Redemptive Faith Tested.**

Up until this point in his story, Job has fallen considerably from the heights of his initial *holy faith* as the “servant of the Lord” who “fears God and turns from evil” (Job 1:8). Enticed by his *fleshly nature*, Job's Self-importance has inflated, diminishing his trust in God and *dragging his heart earthward* to rely on the opinions of his friends.

But, in a moment of *clarity*, Job's *earlier faith* revives, as he focuses his hope and trust in his coming *Redeemer*, who would restore and establish Job long after his *flesh is destroyed* (Job 19:28). Job's *rekindled faith in his Redeemer* seems to be brought about by two factors which humble him.

### Personal Responsibility before God.

To this point, Job's friends have provided the human audience that has *emboldened* Job's flesh to justify himself and to *rail against* God. However, each of his friends, *saddled with the same fleshly need for Self-justification* and honor, have turned on Job, accusing him of wrong-doing.

So, Job realizes their *fleshly attacks*, saying:  
 "How long will you torment me and break me in pieces with words?" (Job 19:2).

Defending himself, Job says, "And even if it is true that I have erred, my error remains with myself" (4). That is, he alone bears the weight of any "error." He alone bears the responsibility for his sin. In the deep parts of his heart, Job recognizes that he will "see God" with his own eyes (25), standing before him at the last.

Taking personal responsibility before God for one's sins is a precursor of faith, for such responsibility *turns from the flesh's first*

*impulse to hide from God* either in Self-delusion or *social religion*.

Though Job takes responsibility of his own life before God because he sees the *fleshly Self-justification of his friends*, accusing them by saying: “You magnify yourselves against me” (5)—that is, they *diminish him to honor themselves*. He still does not see that he is doing that very thing to God—*diminishing God* to honor himself. So, this *Self-awareness* does not lead to a full repentance. But, another factor drives Job to a *faith in the Lord as Redeemer*:

Hopelessness: the loss of all things.

We have seen that Job’s *flesh* has steadily shifted his *faith focus* from the grandeur and glory of the Lord to a human-involved, *secular view* of a Godless world without hope.

Yes, this hopeless, secular and Godless view of the world can *drive some to fleshly religion*, as in the case of Saul and Israel. But Job’s loss and utter *hopelessness* make him *despair of any*

*help from his flesh*, realizing that his fleshly life is passing and will eventually be destroyed. In the *flesh*, he has lost all of his personal status before men, for his “glory” has been “stripped” from him, as has the “crown from my head” (19:9). All his hope *has been uprooted as well*: “my hope has he pulled up like a tree” (10) so that Job has nothing left to rely on in this world. So, his only hope is in His Redeemer.

Faith and Hope in the Redeemer.

Job realizes that only with God and His words is there any *substantial hope* for the future, so he longs for his own “words” to be “inscribed in a book” (23) that would last “forever” (24). Seemingly surveying the *entirety* of his life experiences, Job realizes that the one thing in life that he “knows” that will endure from now to the end is that “my Redeemer lives” (25). By *faith*, Job has known and “knows” the Lord God. And, this Lord is not simply a detached deity but is *his Redeemer*—the only one to exchange the hopeless and fleshly *destitution* of

his life for a restored life in the end, for “at the last he will stand upon the earth” (25).

Thus, Job finally *looks past* the hopeless wretchedness of his own flesh to gaze in faith at his “Redeemer.” Not only does Job’s faith *recognize the Lord as the only Only worthy to Redeem* him. He also recognizes the *decay and certain destruction of his own flesh*. Trusting in the one Lord, he *despairs and abandons* any hope of his own lasting Self-rule.

Instead, he knows that his own “skin” is to be “destroyed” but that the Redeemer will *restore his corrupted flesh* with life, and he will “see God” face-to-face in the end (26).

Thus, Job has a momentary inclination for *redeeming faith*, but only a powerful work and revelation of God will bring about a heart-felt repentance to restore Him as the Lord’s servant.

## 7.2. Israel's Tested Faith:

Ever since our first parents *hid* from the Lord God in the *shame of their naked flesh*, our fleshly nature drives us to *distance ourselves from the Lord God in Self-protection*. So, Moses drew near to the Lord God's presence but Israel in the flesh pled, "Do not let God speak to us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:19). Moses humbled himself to obey the Word of the Lord, but the congregation's *fleshly mind* compelled Israel to *design Elohim to its liking—first as "gods" to go before the nation* (Ex. 32:1) and then as simply *Elohe, a monotheistic singularity who existed in isolation as yachid*, rather than Elohim who existed as a unified *echad—family oneness*. So, Samuel called the king to *obey the voice of the Lord* (1 Sam. 15:19), but Saul instituted a *fleshly national religion* that encouraged Israel to worship as it pleased, feigning compliance to

the “voice” of the Lord but redefining His “words” as they pleased (20).

So, when David ascends the throne as the Lord’s *mashiach Melech*, he determines the *future path* for Israel and its relationship with the Lord God. To *surrender to the Lord God to trust in His redemption*, following the example of their father Abraham who *believed* in God’s promised Seed (Mashiach) and was counted as righteous (Gen. 15:5-6). Or, to perpetuate Israel’s national religion, which *justified* the nation before God by offering *sacrifices* of its own choosing, though Samuel had already warned Saul that to “obey” the word of the Lord is better than “sacrifice” (1 Sam. 15:22). So, David finds himself at a crossroads. Restless in his palace, he resolves to build the Lord God a “house of cedar” (2 Sam. 7:2) though the Lord has asked for no such house (7). Would Israel *institutionalize* its national religion by building a “house of cedar” for the Lord to present sacrifices from a distance, while the nation and its people lived as they pleased?

In a dream, the Lord God revealed a better future for Israel if it allowed God's appointed Mashiach to *redeem the nation*. Like Job, David *is ready to hear and believe God's promise of Mashiach* because he has rejected a *fleshly insistence* on his own way.

### Humbled Faith of a Servant:

Like Job, David is *ready to turn to the Lord* and trust in His promised Seed of Redemption because he has *humbled himself* before the Lord God. After Nathan the prophet brings to David the Lord's reply to his *intention* to build for the Lord a "house of cedar" (2 Sam. 7:5), David shares his *humbled heart* as he presents himself to the Lord by saying: "Who am I and what is my house that you have brought me this far, O Lord God?" (2 Sam. 7:18). And, he affirms that he is merely the Lord's "servant" (19, 20). Clearly, David has humbled himself before the Lord. Assigning no trust or honor to his *fleshly Self*, David is able to honor the Lord God with a holy faith. As we have seen already with Job, David *knows* God and is *known* by the "Lord God" (20).

### Surrendering Fleshly Hope for a Redeemed Future.

David has set his *heart* on honoring the Lord by building for him an *earthly* “*house of cedar*” (7:2). But, when he hears that the Lord calls David and Israel to an entirely new future. Not simply an earthly nation building monuments to honor their God, but a redeemed future reaching into eternity to establish an eternal throne, David does not mention again an *earthly house of cedar for worship*. Rather, the Lord has *given David the “word” of promise* that David’s own “house” would be “established” before the Lord God (26). Now, when the Lord God promises to build a “house” for David (11) which would support Mashiach and the “throne” of his eternal Kingdom (16), He does not mean a *literal house*. Rather, David knows that his *Seed is to be raised up as a Redeemer* who builds a “dynastic household” (Ruth 4:11-12). So, David dares to *dream of a future* in which his “house” is “blessed forever” based on God’s own word of promise and good pleasure (29).

Promised Seed and His Redeemed House,  
Blessed Forever.

One day, the Lord God through Ezekiel would give Israel the exact instructions on building a *house* for international worship. But when David presented to the Lord his hope of a *house of cedar*, such a structure had the dangerous potential to become the *means* by which *fleshly worshippers* turned to their own *fleshly religion* to justify themselves before the Lord God.

Originally, God prophesied that only His promised Seed would be the One to *redeem* His fallen and fleshly people from their waywardness—by “*crushing*” the *Serpent’s head* (Gen. 3:15) and by *multiplying* sons as the *stars of heaven* to bless all the families of the earth (Gen. 22:17-18).

Now, would Israel *save itself* by its own sacrifices and offerings lifted up in the *monumental house* of its own design? Would it change the *Word* promising a Redeeming Seed to adhere to a Torah-observant *righteousness* when God had clearly promised that only the Branch of David, raised up, would be Israel’s *Yahweh Tzedekenu*—the Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23:6). As Israel built *houses of cedar* as a *cure* for its own unredeemed, *fleshly sinfulness* (Jer. 7:4), it was repeatedly rebuked by the prophets that these “vain offerings” and

“convocations” (Is. 1:13) were futile to *cleanse their wayward flesh*. Instead, their efforts to achieve a righteousness based on mere Law-observance was as a “polluted garment” (Is. 64:6).

Yes, Israel, once *redeemed* of their fleshly sin by Jesus Mashiach, will one day *build a beautiful house* for worldwide worship. But, that *future* would only take shape through the *redemption* in God’s promised Mashiach who would free His people from their *fleshly uncleanness* by “atoning” for their iniquity to give them an “everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24)—a righteousness not *earned by their fleshly efforts* of Torah-observance *but by His own sacrifice, being “cut off”* (24) so that He might give His own “soul” as an “offering for guilt” (Is. 53:10)—that He might be forever to His people *Yahweh Tzedekenu*, the Lord our righteousness (Jer. 23:6).

Thus, to David, God culminates His age-old promise to *redeem* the families of the earth back to Himself and His blessing through the *redemptive work of His Firstborn nation, the sons of Abraham through the House of David*.

For, after the *lineage of David* ended in corruption at Jeconiah and Judah’s exile to Babylon (Jer. 22:30), the Lord God would *raise up for David* his own Seed, *zera*, who would be “cutoff” for the sake of His people to “atone” for their iniquity and to

take their *dead flesh* and give them His “everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24)—paid for in *redemptive sacrifice* exactly 483 years (69 weeks) after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem to its repentance through its knowledge of the Law (Ezra 7:25) in 450 BCE. So, Jesus Mashiach was “*raised up*” as the Seed of David by the Holy Spirit using *material from David’s “own body”* (2 Sam. 7:12; Matt. 1:18) and was crucified 33 CE according to this promise.

Having now “removed the iniquity” of His people by His cross of atonement (Zech. 3:9), Jesus now builds an eternal *household* of “blessed” sons from “all the families of the earth” (Gen. 22:18). As the *gracious and responsible* Firstborn Son, Israel has let all the *nations* come into God’s “household” first. But, all Israel will one day “look upon” the face of Jesus, *whom they pierced*, and they will mourn for Him as their *long-lost Son* (Zech. 12:10). One day, Jew and Gentile will take their place in the Household of God and David, supporting the eternal “throne” of Jesus Mashiach to establish His *forever Kingdom* (2 Sam. 7:16).

On that day, the Lord God will rule on earth through Jesus Mashiach in Jerusalem, and the *house* the Lord commanded in Ezekiel will be a “house of prayer” for the nations (Is. 56:7). But first, all Israel must *repent of its fleshly national religion* of Self-

justification to fully embrace Jesus as its Mashiach, its only Yahweh Tzedekenu—the Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23:6).

## 8.0. Forgetful Soul: Tested Remembrance.

Bless the Lord, O **my soul**, and **forget not** all his benefits,... who **redeems** your life from the pit, who crowns you with **steadfast love** and **mercy** (Psalm 103:2, 4)

Through the book of Job, we have seen how human conversation has *turned Job's focus* from its initial *holy faith in the Lord God* to fleshly Self-concern and justification. For, as Job defends himself before his friends, who accuse him of sinning against God to incur His judgment. Job protects his *self-life*, *pulling* him into the earthly concerns of human interaction and, inevitably, into the fleshly life.

Thanks to our first parents, Adam and Eve, the flesh is not some *contagion* we catch or avoid. We are all infected by the same *fallen nature* which led them to turn from God.

For, when Job's speech *becomes Self-justifying*, he is speaking the natural language of the flesh. The *flesh imagines the "Self"* to be "like God" (Gen. 3:5) as an equal *ruler*. As such, its main purpose is Self-justification—to be "right" to do what is "good" and turn from

“evil” based on its own understanding and its own Self-merit, apart from God. So, the *fleshly life* makes us naturally disinclined to faith. In fact, seizing its own “Self-rule,” the *fleshly life* undermines the *humble surrender* that is the first step of holy faith.

So, we have seen Job’s steady decline as his *view of Self expands* and his view of God diminishes. Starting with his own *fleshly heart*, Job’s sense of commitment shifts from the Lord God to himself and then *his social relationships*. With this shift, his *fleshly mind* has become self-justifying, proud, and secular.

Now, we will see how this *inexorable shift* from Self-sacrificing *faith* to a fleshly unbelief now begins to affect Job’s very soul.

The Biblical view of the *soul*—one’s sense of “self,” how one understands and identifies as a living being, and how one *stands* among others, is directly tied to “memory,” for the psalmist says: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not his benefits” (Psalm 103:2).

Apparently, the deep identity of the Soul and

its *faith* in God depends on its ability to *remember God*:

- **Remember:** The *soul* is able to worship God by faith because remembers His “holy name” and then “blesses” Him (Ps. 103:1). The *soul’s* authentic identity responds to God as He has himself is truly revealed as “holy.” To forget God is to *have a faith based on man-made fiction*.
- **Review** life by the **Word** of God: The *soul* is also called to *review* past events of life and to define by the Word of God—to see God’s “forgiveness for iniquity” and “redemption” (3-4).
- **Renew relationship** with God—keeping covenant. The *soul’s* integrity is that it remembers and *keeps* what it has committed itself to—living in the covenantal, “steadfast love” (4) shared with God.
- **Result: blessed remembrance.** As the psalmist experienced, a *soul* that remembers the Lord according to His Word is full of praise, seeing the Lord’s

“healing” and “goodness” evident in the world (1, 3-5).

**Soul Remembers:**

Lord’s “holy name” and his “benefits”(1-2)

**Blesses God:** Soul is able *authentically* to “bless” the Lord (1)

**Reviews Life by**

**Word:** forgiveness, healing, mercy (3-4)

**Renews Relation:**

Redeemed in “steadfast love” (4)

Thus, we see that a *healthy* and *honest* remembrance of the past sustains the Soul’s own integrity and authenticity to stand before the Lord by faith and to testify of His goodness to others.

Dangerously, we will see *how the fleshly soul* will choose to forget the Lord and His past works of grace and mercy. So, Job’s soul forgets, so that he sees himself standing in a Godless and unjust world. And, after the rules of David and Solomon, Israel also chooses to forget all that the Lord God has done through this *anointed line*, as the collective soul of the nation abandons faithfulness and its *support for*

*the throne of the Lord's anointed King.*

Instead, Israel *identity* as a nation is to stand by its own Self-righteousness rather than *under* its covenant to support the Lord's *anointed and his house* (2 Sam. 5:3).

As we shall see, both Job and Israel's choice to *forget* the Lord and His works and promises to them diminishes their souls. Deep down, there is a still a *realization* that the words they used to remember the past were not *truly accurate*—causing their words to lose their credibility. Lying to the soul means that words have little meaning and can't be believed, even by oneself.

### **8.1 Job's Forgetful Soul: Fed on Empty Words**

When I **remember**, I am **dismayed**, and shuddering seizes my flesh (Job 21:6).

After Job's moment of clarity and *hope*, as He looked forward to the day his *Redeemer* would stand on the earth and finally restore his *ruined*

*flesh, making* right all that had been ruined in his life. Job now forgets the promise of the Lord's *redemptive power* one day overturning this world's brokenness.

Yet, now, Job forgets the Lord entirely and is overwhelmed by the *horrors* that he has endured. Remember, it was not always this way with Job. Earlier in the story, when Job's losses were fresh, Job still *remembered* the Lord as *righteous* and *merciful*. Then, Job was still able to remember that the "Lord gives and the Lord takes away"—remaining "blessed" in his holy name (Job 1:21).

What is the difference, that now Job sees his current life as unacceptable? When Job's faith initially *held fast*, Job's *soul* was *rooted* exclusively in the Lord God alone as God's *holy servant Job* (Job 1:8). Job stood before God and God alone, and it was only God's place to judge him, considering Job to be "blameless" and "upright."

Now, as Job *forgets the Lord God, his own vision seems to expand* as he not only stands

before his judging friends but also with the Godless who ignore God and thrive. In Job's eyes, it is not enough to stand before the Lord God as his humble servant. Instead, he stands with humanity in the midst of a broken world. So, forgetting the Lord God and all His previous works of salvation and redemption, Job now focuses his fleshly mind to remember only the injustices he has seen, more evidence to support his claims that he has been treated unjustly.

So, as Job's "soul" continues to forget or ignore the Lord God work in the world, he then views the world and life itself as full of injustice. He asks: "Why do the wicked live" and grow "mighty in power"? (Job 21:7). These wicked *mock God*, saying "Depart from us" (14) yet still they "spend their days in prosperity" (13).

While all this may or may not be true, it is important to note *how expansive* Job's "soul" and his remembrances have become. Rather than taking responsibility for and *reviewing his*

*own life before God*, he now takes on the responsibility for the entire world and its wicked. Prior, his *soul* was directly accountable to God, knowing what the Lord had given and taken from him. Now, he makes it his business to be concerned with the Lord's right to judge the wicked. Clearly, Job's complaint is not that the wicked have dishonored God—he is not so concerned about God's name as he is about his own name. How can the Lord God show such *apparent favor* to the wicked while treating him so badly?

Now, when Job expresses such bold denunciations, does he honestly believe that his life has been *untouched* by the hand of God and His blessings? Can he truly speak to the affairs of all the world's wicked?

What is clear is that earlier, Job's memory and review of his life was spoken as one who knew the blessing of God. Later in his discourse, Job remembers when he was in his "prime" and knew the "friendship of God" with his "children" around him (Job 29:4-5).

Thus, Job's life was not always *ruined by injustice* nor deprived of the goodness of God which, apparently, only the *wicked* experience. But, to *remember* life in this way, deliberately forgetting the *hand of God's "friendship" which had been upon him and the "steadfast love" and "care"* which had previously "preserved my spirit" (Job. 10:12) is a deliberate act of the soul, a choice to *misrepresent reality*.

Deep down, Job must realize that these *false remembrances* which he has covered his *soul* with are merely "comfort... with empty nothings" and an empty "falsehood" (Job 21:34).

Thus, the *deliberately forgetful soul* which turns its back on the remembrance of God , *his holy name*, and the "steadfast love" of a covenantal relationship shared between Job and God, is a soul *comforting itself with* "empty" words and falsehoods. Because Job knows that his *own words* are empty and *meaningless* in denying his relationship with God, he places little value in the words of his friends.

It is truly dangerous for one's soul to deliberately *forget* the Lord God and his mercy, goodness, and steadfast love. For, the *forgetful soul is inauthentic*—realizing deep down that it does not truly believe what it is saying. Its words are convenient mis-statements to achieve an ulterior purpose in the world. So, when Job protests the *utter injustice* of a world bereft of God's actions, he undermines what he has said before this and after regarding the *blessing of God* and His friendship. What is the *fiction*—convenient fiction—his former “faith” or this “Godless world of injustice” he now laments? Either way, Job's words are mere “nothings” to advance his purpose.

Worse, a soul which defines itself by such deliberately “empty nothings” will be *empty itself*. The forgetful soul is the empty soul, alone in its self-deceiving fiction because it has dismissed God's prior work as a mere *fiction*.

## **8.2 Israel's Collective Soul: Forgetting God.**

Like Job, Israel's *collective soul* was also tested, as the people of Israel conveniently forgot the Lord and their prior covenant to *live together under His anointed King*. Few Biblical events

in Israel's have had such a profound impact on the lives of its people than this choice now to divide the Kingdom into Judah and Israel. Such an extreme decision must have seemed *inevitable* at the time, but now we can see that it is simply the result of Israel's *deliberate forgetfulness*, a self-deception for which Israel has paid a great price over its subsequent generations.

Apart from the later *reformers* such as Hezekiah and Josiah, the rules of David and his son Solomon are seen as the *golden age* of the Kingdom. Under the Godly rule of David, the Lord God put down all of Israel's enemies and brought Israel into a time of peace. Praise to God multiplied psalms, guiding worship for generations. And, under Solomon's rule, the people of Israel were treated with honor, for the Word says: "But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves. They were soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, his chariot commanders and his horsemen" (1 Kings 9:22).

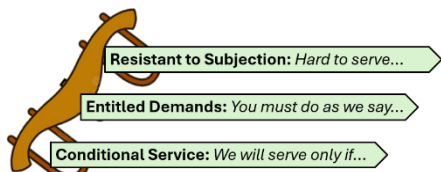
Solomon continued the *blessed rule* of David's House, making silver "as common in Jerusalem as stone" (1 Kings 10:27) and dedicating the Temple to the Lord as a place for the Lord's name to be

honored, to which the Lord God answered with the “cloud” of His glory (2 Chronicles 5:13-14). Israel had seen the Lord God’s *blessing* and *work* through the house of David, for the people had pledged themselves to support the throne, saying: “Behold, we are your bone and flesh” and remembering the Lord God’s own words to David: “You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel” (2 Sam. 5:2).

Israel’s *faithfulness* to the truth of the Lord God’s words will to be subject to the *rule* of David’s House and the eternal throne and Kingdom it would establish under the coming Mashiach, the Seed of David to be raised up. Israel’s *faithfulness* lasted exactly until the death of Solomon. For, like Job, Israel’s collective *soul* was fleshly—deliberately forgetful and emptied of substance, for its memories were convenient yet “empty nothings.”

Israel’s *soul* was tested and shown to be *deliberately forgetful and empty* in its fleshly weakness as it gathered before Rehoboam after the death of Solomon. As the people of Israel *remembered the previous events of Solomon’s rule*, they said: “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and

his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you” (1 Kings 12:4). The people were already *resistant* to the **yoke** of being “subjects” to the king:



As we see in the words of the people, the very fact that Israel is making its service *conditional* and issuing its own demands shows that it is unwilling to bear the “yoke” of subjection any longer. The *soul* of the people—how Israel sees itself, how it identifies and the *standing* it takes toward God and his anointed king makes it ***unwilling*** to be subject to the throne.

Therefore, its *forgetfulness* is a mere means of positioning itself to get what it wants. Israel’s *flesh* has not changed from Adam and Eve’s original *rebellion* and Self-righteous persistence that justified their blatant sin. So, as demonstrated at Sinai and then through the rule of Saul, Israel’s *fleshly heart* was still

selfish, its *fleshly mind* still self-justifying and self-ruling.

Until Israel *repents of its **unyielding soul***, unless it learns from Job and David and its people learn to surrender their souls in true servanthood, even the rule of the most perfect King, Mashiach, will be unearable.

As Job demonstrated at first, the Soul of a Servant gladly takes on the Lord's yoke, knowing that He alone is worthy of rule. So, the Soul of a servant is willingly subject, humbled in its openness, and ready for sacrificial service:



**Willing Subjection:** *We submit to God's Will*

**Humbled Openness:** *Will do what you say*

**Sacrificial Service:** *We will serve only if...*

Back to that fateful day of division, the Word of God shows that Rehoboam is also *moved by the flesh*, so he responds harshly to the demands of the people. So, Israel deliberately

forgets its previous pledge to the Lord and rebels.

Now, it is important to note that the result of Israel's *deliberate forgetfulness* was a vulnerability to the "empty nothings" which it also employed to justify its rebellion. So, Jeroboam says: "Behold your gods, O Israel, who bought you up out of the land of Egypt" (1 Kings 12:28), knowing full well that he was foisting a deception—a *convenient lie* to serve his human purpose of keeping the people out of Jerusalem. Again, *fleshly religion* is used to advance human purposes.

Thus, the *underlying* reason for Israel's *deliberate forgetfulness* is a collective soul unwilling to *yield*. For, if the *fallen flesh* of our first parents, Adam and Eve, chose outright rebellion against God's command to "not eat" of the tree, why should the *same fallen flesh* of Israel be any different?

To repent of *such rebellion* requires the people to also *repent* of their *deliberate forgetfulness*. Just to *ignore* an outstanding

commitment to be *steadfast* in their covenant love for God does not obviate the reality of the Lord God and His own covenant faithfulness. To forget His promise of Redemption and righteousness in His Mashiach in order to pursue their own Self-made righteousness through Torah observance does not prevent the reality that the Lord's Mashiach came according to promise, was "cut off" to "atone for iniquity" and bring an "everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24) as God revealed to Daniel that He would in 33 CE. And, that after two days (2000 years) of *deadness to Him*, the Lord God will "revive" Israel on the Day of the Lord when its people look upon the face of their King, Jesus Mashiach (Zech. 12:10), on Yom Kippur 2033 CE.

Though Israel has deliberately chosen to forget, the Lord God remembers. Though Israel has chosen to clothe its soul in "empty nothings" that justify its own rebellion, the Lord's Word holds true and comes to pass.

The Lord God clearly revealed to Daniel that there would be 483 years from the decree to restore Jerusalem to repentance and the cutting off of Mashiach to do two things: to “atone for iniquity” and to bring an “everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24). Now, if the people of Israel *forget this promise* and persist in their claim that they need no Mashiach to save them. That they need no atonement, for they are content in their *rebellious flesh and* their fleshly religious acts which they have forced upon God. And, that they need to righteousness, neither do they need Mashiach to be their *Yahweh Tzedekenu* (Jer. 23:6), for they have their own Self-righteousness produced by their acts of Torah-keeping and mitzvot. Will the deliberate *forgetfulness* of Israel and its reliance on its own “empty nothings” to create a new path for itself force the Lord God to abandon His Word? No. Rather, we see that the Lord God has brought Mashiach just as He promised:

**Promised Mashiach:** How the Lord God’s promises are being fulfilled.

**Decree to Restore  
Jerusalem.** Dan. 9:25  
450 BCE. Artaxerxes Decree

**Cut Off to Redeem:  
Atonement.** Dan. 9:24  
33 CE: Jesus crucified/raised

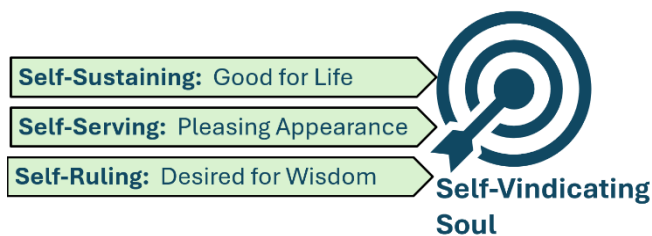
**Returns to Redeem:  
Day of Lord:** Zech. 12:10  
2033 CE: (Hos. 6:2)

## 9.0. Self-Vindicating Soul. Introduction.

Of all life's assumptions, the belief that we are *right* is at the core of our *souls* and understood as axiomatic for a healthy identity. We blindly assume that we are *right* because we are who we are—it is our identity, it is the defining feature of our *soul*, to be right. Yet, the Word of God says that this *assumption* of being “right,” especially *right before God*, is a dangerously wrong assumption that is the *evil fruit* of our *fleshly souls*.

We have already heard the Bible's original message that we were *created* to know and be known by God in a faith relationship, to *dependent* on God's spiritual life as His servants. But, in the beginning, we see that *our fleshly souls* seek to stand alone, separately. For Eve to be “like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5), she must be able to stand on her own and possess the ability to *do right* by herself by determining what is “good and evil” apart from God. So, she *vindicates* herself—maintaining the “rightness” of choosing to sin with three good reasons: *first*, sinning against God would provide “good food” for them—

that is, the *fleshly soul* is Self-sustained by *life*; *second, sinning against God* would be pleasurable because they would obtain what was “pleasing to the eyes”—so, the *fleshly soul* is Self-serving. It steals devotion and faithfulness away from God to lavish such things upon itself. Finally, in the eyes of the woman, *sinning against God* was the right thing to do because it was *desirable to* “make one wise” (Gen. 3:6), showing that the *fleshly soul* is truly Self-Ruling, claiming to *know* all things as if it were the Creator Himself!



In summary, our *fleshly souls*, fallen from God and infected with the world’s unbelief, will assume *like Eve* to be right even in the most blatant sinning. And, this Self-deception will not be an irrational belief. Rather, the

*fleshly soul has good reasons to think that it is and will always be “vindicated”—proven right.*

Based on past experiences with the Lord, the *fleshly soul* feels entitled to have “life,” so it assumes that it is Self-sustaining—the power of life and death is in its own hand. From the beginning, we have already seen that Job views his “life” as his possession, and he is entitled to receive *good* and not *evil*. He currently protests because *life* and God have disappointed him. And, the *fleshly soul* is self-serving, having the right to *please itself* by doing what it deems to be right in its own eyes. Having been *previously called the “servant”* of the Lord, now Job serves his own interests, arguing for his own welfare at the expense of God’s name and honor. Finally, the *fleshly soul* reveals that its goal all along is to *rule* its life alone, apart from God’s interference. So, it feels entitled to *know completely*, as God *knows*, to have a “wisdom” apart from God to impose its purposes on reality. All these senses of entitlement convince Job and his *fleshly soul* that he is *right before God, apart from God*, and that in the end he will be *vindicated*.

Israel’s collective soul which also is convinced of its own Self-vindication before God is much more

dangerous, for it makes the people impervious to any discipline or rebuke God sends through his servants or even the judgment of Babylonian exile. So, we will see that as God's people hurtle toward *Babylonian captivity*, the urgent warnings of the prophet Jeremiah go unheeded.

Convinced that its *family relationship with God*, its *covenantal calling*, and its *service to God* confer upon Israel certain *rights* which will results in its *self-vindication*, no matter what it chooses to do as it acts out of its entitlement. Convinced of its own Self-vindication, Israel will not only *ignore* God's rebuke and corrective discipline in its exile, but it will also *reject* the Lord God's Mashiah.

Israel forgets that the Lord requires His children, people, and servants to *approach Him only by faith*—no other consideration changes this necessity. Though Cain and Abel were both sons, only Abel was accepted by his faith. Despite Korah's claim that "all in the congregation are holy" (Num. 16:3), being of the same covenant people, only Moses was accepted for his faith. And, though both Samuel and Saul sought to serve the Lord, only Samuel was accepted by his faith, for he subjected himself to the Lord's way and did not presume to serve the Lord in his own fleshly Self.

### 9.1. Job's Self-vindicating Soul:

Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; he would **pay attention** to me.

<sup>7</sup> There an upright man could argue with him, and **I would be acquitted** forever by my judge. Job 23:6-7

Shall not the **Judge of all the earth** do what is just?"....

Abraham answered and said, "Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but **dust and ashes**. Gen. 18:25b, 27

To understand how Job's *fleshly soul* has so changed his *view of God*, let's note the clear difference between the words of Job, who at this point of the story *demand*ed an audience before the Lord God and expected his *rightful vindication*. And, the words of Abraham, who was actually conversing with the Lord God on matters of justice.

Abraham, while speaking with the Lord God, had a clear view of himself as mere "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27). He realized also the vast difference in *rights* possessed by the parties

engaging in this *legal disputation*. This was not a debated between equals. Rather, he approached with *fearful reverence* the “Judge of all the earth” (25b). His appeal was on the basis of the Lord’s own nature to do what was well within his right, and his right alone, to carry out—“to do what is just.” Abraham realizes that the “Lord, as Judge of all the earth,” alone has all *rights* to act and render judgment. He *has no standing* to make demands on this Judge nor to force a verdict. All depends on the authority of this Judge to do what is right.

Having abandoned *faith’s humble servitude*, Job’s *fleshly soul* now demands that the Almighty “pay attention” to him (Job 23:6). And, his entitlement does not stop there. Job expects the certainty of his own *acquittal forever* before the Lord.

Now that we have seen the *Self-vindicating* nature of Job’s *fleshly soul*, let’s seek to understand the *path that brought Job* to this place, for it is the same path Israel and Judah reached when the Lord God *disciplined both*

with the judgment of Exile—*first to Assyria* and then to Babylon.

Compared with Abraham, who soberly realized that he had no *standing* as a being of “dust and ashes” before the Judge of all the earth” (Gen. 18:25b, 27), Job assumed that *he stood as an equal before God* (Job 23:4-5). He would fill his mouth with “arguments” and know that God would *regard him* as one he must “pay attention” to (6).

The *presumptuous standing* of Job’s fleshly souls is not surprising, for since the beginning, the *flesh* aspires to be “like God,” claiming to stand as an equal litigant in the court of morality.

Job stands confidently in his Self-Regard, for he is *furnished with a full complement of rights*. First, Job feels *entitled* as one who has a **relationship** *with the Lord God*. Not only does Job “know” the words to come out of the Lord’s mouth (23:5) but the Lord “knows” his ways as well (10). Second, Job has the *right to stand confidently before God because he has fulfilled his **role** as a **servant** of God*. Job claims that he has “kept” the Lord’s “way” (11)

and “treasured the words of his mouth” (12). Interestingly, Job’s claim to “treasure” the Lord’s words must not include *heeding and surrendering* to these words, including the commands to “fear the Lord” and trust in His promised Mashiach alone as his redeemer.

Finally, Job is entitled to *contend with God* and stand alone against him as a fellow litigant because he has been ***called to a reciprocal covenant***. Job says, “He will complete what he appoints for me” (14).

Together, these *perceived rights* inflate Job’s sense of Self-importance while also diminishing his regard and “fear” of the Lord. Buttressed by these *rights* to stand confidently before God, Job’s *fleshly soul* stands before the Lord in Self-vindication, for Job is confident that “when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold” (10).

Importantly, Job’s soul-sense of Self-vindication is completely different from Abraham’s attitude. Whereas Abraham came before the Judge of all the earth” as a mere trifle, appealing not to his own merit but

entirely upon the Lord's mercy and sense of unshakable *justice* (Gen. 18:25).

Make no mistake, Job's sense of Self-vindication is not the confidence of one who has been truly *justified by God* (Rom. 5:1). Instead, it is the *delusion* born of his own *fleshly soul*. For, Job still shares the *fleshly terror* at the Lord's holy presence. Job says: "I am terrified at his presence" (23:15) in the same way that Adam admitted, "I was afraid because I was naked" (Gen. 3:10) and the people of Israel were afraid and exclaimed: "do not let God speak to us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19). Unlike the *fear of God* by which the Lord's servants draw near to Him by faith, this *fleshly terror* is the threat that *naked flesh* feels in the presence of true holiness, that danger that the Self-vindicating Soul feels as its *rebellion is uncovered and it must either repent or perish*.

Sadly, we shall see that this *same* Self-vindicating *fleshly soul* of Israel blinds its people from the *weight* of their own guilt, thus, making the thought of taking responsibility for their sin and truly repenting an impossibility.

## 9.2. Israel's Self-vindicating Soul.

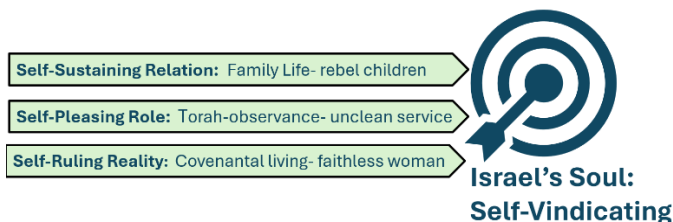
you say, '**I am innocent**; surely his anger has turned from me.' Behold, I will bring you to judgment for saying, '**I have not sinned.**'  
Jeremiah 2:35

Like Job, Israel's *fleshly soul* was tested and revealed to be Self-vindicating. Let's consider closely the *sense of entitlement* which convinced Israel that it was beyond reproach even as *Israel fell to Assyria* and Judah headed toward certain exile in Babylon.

Israel was so convinced of its *Self-righteousness* and religious *service* that it claimed "I am innocent" (Jer. 2:35) even as its soul's Self-vindication would soon be uncovered as *a mere tragic delusion*.

It is important that Israel's people understand how their *fleshly soul* could be so wrong in their Self-Vindication, for from Israel and Judah's first exile to its second scattering to all the nations and its eventual regathering, Israel has shown no signs that it has abandoned its fleshly Self-vindication which keeps it from

realizing its guilt and waywardness before the Lord God:



So, let's consider this moment in Israel's history which the prophet Jeremiah uncovers in second chapter, as he traces out the *entitlement* which fueled Israel's Self-vindication.

Entitlement #1: Self-Sustaining Right to Good Food in the Family.

The most basic and fundamental *right* which Eve assumed was hers was the right to *life*. Born into a paradise in which the Lord God provided all things for her and Adam in the garden, Eve simply understood that *the life she enjoyed* was her *rightful due* and that she had a right to "good food" (Gen. 3:6). And, she assumed that her *right to life* was inalienable, regardless of whether she was with God or alone. She stood in a *kinship* relationship with

God, the Lord God who created Adam and Eve as his chosen line. So, all the more, she was entitled to *life* and *good food*. This entitlement deluded her to think that she could be *self-sustaining* apart from God. Even though the Lord God warned of “death,” she would still have access to this *good food*, despite this threat.

From its very conception as a nation, as Israel witnessed the Lord God redeem its life by overpowering Pharoah and then clearing away the nations and their armies, it knew that it had a special relationship with God. God called Israel his “firstborn” among the nations of the earth (Ex. 4:22), so it was especially entitled to its *life* and access to *good food*. Its congregational life as a nation of *sons* on the earth was its *inalienable right*—regardless of how its people drew near or withdrew from God.

So, in the midst of their *rebellion* and *forsaking the Lord God*, the Lord pinpoints Israel’s sense of entitlement which blinds it to its own guilt: “No you called to me: ‘My father, you are the friend of my youth’ while

wondering, will he be “angry forever”? (Jer. 3:4).

This *entitlement, this right to a family life with the Lord God*, is even today seen as an inalienable, irrevocable possession of Israel *apart from God’s interference*. So, the Jewish life has become celebrated as a *good* in itself—its Shabbat dinners and *festival feast days*, its traditions and memorials. Jews have a *right to the Jewish life*, and this right emboldens them and feeds the Self-vindication of the Jewish soul—that no matter what it does, it will always be *right* before God. Because of this *life* that is theirs by birth-right—so, *l’chaim!*

However, Israel forgets in this *entitlement to life* that the Lord God alone, as the Creator of life, has the *right to life*—to give and to take it (Job 1:21). And, as the Lord of His household, He has the right to judge His children, accepting those of faith (like Abel) and rejecting those who act lawlessly and rebel (like Cain).

So, as early as the prophet Isaiah, the Lord God had warned that *merely having this special family relation* with God did not excuse

Israel's nor justify Israel's waywardness, saying: "Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me" (Is. 1:2). Again, notice how the Lord God does not simply excuse or overlook Israel's sins because they are His children: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord... they are utterly estranged" (Is. 1:4).

Two important points must be made here. First, the Lord God does make provision for the sins of His children, acting mercifully to them as the psalmist says: "He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities" (Ps. 103:10). However, this gracious forgiveness to his family he extends with condition: "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who *fear him*" (12-13). So, to those who "fear Him" and approach Him by faith, as did Abraham (Gen. 15:6), he makes provision for their sins, the *redemption* *He secures* through the sacrifice of Mashiach

who “atones for iniquity” and brings an “everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24).

Secondly, the Lord God does not *confer* upon His children an *inalienable right to life and blessing even when they rebel*, just as He never conferred to the human family a guarantee of *life* even if they sinned and ate of the tree of unbelief (Gen. 2:17). Instead, the Lord says that to the children who “forsake” the Lord and despise the Holy One of Israel, “they are utterly estranged” (Is. 1:4). In other words, just as our first parents *relinquished their right to “life” and God’s protective “grace and blessing” when they sided with the Serpent to sin because they had orphaned* themselves from the Lord God. So, Israel people *estrangle and orphan* themselves from the Father and His blessings when in their Self-entitlement *rebel against God* and refuse His way.

As we shall see in the next test, Israel was so entitled and *enamored with their own self-made righteousness and religious life* that they rejected the Lord God’s only provision for their sin, the Redeemer who alone had the right to *crush* the Serpent’s fleshly grip (Gen.

3:15). Thus, the Lord God does bless Israel and its people with His favor because they are the children of God, being merciful to their sin. But, this favor and life are not *irrevocable guarantees*. If this favor emboldens and entitles Israel to *forsake* the Lord to create for itself a *Jewish Life* which keeps God at a distance—a *benign remembrance* invoked in the candlelight of Shabbat; and *rejects* the Lord's provision of a Redeeming Mashiach *for its own Self-righteousness*, then such *estrangement* is still *fleshly rebellion*, to be answered not with blessing but with judgment.

#### Entitlement #2: Self-Pleasing Right to Serve

The second *right* which Eve assumed was God-given was to do what was “pleasing” in her eyes (Gen. 3:6), for the fruit of the tree was “pleasing to the eyes.” In this way, Israel and its kings have seen it as their *right* to serve God in ways that were *pleasing in their own eyes*. Contrast this way the *surrender of faith*, which Abraham, David, and the prophets demonstrated.

While Abraham was quick to do all that the Lord God commanded, clearly surrendering

what pleased himself to obey the Word of Command to offer Isaac as a “burn offering” (Gen. 22:2) by binding him, laying him on the altar, and raising his knife (9), all actions which were far from *pleasing*. But, when Saul was commanded to *devote Amalek* to destruction, he kept “the best of the things devoted to destruction” to “sacrifice” in his own way that pleased him. In this way, Saul viewed as his *right* to serve the Lord in a way that was also Self-pleasing, according to what he saw to be best.

Clearly, the Lord God calls Israel to *serve* and *obey* Him. As the proven servants of God demonstrate, this call to *serve* the Lord requires that they *surrender* to the Lord their own *fleshly inclinations* and desires to serve themselves, for it is impossible to serve two masters—to serve God and their own fleshly way. So, when Saul and Israel attempt to *serve and obey* the Lord God *while* retaining their right to do as they please, to do what is *right* in their own eyes, they undermine their own service.

In this way, Korah was called to *serve* the Lord as a Levite, but this calling *emboldened him* by this entitlement to serve, and he insisted that he had the

right to serve *apart* from the Lord's designated way. But, Moses insisted that it remains the Lord's *right* to "choose" how he is to be served (Num. 16:5). So, the calling to *serve* and *obey* the Lord does not confer a universal right to serve apart from the Lord's choice and will. So, Korah's *service* was seen as *wicked rebellion*, and the "fire" of the Lord consumed him (35).

Thus, at the time of Jeremiah's words to the people of Judah, this insistence on *serving* and *obeying* the Lord according to each one's *fleshly purpose and pleasure* was condemned by God as "evil": "They know no bounds in deeds of evil; they judge not with justice" (Jer. 5:28). For, the service and obedience which the people offered to the Lord, which they assumed *justified* them as *righteous before the Lord* and *vindicated* in His judgment, was instead merely Self-pleasing and fleshly religion.

First, the "prophets" and "teachers" of the people did not speak and teach according to the Lord's purpose and will but instead spoke for themselves. As a result, the "prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction" (Jer. 5:31). But, this *self-pleasing* service to the Lord would end in judgment, for the Lord asks them, "what will you do when the end comes?" (31) Despite their *self-deluded view that they serve*

*acceptably*, the Lord God did bring these rebellious leaders to judgment.

Second, to advance their own *fleshly influence and power*, these *prophets and teachers* diverted the true message of the Law, which first commanded *faith and redemption* rather than a Self-righteous using the Law and its observance as a means of Self-justification.

For, *faith commands* not separation but a *surrendered drawing near to the Lord God **for life***. Abraham drew near to the Lord God by faith, as did David, as did Moses. Even before Sinai, Israel was given the example of Abraham, who “believed the Lord” so that God “counted it to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6).

But, Israel was unwilling to ***draw near*** with such faith, because faith required the surrender of its fleshly control. So, the people chose the way of *fleshly separation, saying at Sinai*: “Do not let God speak to us, lest we die” but let Moses “speak to us, and we will listen” (Ex. 20:19).

In this way, *Israel’s* prophets and teachers ignored this command of faith and redemption for righteousness, instead foisting upon Israel a Self-righteousness through Torah-observance. But, to seek another path for “**life**” apart from *drawing near to the Lord God in the surrender of faith* was a futile endeavor. As the Lord God said, the people

“committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the **fountain of living waters** and have hewed out cisterns for themselves, **broken cisterns** that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:13).

But, keeping Torah was never meant to be *divorced* from faith and redemption, a way around faith in the Lord’s redeeming Mashiach to secure “righteousness” in a way other than Yahweh Tzedekenu (Jer. 23:6). For, surrendering to the “Lord” by faith to be *freed by Him* precedes any *mitzvot* of the Law: “I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex. 20:2).

So, Israel keeps its “stubborn and rebellious heart” (Jer. 5:23) by stiffening its “neck” to resist the Word of God shared by the Lord’s servants (7:22-26).

Furthermore, Israel’s own “righteous deeds” performed in accordance to Torah have only been “unclean” (Is. 54:6) in God’s eyes, not securing Israel the “life” it craved apart from Jesus Mashiach and His life-giving atonement (Dan. 9:24) as *Yahweh Tzedekenu* (Jer. 23:6). Instead, Israel continues to this day as a “*valley of bones*” (Ezek. 37:1) as a people who say “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off” (11) and who have only known *exile* and *separation* from the fountain of living water and the Mashiach who

called futility to “stubborn and rebellious hearts” (Jer. 5:23) “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink... out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37-38). Instead, Israel has *clung to its broken cistern* of Torah observance, yet failing to observe Torah’s earliest commands to let God’s appointed Mashiach be the one to “crush” the Serpent’s head (Gen. 3:15) and provide Israel with a righteousness of faith (Gen. 15:6) as the Lord our righteousness (Jer. 23:6) by “atoning for iniquity” to secure such an everlasting righteousness (Dan. 9:24).

Finally, Israel’s sense of entitlement also comes from its honored relationship as the Lord God’s *covenant people*. Like a woman entering a marriage covenant with her husband, Israel is bound by covenant to the Lord. As the Lord says: “I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness” (Jer. 2:2). Because Israel and its people belonged to the Lord, they were “holy to the Lord, the firstfruits of his harvest” (3).

Ironically, it was this *intimacy* which fuelled Israel’s rebellion. Like a woman refusing to humble herself to “serve her *rightful husband*, Israel and its people would then “bow down” to strangers “like a whore” – indiscriminately and for shameless profit (2:20).

Thus, the Lord showed through Jeremiah that though Israel was still in *covenantal relationship* with Him, it was still possible for her to act shamelessly and unfaithfully to Him. As a wife choosing to offer her body as a *prostitute*, so it was possible for Israel, though bound to the Lord, to break the bonds and incur guilt through its unfaithfulness. So, Israel and Judah are like sisters acting treacherously against the Lord (3:10), guilty of *bowing down* to other masters in whoredom (2:20).

And, in this *covenantal* relationship, Israel and Judah have the *right* to honor the Lord God with their sacrifices, offered in His Temple. Yet, Temple worship still does not give Israel the right to *sin freely against the Lord*, and yet still “stand before me in this house... and say, “We are delivered!” (7:10).

Thus, all the *rights* which Israel claimed for its Self-vindication are mere “deceptive words” of assurance (7:4). God is the Father of Israel, but its people are “rebellious children” (Is. 1:2). The Lord God has given Israel His Law, but not as a means of Self-righteousness, for its “*righteous deeds are like a polluted garment*” which cannot cover its uncleanness (Is. 64:6). And, the Lord God called Israel to be His Holy people in covenantal love, but Israel and Judah have still betrayed Him in their

“treachery,” (3:10), bowing down in “whoredom” as an unfaithful wife (2:20). Though given the right to offer sacrifices before God, the “Temple” is no refuge nor vindication for their sins to “steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods” (7:9).

Instead, Israel has trusted “deceptive words” (7:8) so that it continues in its “abominations.” Though blinded by its self-entitlement and vindication, Judah and its people are still under the disciplining judgment of God. So deceived is Israel that it believes that it is “innocent” and not deserving of “his anger,” though this sense of Self-vindication becomes the very grounds for its judgment!

## 10.0. Tested Way: Self-Redeeming.

### Introduction.

So God **blessed** the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. These are the **generations** of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. Gen. 2:3-4.

for my people have committed two evils:  
they have forsaken me, the **fountain of living waters**, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, **broken cisterns** that can hold no water.  
Jeremiah 2:13

To understand the *way* the Lord God promised to our human family, the line of Adam and Eve, let's begin with God's completed work of creation. In the beginning, after the Lord God had prepared the Earth for the chosen line of His family blessing, the line of His Mashiach, the Lord "rested" from His work of creation (Gen. 2:3) and created a *blessed time*—the seventh day—to spend with

His holy people, the “generations” who would inherit the “heavens” and the “earth” (Gen. 2:4).

In this way, you and all those of the line of Adam were created for an inheritance of both “heaven”—the spiritual realm that is unseen, and “earth,” this material reality of dust and matter. We were given two natures—the very life of God Himself as he “breathed” into us His very “breath of life” (Gen. 2:6) as well as fleshly bodies of the “dust” of this earth.

For, God’s Heir, the Mashiach, would be raised up from our line as the Firstborn whose “generations” would inherit the *heavens and the earth* (2:4). As the *others* born as the sons of God from the line of Adam (Gen. 6:2), we were to receive our inheritance of heaven and earth only in our Mashiach, our Firstborn.

Mashiach, the Firstborn Son of the heavens and the earth, is God’s rightful Heir from whom all His family “generations” of sons receive their *rightful inheritance* of God’s blessings of heaven and earth. Life, and the

*way* of the Lord God's original blessing, is found only *with the Lord God* and His Mashiach as the only source of this life, the "fountain of living waters" to quench our need for a life and blessing of the heavens and the earth.

### Job's Path of Self-Entitlement:

However, as Job undergoes his *tenth test*, the test of his *way*, he has taken a dangerous and irreversible detour. As the work of his fleshly heart, mind, and soul have drawn him from his original *faith relationship* with the Lord God, he has now in stages become accustomed to *life apart*. His *fallen flesh*, innately bent on Self-rule in this world apart from God and Self-righteous in its own eyes (Gen. 3:5), has *accustomed Job* to an earthly, fleshly life—a "broken cistern" (Jer. 2:13) which has *replaced* what was hitherto irreplaceable and *heavenly*—the "living waters" of God's life and blessing, with a fleshly substitute.

Thus, Job's path from here is *irreversibly broken*. Having determined that he is well-capable of securing for himself his own Self-rights, he would secure an earthly blessing and inheritance *by his own hand*, brazenly coming before God with his demands—as a *prince Self-crowned* (Job 31:37), he would demand what was his rightful due. For this once *humbled servant*, the only path to recovery is the way of *rebuke and revelation*, in which the Lord God himself will finally restore Job to his senses!

### Israel's Path of Self-Entitlement

Like Job, Israel has also take this path of *earthly entitlement*. Having secured for itself a *fleshly and earthly* source of blessing—its own Judaism to ensure its sense of “blessing” and an earthly “inheritance” through its “broken cistern” of Jewish Life, its own Self-righteousness from Torah observance, and its own *redemption* by its own great rabbis, what need did Israel have for Jesus as its Mashiach?

What did it matter that Jesus Mashiach was to be *Yahweh Tzedekenu* to Israel—the people had secured their own Self-righteousness by Torah observance—as *polluted a garment* as it were (Is. 64:6). What need would Israel have for a Seed to be Raised Up from David’s own body to build a “house” for the name of God and David—a spiritual household? The people had their “Temple of the Lord,” where they were free to offer to the Lord *offerings* according to their Sadducean policies to appease both God and Herod. What need would the people need of an “atonement for iniquity” (Dan. 9:24) which Jesus Mashiach was scheduled to deliver in 33 CE, when the people had secured for themselves an earthly salvation by their own works, traditions, and customs. So, at the appointed time, 33 CE, Israel had no need of Jesus as their Mashiach and so rejected him to a Roman cross. By denying Jesus Mashiach His rightful place as Redeemer, would Israel walk perpetually in its own Self-redemption?

Once Job decides to walk the path to seek a *blessed life* by his own fleshly works and self-rights apart from God, *a final rebuke and revelation* of God inevitably await. Likewise, when Israel directs its way to the path of a *Self-entitled Blessed* apart from God, determining to obtain “good” by its own works, willfully choosing as a nation to settle for an *earthly inheritance* by refusing the Lord God’s path of redemption and *heavenly blessing* in Jesus Mashiach, the nation’s Firstborn Son, the nation also chooses the inevitable path of rebuke and **fearful revelation**.

Thus, the Lord God mercifully culminates the *testing* of His servants, both Job and Israel, with a **full revelation** of His power and presence, to achieve their final and complete restoration.

### **10.1. Job’s Self-Entitled Way:**

#### Self-entitlement directs his way.

In the beginning, Job was content to be seen by God, who alone had the place as his *holy Creator* and Lord to judge him as being

“blameless” and “upright” (Job 1:8). As the Lord of all authority, God alone was *righteous* and the *arbiter* of “good” and “evil,” for apart from God’s work, there was only dark chaos.

Recognizing that the Godless world is a *world* absent of the Creator’s work, we realize that *before God’s* life-giving work, there is only a world of death; before His *light-bringing*, there is only darkness; and, before His Righteous life, *there is only an empty, profane world.*

So, by the time Job is tested once again, his *fleshly life* has so deceived him that he begins to see himself with the Creator’s place and power. Convinced of his own self-sufficiency apart from God, he assumes a *baseless* sense of entitlement before God.

First, he assumes that he even apart from God, he has “rights,” for he says: “As God lives, who has **taken away my right**” (Job 27:2). What might that “right” be, apart from the Lord, whose Almighty authority bestows every *right*? Upon what power or what authority, apart from God, does Job pin his “rights”?

Clearly, Job and his friends have claimed among themselves human “rights” of respect, courtesy, and communication. So, we see that as the *flesh* has shifted Job’s focus from the *heavenly court*, where the “Judge of all the earth” had previously viewed him as his “servant” who was “blameless and upright” (Job 1:8), to the *earthly conversations of men*, Job’s inflated and Self-justifying soul assumes that these *human rights* dictate the proceedings and decisions of heaven.

So, just based on his *fleshly experiences* before men, Job lays claim to judgments that had been normally *reserved* for the Almighty’s court—Job clings to “my integrity” and “my righteousness” (27:5-6) as his possessions.

Girded with these *human-based* rights, Job is confidently positioned to *proceed* on his way to *recover* what he had lost, to obtain and recover his *life* and its *blessings* even if God is now a distant, unreliable *adversary*.

### Two Paths before Job:

As Job’s testing enters its final cycle, on the *path* which would lead to a final and fiery

*revelation* of the Lord God's sanctifying presence, he is at this point *firmly rooted in his own fleshly sense of entitlement*. It is *his right* to cling to both his *integrity* and his *righteousness* apart from God. From this *earthly vantage*, he sees two paths before him.

The first is the unknown path of *faith*, a path which he can't control or navigate by his own power. Rather, he must simply *surrender* to the Lord God, being willing to once again face death and loss. Yet, this is the path of "*wisdom*" (Job 28:12-13), and it is the path of repentance. For, to take the path of faith once again, Job knows that he must give up his *Self-justifying rights* in order to gain wisdom in the "fear of the Lord" so that he may "turn" from evil and gain "understanding" (28).

The right and the wise path lies before him. Yet, perhaps, this path is too freshly painful. Job gave up his *rights* to the Lord God once, and he lost everything. And, while the path toward this "blessed" God is wise, it also requires the *death, the surrender*, of his own *fleshly empowerment*. Will Job give up everything again to become the Lord's

“servant”? As Job recalls this *Godly past*, when “God watched over me” (29:2) and he was *blessed* in his path, as his “steps were washed with butter, and the rock poured out for me streams of oil” (6).

In the midst of this *past remembrance*, Job’s fleshly mind presents a better path. Rather than Job *submitting as a servant* to the Lord, he could live on earth as if he himself were God. He could be honored by men on this earth rather than God, for the people honored him, not God: “They waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouths as for the spring rain” (23). Rather than living as a servant, Job could take the fleshly path of Self-rule, gaining for himself an entirely earthly inheritance. Not only would he determine his own way, but he could *choose* and direct the *way* of other people because he “sat as chief” and “lived like a king” among the people (25).

As we shall see, Israel also chose this path to *Self-rule* apart from God rather than *serve and surrender to* Jesus as their Mashiach.

### The Path of Self-Exalted Blessing.

Remember that the Lord God's original plan for chosen "generations" of Adam's line is to inherit the "heavens and the earth," for the Lord God has given the Mashiach, the "Son of Man" (Ps. 8:4) and creation's Firstborn Heir, "dominion over the works" of God's hands and has put "all things under his feet" (6).

Thus, as the Firstborn, Mashiach has the *family right* to *redeem* all humanity, including Job, and to "atone" for his iniquity to give him an "everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24). For, Mashiach alone is to be Job's *Yahweh Tzedekenu*—the "Lord our righteousness" (Jer. 23:6).

However, since Job already sees himself to have the "right" to be "righteous" (Job. 27:6) by his own hand and considers himself to be a "prince" (Job 31:37)—having obtained honor and an inheritance without any need for the Lord's Mashiach, then Job has *achieved the "blessed life"* in a way entirely *foreign* to what the Lord God had promised all along.

To seek and claim to have obtained a life "blessing" and "inheritance" apart from the

Lord and His Mashiach is to take an *irreversible path* to rebuke and *fiery revelation* of God's true power and glory.

## 10.2. Israel's Self-entitled Way.

Matthew 21-22

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a **donkey**, on a colt, the foal of a **donkey**.

Zechariah 9:9

And after the (seven weeks and) sixty-two weeks, an **anointed one** shall be **cut off** and shall have nothing" (that is, 33 CE).

...to put an end to sin, and to **atone** for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness...

Daniel 9:26, 24b

Before the Jewish people were cast into exile, the Lord God had warned them through the prophet Jeremiah to warn Judah that it had "forsaken" the *true spiritual life* of the Lord God's "living waters" and had instead built for

itself “broken cisterns” which could hold no water (Jer. 2:13). That is, Israel had built for itself a *fleshly life* which replaced the “living waters”—the spiritual abundance which the Lord God had promised.

What was this *broken life* which Israel had settled for? Recall that the Lord God promised to *raise up David’s Seed, Mashiach*, as One who would *redeem His people* by being “disciplined” for their iniquity (2 Sam. 7:14) to secure for them an irrevocable righteousness in Himself as *Yahweh tzedekenu*, the Lord (their) righteousness (Jer. 23:6); to build them into not just an *earthly house* (David’s) but a *heavenly and eternal house* (2 Sam. 7:11, 13), to *establish an eternal throne* (16) to rule an everlasting Kingdom forever.

The Lord God promised the *sons of Israel* that they would one day inherit the “heavens and the earth” as the “generations” of Mashiach (Gen. 2:4), multiplied from this *Zera* to be as the “stars of heaven” (Gen. 22:17). But, when Jesus Mashiach was presented to Israel in 33 CE according to the prophecy of Daniel, presented to them as their

*humble king*, riding on a *donkey* as prophesied by Zechariah (9:9), the people promptly rejected and handed him over to Rome for crucifixion. Why did Israel reject the Lord's *redemptive path of blessing in the Mashiach* in 33 CE? There are two main reasons.

First, as we saw with Job, we see now in Israel. Israel had developed for itself a *fleshly life* for itself which was in reality a “*broken cistern*” which sought to replace but lacked the spiritual vitality of true “*living waters*” (Jer. 2:13). Israel had cultivated a rich *Jewish life* with its “*vain offerings*,” “*new moon and Sabbaths*” and “*appointed feasts*” (Is. 1:13-14); a *Self-made righteousness* achieved through Torah-observance (Is. 64:6); and, a *religious system* centered around the Temple (Jer. 7:4). With such *richness and blessings*, Israel was well-along the path in 33 CE of settling for a *life of blessings*, albeit earthly blessings would eventually still end in the *hopeless void of death*. So, what need did Israel have for Jesus as Mashiach? It was already *rich* in Self-earned blessings! So, what need did Israel have of Jesus as Mashiach, especially since it was well-

along the path to *securing for itself its own blessings and inheritance!* So, Israel settled. God promised an inheritance of “heaven and earth” but Israel settled for a temporary experience on earth; the Lord offered Israel *sonship* in the family of God, but Israel chose to be simply the *sons of Abraham*; and God offered *redemption* and the eternal *waters of life* in Mashiach and His forever Kingdom, but Israel chose its own Self-righteousness which was *drained of life*, ending in certain death for its people. When a *people* stubbornly chooses to *rule in death* rather than *serve in life*, there awaits only *rebuke* and the terrifying *revelation* of God.

But, the second reason for Israel’s *errant path* to its own Self-secured inheritance is that Israel’s *waywardness* needed to be tested and revealed as the *failing* of its fallen flesh. For, with this tenth test, Israel would see that its own insistence on its *fleshly way* leads only to certain ruin, disenfranchisement, and death. That is, Israel deliberately chose, at this point in its *history*, in 33 CE, to *stay* its path of Self-redemption and Self-reward, choosing Torah-

observant Judaism and the Jewish Life though it would only lead to further exile and the *certain and hopeless death* for its people for generations. And, Israel chose to reject the “*fountain of living water*” which Mashiach secured for them through His redemption on the cross.

Thus, Israel would set itself on a *path* which would lead to certain *rebuke*, as its remnant of Jews who would eventually follow Jesus as their Mashiach would testify to the nation of its waywardness. And, to a final and fiery *revelation* when it would look upon the *face* of Jesus and recognize Him as its Firstborn Son, its only Redeemer and hope for its *life and future inheritance* (Zech. 12:10). On that day, Israel will realize the *folly* of its wayward flesh and *repent fully* to an everlasting life as servants of Jesus Mashiach!

For, like Job, Israel must endure all twelve appointed tests so that it might understand the full and horrible *desception* of its own flesh, so that is eventual repentance and restoration to Jesus as its Mashiach might be eternal and irrevocable.

For, Israel must eventually *join* with Jesus Mashiach in an eternal, Kingdom-establishing bond that will last eternally. For this reason, its repentance must be total and soul-reaching and heart-rending, as each of the **twelve tests** it has experienced throughout its generations will eventually allow Israel, in the end, to once-for-all **reject the flesh** as it begins to gaze forever upon Jesus as its Lord and Mashiach.

This is the reason the Church was *temporary* but Israel is eternally the ***holy people*** of *Jesus Mashiach*. The Church, not *subjected* to these **twelvefold tests**, reached its terminus as its *fleshly nature*, left to itself, eventually corrupted even the *fruitful sixth church* to become the unrecognizable seventh church which had *shut Jesus out of His own house!* (Rev. 3:20).

Thus, Israel *chose to reject* Jesus as Mashiach in 33 CE in order to pursue a path of Self-blessing *through its fleshly institutions* of Jewish traditions of life, learning, and Torah-observance. In the end, its “inheritance” would only be *certain death* without its Redeemer and a temporary hope for this life

alone. Only by taking this path will Israel one day *repent* of its fleshly way as the people “look on me, on him whom they have pierced” and “mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a **firstborn**” (Zech. 12:10b).

What Jesus Mashiach said about Israel’s  
Waywardness:

When Jesus Mashiach was revealed to Israel in 33 CE as its humble king, “riding a donkey” as Zechariah had predicted (Matt. 21:5), the people of Israel revealed a natural *yearning and heart to welcome* Jesus as their Mashiach.

1. **Willing but unready heart:**

The crowd that surrounded the way to Jerusalem as the Lord Jesus passed as he humbly was led into the city shouted, “**Hosanna** to the **Son of David!** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” (21:9-10). In the *spontaneity of faith*, the guileless of Israel *knew* that Jesus was its Mashiach. But, the nation was not quite ready, at that point, for it was still a “fig tree”

which remained *fruitless* in its season (21:18-19).

As His parable of the *wedding feast* illustrated, Israel was too pre-occupied with its Jewish life to have any interest in *welcoming and celebrating God's Heir, Jesus Mashiach*.

"But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business" (Matt. 22:5). The *business* of being a Jew was more engaging than entering their *true inheritance* from God, the eternal Kingdom of Mashiach which would one day have dominion over all *heaven and earth*.

Further testing would reveal Israel's unwillingness to *relinquish its* own "path" to achieving all that God had promised. It would take two thousand years for Israel to fully understand that its *Mashiach-less* future would inevitably lead to its *annihilation* as a people and the *total descent* of the world into the darkness of Antichrist.

## **2. Self-appointed authority and stolen inheritance:**

As we have seen, step-by-step in the life of Job, the inescapable *corruption of the flesh* that

hardens heart, mind, soul, then eventually, way, ***ruined Israel's leaders*** most thoroughly, for these were lavishly rewarded for stealing the devotion and authority that *belonged* to God and His Mashiach and using it to *solidify their control over the fleshly religion* that was **Judaism**.

So, having long-since *authorized and justified* themselves through human consensus, they questioned the “authority” of the Son of God himself, saying: “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” (21:23-24). Clearly, Jesus was performing the *miraculous works* of God’s promised Mashiach—“the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them” (Matt. 11:5). And, this power was clearly not *authorized* by their Jewish religion which had no power to begin with. Yet, they brazenly refused to *believe* the signs Mashiach worked. Why?

Because the *Jewish leaders* wanted what Mashiach had been long-promised—they

wanted to inherit and control the Kingdom of God for themselves, by the *power of the flesh* and the *rule of man* without the interfering *hand of heaven* if the Davidic Kingdom's true Heir, the Firstborn Son, would rule as "the Lord their God and David their King" (Jer. 30:9). Jesus describes their *hidden motives and antipathy toward the true Heir* through a parable of murderous tenants: "But when the tenants saw **the son**, they said to themselves, "This is the **heir**. Come, let us kill him and **have his inheritance**." (21:38).

### **3. Willful Blindness:**

For the past two thousand years, the "two days" of Israel's dormancy and *deadness* (Hosea 6:2), Israel has justified its *rejection of Jesus* as God's appointed Mashiach as a Biblical impossibility.

1. **Blindness to Tanakh-Promise:** First with a willful blindness of their own Tanakh-witness of who the Mashiach was meant to be as both the Son of God and the Son of David.
2. **Bias against Jesus and His lineage.** Then, Israel is offended at the story of the birth of Jesus, insulting him as an illegitimate *bastard*.

It consider it an impossibility for the Almighty God and Mashiach to be dishonored by weakness.

Previously (Test 2: Socially Needy Heart), we have seen that the congregation of Israel *self-appoints* itself as the authority to define the person of God as *Elohim*. First, the people conceive of Elohim as a pantheon of gods to “go before us” as did the Egyptian gods (Ex. 32:1)-- *Elohim* (pl) *yeleku* (pl). Then, Israel imposes on Elohim a strict *monism*, essentially thinking about and re-imagining *Elohim* as *Elohe* (singular) whose oneness is *yachid* – a indivisible singularity rather than *echad*—a unity.

Thus, Israel willfully and historically could not conceive of Mashiach being anything but a mere *human*, distinct and unrelated to Elohim as would any other creature to its creator. As a mere created being, Mashiach would have the same relatedness to Elohim as would any other human, or even a beaver or a goldfish.

But, Scripture is replete with clear passages that *portray Mashiach* as more than a mere

human, as having a *kinship* relationship with Elohim. Consider a few:

- As Elohim, Mashiach obeyed the command of Elohim to “create a firmament” (Gen. 1:7)
- As Elohim, Mashiach was addressed by Elohim, who said, “Let us make man in **our image**” (Gen. 1:26). \*Oddly, rabbis are much more inclined to say Elohim addresses “angels and the entirety of creation” when He says this, making God guilty of the greatest idolatry.\*
- As Elohim forever enthroned, Mashiach is *anointed* as Elohim by Elohim with the “oil of gladness” (Psalm 45:6-7).
- Mashiach is told by Yahweh, the Lord, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you” (Ps. 2:7).
- Mashiach is called “Lord”—Yahweh, as in Yahweh Tzedekenu (Jer. 23:6).
- Mashiach is called “the Lord their God and David their King” (Jer. 30:9)
- Even the Jews themselves, being “sons of the Most High” are called “Elohim” (Ps. 82:6) because Elohim is essentially the

*family name* to describe the oneness of God as “Everlasting Father, Wonderful Counselor, and Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6).

Even though the Tanakh is replete with the truth that Mashiach must be more than a mere human to accomplish the *salvation* and *redemption* that is His right—to be a “wall of fire” as Lord, *Yahweh*, sent by the Lord of Hosts (Zechariah 2:5-9); to be “cut off” to *atone* for the iniquity of His people (Dan. 9:24); to be the “righteousness” of His people as *Yahweh Tzedekenu* (Jer. 23:6); to sit forever on the throne of David as “the Mighty God” (Is. 9:5-6) to destroy every *warrior* coming against Israel; and, to “destroy” all the nations that come against Jerusalem” (Zech. 12:9-10).

Yet, the question remains. How can the Word of God teach that Mashiach is “Lord” and “God” yet still be a man, born the Son of David? Is there a legal basis for this claim?

Clearly, the Lord God states both the reality and also the means by which Mashiach is both “Lord” and “God,” promising Israel:  
 “But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for

them” (Jer. 30:9). Mashiach is called “the Lord their God”—*Yahweh Elohehem* and also “David their King”—*David Melekhem*. But, why is He called this? The Lord God explains this by saying, “whom I will **raise up** for them.” Israel’s teachers understood that by the Torah-mandated act of “**raising up Seed**” for a deceased, by the *right of redemption-geullah* or the *duty of kinship-yibbum*, the Seed so raised up by a kinsman-Redeemer (who is not a direct brother) will be the *son* of two fathers.

So, Perez is the son of both Judah and Er (Gen. 38); Obed is the son of both Boaz and Mahlon (Ruth 4), for Boaz *raised up Seed* so that this Son would “raise up the name” of his deceased father (Ruth 4:10). So, when the Lord God promises to “**raise up Seed**” for David once David has died (2 Samuel 7:12), He is also ensuring that this Seed, Mashiach, would be the direct “Son of David” (12) and the “Son of God” (14). For, David’s line would be *cut off* one day at Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), so the Lord God himself must “raise up” Mashiach to bear both His Name—*Yahweh Tzedekenu* (Jer. 23:6) and the name of

“David their King” (Jer. 30:9). And, to bear the *name* of one’s father is to also bear their *image, likeness, and nature*. So, Mashiach bears the name and nature of God as “Everlasting Father, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, and Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6).

Yet, were *Israel’s teachers* aware of Torah-ordained practice of *raising up Seed* in 33 CE? Indeed, Israel’s teachers were not only aware of the practice of “Raising up Seed” but used this as a ploy to *trap Jesus Mashiach* in debate, saying: “Moses said, “If a man dies having no children, his brothers must marry the widow and **raise up offspring (Seed)** for his brother” (Matt. 22:25). Not only did Israel’s teachers know of the command to “raise up Seed,” but they also willfully chose to ignore or forget the Lord God’s promise regarding Mashiach: “I will **raise up your Zera** after you, who shall come from your body” (2 Sam. 7:12).

### **3. Diminishing the Place of Mashiach:**

Israel’s *stubborn* hurtle down the road of a Mashiach-less future is the result of *relocating the object of their faith* from the terrifying Yahweh Elohim whose glory and name fill the

heavens to a human-defined deity, whether a pantheon or a lonely singularity—either way, Israel’s *religious conversation* offers a comfortable yet useless version of a benign God who lets His children run rampant. So, Jesus rebukes Israel’s leaders, saying: “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God” (22:29).

To this day, Israel is caught in a conundrum of their own making. In its Self-honoring *flesh*, Israel demands an innocuous, Shneerson-like Mashiach who will *harmlessly* participate in its Jewish Self-admiration. But, such a *feckless* Mashiach offers no help as the world encircles Israel and arms itself with genocidal weapons.

Thus, it is critical for Jewish survival that Israel snap out of its *Mashiach-denying* moment and reconsider the Tanakh’s powerful promises of Mashiach, made by the Lord God whose Words carved out creation.

In 33 CE, the Jewish leaders could only bear to think of Mashiach as “the son of David” (22:42), but the words of David remind them that Mashiach is David’s Lord as “the Son of God.” So, He is the Firstborn Son and Heir of

all humanity, for He is “the Son of Man” who is “seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:64).

Though Jesus Mashiach was *raised up as Seed* according to the laws of *geullah* and *yibbum* to be the Son of David and the Son of God, how did this actually happen?

From a *woman* of the House of David by betrothal, Mary was chosen like Tamar and Ruth before her to give birth to the Seed “given” by the Lord (Ruth 4:12). So, as God had promised, God sent the Holy Spirit to “raise up Seed” for David coming from David’s own “body” (2 Samuel 7:12; Matthew 1:18). That is, the Holy Spirit took *preserved material* from David’s own body to conceive the “child” of promise. But, was David’s bodily material preserved? David himself recounts: “You have kept count of my tossings; put **my tears** in your bottle” (Ps. 56:8), and modern science tells us that *human tears* contain *genetic material*. Wouldn’t it be fitting that Mashiach, promised to be the “man of sorrows” and “acquainted with grief” (Is. 53:3)

would be raised up as David's Seed by the very *tears of David*? Born fully of human genetics to be the Son of David, and "begotten" by the Holy Spirit as the Son of God.

Only such a Son of Man and a Son of God could have the power to *redeem His people* of their sins, becoming for them Yahweh Tzedekenu, the Lord our righteousness.

For, only the Son of God, whose infinite life as Creator could "bear" the griefs and sorrows of His people's sins (Is. 53:4) and carry the "iniquity of us all" (6). And, only the Son of Man/ David could be "disciplined" for both the culpability and the guilt of sin (2 Sam. 7:14) to be "pierced for our transgressions" (5) and so "bear the sin of many" by "pouring out his soul to death" as a ransom (12) in order that by making "atonement" for iniquity he might secure for His people an "everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24) to become for them forever, *Yahweh Tzedekenu*.



## 11.0. Tested Way: Witness.

From the early beginning of the family of man, the witnesses of the Lord who speak His truth to a *fleshly people in this dark world* have always been outnumbered, outvoted, and overruled. For, the *fleshly ways* of this world are designed to perpetuate the *fleshly norm* of drowning out the Lord God's voice amidst the cacophony of fleshly talk.

So, Abel's witness of *true faith* and sacrificial worship provoked Cain's selfish and God-dishonoring efforts and so was killed. As we now shift to this penultimate test, with Job's way confronted by the *witness of Elihu* and also the future prospect of Israel one day being confronted by the *witness of Jesus Mashiach by a faithful remnant*, let's consider the ways that the flesh conspires to *nullify* the witness of the Lord God's servants. As we hear Elihu's *witness* before Job's final encounter with the Lord God, let's consider how Job's *way* is still tested to see if he will *heed* or dismiss Elihu's rebuke and witness of the coming Lord. Let's consider *fleshly*

*assumptions* which conspire to undermine Elihu's witness:

**1. Consensual Truth:** Because the *fleshly mind* recognizes only *human authority* in discerning and determining the *truth* of God's Word, for such human authority can always dull the sting of God's truth, diminish the *cost* of knowing the true God, and demean the *glory and worth* of God's Lordship to retain human control. The flesh *recognizes only* human consensus as a test of truth. Biblical truth must be *acceptably popular* and *convenient*, not overly taxing the flesh nor calling it to sacrifice and sanctification as its due worship. So, Elihu was silent before Job's *three friends*, being outnumbered.

**2. Qualified Opinions.** Likewise, the *flesh sets up human relationships, groups, and* approving institutions to approve and give weight to certain opinions over others. In this way, disruptive voices which have not *proven to be safe and non-threatening* can be easily dismissed. So, Elihu lacks the proper

qualifications, being “young in years” (Job 32:6).

**3. Suspicious Spirituality.** Earlier, Job had spiritual experiences before the Lord God as his *servant*, experiences which had little relevance in the moral deliberations between Job and his friends. In this same way, Elihu wrongly assumes these men will recognize the “spirit in man,” the *spiritual life* given by the Almighty that distinguishes “understanding” from *mere worldly chatter*. For those truly called by God, such “spiritual realities” are compelling, but in fleshly conversation, *spiritual reality* is unconvincing simply because many fleshly interlocutors have no such spiritual awareness, being accustomed entirely to *human conversation and debate*, never having bothered to inquire of the Lord Himself. So, Elihu rightly sets the *aim* of His speech to prioritize what the Lord God himself values, which is the moving of the “Spirit of God” and the “life” to be shared with God (33:4). Elihu speaks, because *lives* depend on

what he says. The *flesh speaks* to maintain the status quo of a sinking ship, as it inexorably sinks into the dark and deathly abyss.

**4. Powerful Partiality.** Elihu endeavors to “not show partiality to any man or use flattery toward any person” (32:21), perhaps being unaware that *partiality is the language, the coinage of the flesh*. For, the *flesh* has no access to the *spiritual power* of God’s Word. Instead, it only understands *power* and *consequence*. The powerful must be *heeded* and *appeased*, with words that may or may not be genuine. For, words are simply *tokens* by which listeners can choose to align with what is popular and powerful, regardless of the *truth* or *untruth* of what is being discussed.

**5. Self-deluding Support.** Fleshly speakers gathers to *justify their behaviors* and their positions to stand apart from God. So, Job and his friends *work* to maintain the *appearance* of rightness before one another—to show others that “I am pure, without transgression” and “I am clean, and there is no iniquity in me” (33:8-

9), blinding one another to the reality of what the Lord God may say to their need for repentance. Very rarely is it heard, but true and bold witness requires those with the courage of Elihu to say: “You are not right” (33:12).

Thus, the Lord God sends *Elihu* as an *outsider* to confront Job and his friends, who are hopelessly intertwined in their *fleshly words* and human-made religious stories. Yet, these *mere words* are truly *broken cisterns unable to hold* the living waters of God’s true life (Jer. 2:13). Likewise, the Lord God will one day raise up a *remnant*, the *firstfruits* of Israel who will fall before Jesus Mashiach in the last days to bear witness of the “living waters” He has poured upon them and the *powerful redemption* they have experienced in Him! Like their *Lord Mashiach* before them, these *Witnesses* will be clothed in an unmistakable vapor of a *spiritual life* nourishing their souls, an “everlasting righteousness” won for them by

the redemption of Jesus Mashiach who has become to them *Yahweh Tzedekenu*.

Confronted by these witnesses clothed in new life, Israel will have the option to either *heed* their words or silence them, as they tried to do to the Mashiach himself.

### **11.1. Job's Tested Way: Witnessing the Way back to Life.**

Then Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, burned with anger. He burned with anger at Job because **he justified himself rather than God**.<sup>3</sup> He burned with anger also at Job's three friends because they had found no answer, although they had **declared** Job to be in the wrong (Job 32:2-3).

Before Elihu begins to speak to Job and his friends, he realizes the deep deception which blinds Job to the spiritual reality of his situation. Elihu realizes that Job's *fleshly heart* is set on "justifying himself" rather than "justifying God" (32:2). The deep flaw which *infected our fleshly nature* from the start was to imagine "*life*" *apart from God*.

But, Job falsely imagines not only that *life* is possible apart from God, but that he can be “**right**” apart from the Lord God as well. For, the very act of Creation *ascribes to God* all rights as the Lord of heaven and earth. And, these rights are *inextricably tied* to His place as the Head and ruler of all things. So, to *claim a “right” before God is to lay claim to His righteous nature as the Lord God.*

Like a child playing in the mud, Job presumes to *lay claim* to the vast riches of the castle on the hill. What is Job’s basis for his righteousness? The other children playing in the mud agree to his claim as they watch the Kingdom’s mighty lords and ladies ride in and out of the castle’s walls.

So, Elihu’s first act of Witness is to recalibrate Job’s vision to match the reality revealed through the Word of God.

### 1. Restoring Creator to Creature relationship.

“Behold, in this you are **not right**. I will answer you, for **God is greater than man**.

<sup>13</sup> Why do you **contend** against him, saying, ‘He will answer none of man’s words?’” (Job 33:12-13).

Elihu first reminds Job of this simple but basic reality: “God is **greater** than man” (33:12).

By the very definition of God as the One occupying the *highest place of honor and creative power*, God is “greater” than man.

So, this is the first *reality* which the *fleshly mind* dismisses, instead believing in the lie that man can be “**like** God”—that is, taking over or usurping God’s place of high honor. Elihu reminds Job that our place is to acknowledge the *greatness* of God and the *smallness* of Man. Despite human words and the *aspirations* of the *flesh*, man is never a match for God, never His equal.

So, to “contend” with God is as futile as wrestling with the *ocean* or grasping the galaxies. Man must realize his limitations and the danger of *contending* with the All-powerful God.

## 2. Realizing the Redemption of Life and Soul.

He has **redeemed my soul** from going down into the **pit**, and **my life** shall look upon the **light** (Job 33:28).

Because Job mistakenly believes that he has the *right* to justify himself, to declare that he is “righteous” before God, he also believes that he can *deliver himself* from sin and its consequences. So, Job’s Self-justification also leads Job to think that he does not need the Lord’s *redemption*.

However, Elihu reminds Job that only the Lord God has access to the *unseen* realities of “life” itself. While Job may be *aware* of the presence of his own *soul*, he has no power or ability to change or heal it, much less save it from *destruction*. Neither does Job have access to his own life, much less provide it with the “light” and vitality of *spiritual life*.

Only God has the power to *redeem* the soul, so Job needs the Lord God and his redemption if he wants to be *redeemed* to see life even after his flesh is destroyed.

## 11.2. Israel's Tested Way: Witness

For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O Lord, are our Father, **our Redeemer** from of old is your name. Isaiah 63:16

As we have seen, Israel's *religious life* had become at the time of Jesus Mashiach's first coming in 33 CE a *closed loop* of Jewish Self-justification. Convinced that Israel had somehow obtained a *Self-made* righteousness by observing Torah religiously, the people *brazenly* rejected Jesus as their Mashiach, choosing instead the path of Self-redemption.

But, the prophet Zechariah predicts that the path of Self-redemption without the intervention of Israel's Mashiach to redeem Israel leads to certain annihilation in the last days (Zechariah 12:3), as Jerusalem becomes a "heavy stone" to gather all nations against it.

So, in the last days, the Lord God will raise up a *remnant*, unrecognized by Israel, but called to testify of the coming of the Son of Man, Jesus Mashiaich until the day of the Lord arrives (Matthew 10:20). Remember, the *commission by which the Lord Jesus Mashiaich* charged His original twelve apostles to gather the “lost sheep of Israel” has been *suspended* for the last two thousand years (Hos. 6:2) as Israel has been cast out into the nations after it *rejected Jesus as Mashiaich*. However, in the last days, Israel’s “fig tree” will start to *bear fruit* again.

### 1. Hear His Call, O Firstfruits of His Harvest

<sup>5</sup> These twelve **Jesus sent out**, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to **the lost sheep** of the **house of Israel**. (Matthew 10:5-6)

But he was **pierced** for our **transgressions**; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are **healed**. <sup>6</sup> All we like **sheep** have **gone astray**; we have turned—

every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:5-6).

If you are of Israel and hear His call today, know that you are of the *Firstfruits* of His imminent *harvest* of Israel to Himself. You will testify to your brothers in Israel amidst *dire hardship and bloody resistance and betrayal*. But, know the **call of His heart** as you go out:

- **Heart for His sheep:** Know the Lord's heart, which has *been overturned* these many years, for His “lost sheep, Israel.” Like David, the Lord's single desire is not that His people be *saved* from the “thief” and find *pasture* and “abundant life” with Him in His “fold” (John 10:10).
- **Sacrificial Heart for Sheep:** Because your Lord is the Good Shepherd who “lays his life down” for the sheep (11), his *thoughts never stray to self-pity, recrimination, nor revenge*. These “lost” generations, His concern is only to *bring you and your brothers home*.

- **Israel Astray:** Do not swerve in your focus. The people of Israel are the *lost children who have wandered far from home, the “lost sheep” who have gone “astray”* (Is. 53:6). Gather Israel first, for whether you are alive to see it, your people will be the ones to bring the Gospel of Jesus Mashiach to the entire world!

## 2. Proclaim Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven!

Don't assume that the *lost sheep of Israel* know the Gospel of the Heavenly Kingdom *brought* to earth by Jesus Mashiach! Recall that Isaiah says: “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light, upon those who live in *tsalmavet*—the *shadow of death*—a light has dawned!” (Is. 9:2). Israel has been so *thoroughly deceived* in the flesh because it has been “**dead** in transgressions and sins” (Eph. 2:1) as it has followed the “prince” of this world's darkness (2) so that your sins have *separated you from God* (Is. 59:2). Being *dead* in the flesh has *limited Israel's* view of the Kingdom to a *terminal, earthly experience*. So, proclaim the “Kingdom of Heaven” which

only Jesus Mashiach brings—a Kingdom entered only by a “spiritual birth” (John 3:3) as His people *receive* Jesus as their Lord (John 1:12-13).

Recall that the Kingdom of Heaven was first announced by the Lord God when He spoke to David:

**King of Heaven:** the Lord God *raises up Seed* for David (2 Sam. 7:12) to rule as King (13) of His father David (16) and His father God (14).

**Redeems a House:** As the Firstborn Heir of David’s House, Jesus Mashiach must *build up* a House of those “redeemed” from death to life as He is “disciplined” for the “iniquity” of His people, bearing their *culpability* (commit) and their *sin* to make “atonement” (Dan. 9:24).

**Establish Throne of Kingdom:** Like the house of Judah, the *redeemed of His Household* will be used of God to “establish” Jesus Mashiach’s “throne... forever” (16). Thus, Jesus Mashiach will rule a Kingdom over *heaven and earth* forever (Is. 9:6-7), *anointed as Elohim on His throne by Elohim* (Ps. 45:6-7) to wield the scepter of uprightness, and *served by His people* as the One raised up by God as

“the Lord their God and David their King” (Jer. 30:9).

Israel must realize that this “Gospel of the Kingdom” is *new*—the world will not be converted to Judaism. Rather, Israel must be *reborn by the Heavenly Spirit*, for “Unless one is **born again** he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Israel has only known an *earthly, man-based religion*. Now, it must abandon its fleshly ways to *surrender* to the Gospel and *sacrifice its old, fleshly ways* to receive the “new wine” of the Kingdom (Matt. 9:17).

3. Bring the Kingdom of God near in Power: saying, ‘The **kingdom of heaven** is at hand.’

<sup>8</sup> **Heal** the sick, **raise** the dead, **cleanse** lepers, **cast out** demons. You received without paying; give without pay. <sup>9</sup> Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts (Matt. 10:7b-9).

Remember, as the Father sent out Jesus Mashiach in His Name, as *Yahweh Elohenu* (Jer. 30:9), Jesus Mashiach sends you out in His name and in His Spirit (John 13:20). You don’t need to understand, but “in the name of Jesus Mashiach” you have the *right* to “heal,

raise up, cleanse, and cast out.” Find the *men of peace* and simply ask: “How can I pray for you?” Then, lay your hands on them and pray. If a *demon manifests*, simply cast it out “in the Jesus’ name!”

#### 4. Be Wary and Wise in your Witness:

First, pray in the Spirit and identify the “worthy ones” whom the Lord will be leading you to. Bless them with your “peace” and *receive* whatever hospitality or help they may want to give you, whether it is food or lodging. Second, “beware” of the *treachery* of people, for when a person is “in the flesh,” they can be influenced by the enemy—so, always respond to the “flesh” by the “Spirit”—never arguing, but letting the Lord God convict and lead to repentance (2 Timothy 2:24-25; John 16:8-111).

#### 5. Sacrificially rely on the Spirit

We can never win in a Flesh vs. Flesh battle, for our warfare is “not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness” (Eph. 6:12). So, simply preach Jesus as Mashiach, giving your “testimony” of your

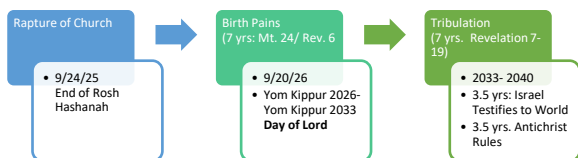
life as proof of His New Life. In this way, the Lord will work through you. “And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death” (Revelation 12:11). As you testify, remember that it is the Word of God, planted as “seed” in human hearts, that bears the fruit of faith—so plant the Word of God freely! Rely not on your own wisdom, nor the fleshly argumentation of mere sophistry, but rather, rely on the Spirit to give you words: “Do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matt. 10:19-20).

#### 6. Be Faithful yet Flee Persecution.

Truly, know that all Israel will **oppose you**, from your families to the councils of leadership. As the *flesh* protests when threatened, its cries will reach a crescendo as the Spirit’s conviction presses deep into Jewish hearts. So, “When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you,

you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes!” (Matt. 10:24).

Therefore, know the promise of the Lord’s coming:



## 7. Finally, Rest in your Good Lord.

<sup>27</sup> **All things** have been handed over to me by my **Father**, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. <sup>28</sup> **Come to me**, all who **labor** and are **heavy laden**, and I will give you **rest**. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and **my burden is light**.” Matt. 11:27-30

Remember that your Lord carries your heavy burden, for when you are “weak, He is strong” (2 Cor. 12:10). Simply obey Him! Shalom.

## 12.0. Tested Way: Revelation and Repentance.

“**Who is this** that darkens counsel by **words without knowledge**? <sup>3</sup> Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me” (Job 38:2-3)

<sup>10</sup> “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a **spirit of grace** and **pleas for mercy**, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall **mourn** for him, as one mourns for an **only child**, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a **firstborn**. (Zech. 12:10)

### Meeting your Maker:

When the Lord reveals Himself to Job “out of the whirlwind” (38:1), He shows the greatest restraint to withhold from Job the fullness of His glory. Speaking to Job in the faintest of whispers to a small creature on a small planet of a small sun in the least of His galaxies.

As humans, we are accustomed to speak and adjust our speech from small to great.

Sometimes, we are small in the presence of those who are *greater*. Or, we are *the greater* speaking to those who are smaller. We adjust our speech, knowing that the *greater* the person, the *heavier* the weight of their words.

All along, Job has used his words among his friends to *posture* and prove and justify his greatness among them. In the end, he succeeds, convincing himself that *he is righteous*.

Israel has done the same thing over its generations, shaping Jewish conversation over the *Word of God* to prove to themselves that they too are *righteous*, powerful enough to achieve Self-redemption apart from God and His designated Mashiach. All this, amidst the sad reality that their *kosher words* give them no solace or assurances beyond this life. Assuming that talking *about God* somehow affects the spiritual reality of God. Yet, long-ignoring His clear warning that their *broken cisterns* hold nothing of the “living waters” (Jer. 2:13) he alone possesses and pours out through His

*anointed rock* (Zech. ), Mashiach, who alone is the “Righteous Branch” of David and the only source of Israel’s *righteous life* as Yahweh Tzedekenu.

So, both Job and Israel have *occluded* their vision with mere human words, positioning themselves in the unending conversation to determine “small” and “great.”

But, when Job finds himself talking with the Lord God, and on the day Israel comes face-to-face with Jesus Mashiach, whom it had so *blithely rejected*, they will have no words in talking with the one who is not simply “greater” but One who is the “**All**.” Whose words don’t carry some or much weight but express His All-Power and His All-Understanding. As people who will one day stand before the Almighty, let us observe a few truths of what to expect:

1. **Who you are** matters. You will not be able to hide “Who you are” before the Almighty (Job 38:2).

2. **What you have said** about God also matters. The Lord takes personally the words spoken about Him. Especially words *darkened by the flesh*. (2)

As we can see at this point, the *truest* and *safest* position for these last two considerations is to position yourself in a way that best aligns with the reality of God Himself—that is, a *humble servant*. Fearing God in this way, your words will avoid *fleshly presumption* and Self-exaltation that diminishes God's glory.

3. Thus, **How you side** with God matters. If you wisely side *with God*, humbled under His Almighty Power and agreeing with Him as His *servant*, surrendering all you have as His rightful due, then you are prepared to meet your Maker.

But, if your life is out-of-line with the *reality* of the Almighty God—your Self, your words, and your positioning towards God—has been *led astray, darkened, or exalted by the flesh*, then you have a single choice: **repent** or **perish!**

## 12.1. Job's Tested Way: Revelation and Repentance.

Make no mistake, the Lord God reveals Himself to Job not in *wrath* but in *mercy*—entirely for the sake of His *servant Job*. The Lord God corrects Job in a show of great love and in the end *honors Job* before his three friends. Job has and will remain, irrevocably, the servant of the Lord. This testing was always intended not to demean or belittle Job but to perfect him! So, let's consider how the Lord's display of His *real presence* burns away the fleshly cobwebs of self-deception ensnaring Job.

### 1.Revealing God's Almighty Power

“Where were you when **I laid** the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. <sup>5</sup> Who **determined** its measurements—surely you know! Or who **stretched** the line upon it? (Job 38:4-5).

In his *distempered period of Self-honor*, Job imagined himself contending with the Lord God. For, Job mistakenly assumed that using the same *words* as God made them equals, in a sense. In human conversation, weight is given to words backed by *experience*. So, Job has

always had an edge over his friends, for *his real experiences* about God were weightier than their *baseless claims*. But now, Job speaks with the One whose words are back not simply by *limited experience* but the total rule over *reality itself*. God is positioned as Creator, and this unchanging *seat as Head of all things* reveals itself in His active rule over nature.

When God reveals a glimpse of His Almighty nature, Job is not merely *outmatched*. There is no comparison at all.

- Job *lives* on the earth, but God ***laid*** the *foundations* of the earth (4).
- Job *perceives* a small portion of life on earth, but God ***determines*** its measurements—where all things start and stop.
- Job has *woken up* to the morning sun, but God has ***commanded*** the morning and the dawn.
- Job has *wondered* at the distant galaxies, but God has ***bound, led, and guided*** these same galaxies in their paths.

- And, though Job has *dwelled* in the land, God has *satisfied* this same land with its fruitfulness.

Job realizes in an instant that as a human, he has only know and talked about the *partial* and *limited*. Yet, the Lord God speaks and demands as a *totality*, with the expectation of *perfected power*. Though Job may seem “righteous” in his eyes, he is simply “more” or a “little less” righteous than his fellow speakers. But, the *righteousness* which God demands of Him, which the Lord expects of His servants, is a God-defined righteousness, a perfect righteousness worthy and acceptable to God Himself. In this way, only the Lord is *perfectly righteous*, so this is the reason why the Lord’s people need the Lord alone as their *Yahweh Tzedekenu*—the Lord is their only righteousness. As Job realizes, so Israel must also realize that simply sharing a common language with God, through the Word of God, does not confer upon them the same *power* God has over the unseen realities. To simply *talk about “righteousness” or “commandments”* or even “*redemption*” grants no lasting power

over these things, in the same way that Job talking about the *Pleiades* grants him no real power to “bind” them as would God. So, simply declaring themselves to be “righteous” by using the language of the Scriptures—*mitzvot, halakah, Tzedek*, does not grant Israel the *promise of God* that it is only the right of Mashiach as *Firstborn* of Abraham and David’s House to make redemption for His family. Israel has no **right** to *claim a Self-redemption, even if it is through Torah-observance*.

As Job was reminded of the Almighty perfection of God and His words, Israel must realize also that it can never claim a “righteousness” of its own making. It has no right before God to do so.

## 2. Restoring Lordship in humility

And the Lord said to Job: <sup>2</sup>“Shall a **faultfinder contend** with the **Almighty**? He who **argues** with God, let him answer it.”

<sup>3</sup> Then Job answered the Lord and said:

<sup>4</sup> “Behold, I am of **small account**; what shall I **answer** you?” (Job 40:1-4).

Through His *revelation* of His Almighty power, the Lord instantly re-positions Job to his original *and natural subjection* to His Lordship.

For, as all creation must obey the voice of its Creator, with *light* even answering the call of the Creator by springing into being, so now Job realizes that *his only rightful response to the Lord* is not “contention” but “surrender.”

The Lord God *restores Job* by first pointing out that he has been a “faultfinder” who was “contending” with the Lord (40:2). As we have already said, the *flesh* is so *Self-deceived* that it innately *exalts the Self* by *diminishing God*. The fleshly Self is only *justified* as it finds fault with the Lord God. So, for Job to envision himself a “prince” (31:37) demanding justice from God, he *also faults God* for being a *reluctant, unjust “adversary”* (35).

Likewise, for Israel to *claim* a “self-righteousness” obtained by its own Torah-observance, saying “I am innocent” and “I have not sinned” (Jer. 2:35) and “I am not unclean” (2:22) is to actually “contend” (2:29) with the Lord, who has said that Israel’s “righteous

deeds” are in actuality a “polluted garment” (Is. 64:6). For Israel to claim that it has achieved a Self-redemption directly *contradicts* the Lord God’s purpose that only Jesus Mashiach as the *Firstborn’s Right to Redeem* His people, to “atone for their iniquity” so that He might give them an “everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24) as their rightful *Yahweh Tzedekenu* (Jer. 23:6).

Remarkably, when the Lord God faces Job, calling him to *answer* Him for his past “fault-finding” and “contention,” Job instantly repents and is restored, admitting from the very depths of his soul, “I am of small account” (40:4). Importantly, we see that the *layer-upon-layer* of falsehood by which Job’s words justified his *fleshly heart, soul, and mind* were instantly *sanctified* by the light of God’s irresistible presence!

Likewise, in an instant of realization, *Israel* will see that its generations of *Self-proclaimed* “*righteous deeds*” are truly “polluted garments” (Is. 64:6) for its *sin infects its very flesh—the nation’s heart, soul, and mind* were so deceived by its Jewish religion that it chose *abominable*

*self-righteousness* desiccated of any true life to abandon the rich inheritance which was theirs at the side of Jesus Mashiach and His lavish redemption! All this will vanish in a moment's recognition that Israel itself is of "small account" as well.

### 3. Restored by repentance:

Therefore I have uttered what **I did not understand**, things **too wonderful** for me, which I did not know. <sup>4</sup> 'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.' <sup>5</sup> I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; <sup>6</sup> therefore I **despise myself**, and **repent** in dust and ashes." (Job 42:3-5)

When the Lord God finally restores Job after these repeated rounds of *testing*, he now understands of what *his fleshly self-reliance* has Robbed him. Convinced that *it is "like God"* in its capacity to understand, the flesh mistakenly sees the *earth* as the full extent of reality—the world of what can be seen with the eyes and understood with the fleshly mind as

the fullness of the promised *life with God*. But, the flesh, so deceived, unwittingly *is ensnared* in this world's inevitable *decay and death*, for the flesh has no answer to the finality of life's end.

In this regard, the people of Israel were also limited by the flesh to an *earth-bound understanding* and *experience* of God, which inevitably led to the impassable barrier of death. Satisfying themselves with an earth-bound hope, Israel celebrated *this earthly life* as its pinnacle—a Jewish life of *challah* and the fruit of the vine, of Shabbat and Shul.

But, Job finally understood that there was an *unseen* and *wonderful* spiritual life that awaited him, a life better than earthly possession or even *kinship*. For, this boundless life was found in the eternal reality of His Almighty Lord, in whose *holy life* he would share once again if only he *surrendered his own life*, “despising” rather than honoring the Self to “repent” in dust and ashes.

In this way, Jesus Mashiah comes to Israel to *redeem* it—taking its *earthly life* as the sons of this earth, of Abraham and David, with its

traditions and feasts, and giving Israel a life overflowing with the “living waters” of God’s spiritual life itself, a life too “wonderful” to know by mere flesh. This new life, under a “new covenant,” would be a life of *redemption* by which their “sins” would be remembered no more (Jer. 31:34) to know and be known by the Lord as His *reborn* sons and daughters!

## **12.2. Israel’s Tested Way: Revelation and Repentance.**

For the Lord has **ransomed** Jacob and has **redeemed him** from hands too strong for him. (Jer. 31:11)

The Lord’s story of redemption was meant to be a story of family rescue, with humanity’s long-promised Redeemer saving first His own family and then all the families of the earth.

But, at the appointed time of His *sacrifice* to “atone for iniquity” and bring an “everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24) in 33 CE, the people of Jesus Mashiach rejected him and chose a *Redeemer-less Path* of Self-justification through Torah-observance. This turn of

events was not a random result of circumstance.

First, as the Lord's *Firstborn* of all the families of the earth (Ex. 4:22), it was Israel's *rightful redemptive responsibility* to make a *way home* first for all the families of the earth (Gen. 9:27) before it thought of its own interests. As Paul says, this *act of Self-sacrifice* brought "reconciliation" to the world (Rom. 11:15), for Israel has suffered exile and spiritual *deprivation* apart from its destined Mashiach that the world might be brought home to God.

Second, Israel has been tested throughout all its generations so that the *full horror of the flesh* would be fully realized. For, through the generations, the *fleshly nature of* Israel's sons turned their hearts from God. Rather than waiting for *its promised Firstborn, Mashiach*, to be raised up for David, Israel pursued a Torah-observant *righteousness* that made Mashiach's redemption unnecessary.

So, allured by its *fleshly heart, soul, and mind*, Israel was convinced of its own Self-righteousness and so chose to reject God's path of redemption through David—a Kinsman-

Redeemer first “disciplined” for “iniquity” (2 Sam. 7:14) to gather a household for God and David to establish the “throne” of a Kingdom forever (16). Instead, Israel satisfied itself in its own “broken cistern,” desiccated of God’s “life” of “living water” (Jer. 2:13) but content with an entirely earthly Jewish life and learning. Sadly, no *flesh*—even Israel’s best efforts to *keep the Law’s mitzvot*—could achieve the *perfect righteousness of God*, so Israel’s best efforts would always be a *righteousness* as a “polluted garment” (Is. 64:6), a mortal religion which would inevitably end in death for all its adherents.

Blinded by its *fleshly Self-regard*, Israel did not realize that its *enslavement was not merely physical by spiritual*. If even Pharoah’s earthly enslavement could prevent Israel from *obeying the Lord God* (Ex. 6:9), how much more hopeless was its *efforts* at Self-redemption to free itself from *a spiritual debt* in an unseen realm over which the *flesh had no access*?

So, Israel was forced to live in a *state of* spiritual destitution, *unclean* in the “polluted garments” of its own Self-righteousness (Is.

64:6) and watching from a distance as the rest of the world discovered *forgiveness and grace* in the redemption of Jesus Christ!

But, after two days—that is, two thousand years—of *spiritual destitution* and unredemption, God promises to “raise up” Israel. Two thousand years after Israel’s *rejection of Jesus as its Mashiach is the year* 2033 CE, the year when the Lord promises to “revive” Israel and “raise it up” (Hos. 6:2) at His coming.

As the Lord appeared to Job for his complete restoration, so Israel’s testing will come to an end, when the Lord Mashiach reveals Himself to Israel.

At once, the web’s of fleshly Self-deception will melt in the *face of Jesus Mashiach*, as Israel now looks upon “him whom they have pierced” (Zech. 12:10).

### 1. Spirit of Humility to plead for mercy

<sup>10</sup> “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a **spirit of grace** and **pleas for mercy**” (Zech. 12:10a)

The first thing the Lord God will do on the “Day of the Lord” and His appearing is to “pour out” on House David and Jerusalem a “spirit of grace and pleas for mercy” (Zech. 12:10a).

Israel will realize two things as the Spirit *pierces* its fleshly blinders. First, *Israel* will realize that it is *threatened* by “hands too strong for him” (Jer. 31:11). Only the Lord Jesus Mashiah can destroy the *gathered nations* which seek to destroy Jerusalem. Only the Lord Jesus can *take Israel’s impending annihilation* and *redeem* it to secure for Israel *eternal safety and life*.

But, Israel will realize a deeper need. How can Israel ever hope to be restored to the Lord God in its uncleanness, its “righteous deeds” a mere “polluted garment?” (Is. 64:6). Israel needs the Lord to “ransom” its sin debt. Israel needs a Redeemer, and the Spirit poured out upon Israel will cause the people to look up and plead for “mercy.”

Israel does not simply need a *celebration of Jewish life, a rich culture of traditions which rival the rich traditions of the world*. No, Israel

pleads for “mercy.” It is helpless, and it needs the Lord’s redemption.

For, as Israel’s *remnant* has testified, only Jesus Mashiach can “**redeem** my **soul** from going down into the pit, and my life shall look upon the light” (Job 31:28). So, as *Israel* sees its soul *held over the pit of total destruction*, it pleads for a Redeemer.

## 2. Recognizing their Redeemer

so that, when they **look on me**, on him whom they have **pierced**, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an **only child**, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a **firstborn**. (Zech. 12:10b)

Unlike the Gentiles, who imagine *redemption* to be an anonymous, even judicial transaction, Israel has always known that redemption is a family rescue. For, only *rightful family members* possess *geullah*, the *right* to redeem their kin who have fallen irrecoverably into the pit. So, Israel has known that the *right* falls to its Firstborn Son to save the nation and to win back its lost inheritance. Once-for-all *crushing*

*the Serpent's Head* (Gen. 3:15) to inaugurate the New Covenant so that Israel would no longer *suffer God's wrath* for its *besetting sins* but would "know the Lord" in the freedom and forgiveness of his own grace (Jer. 31:34).

As the world's armies surround Jerusalem with their *irresistible weaponry*, Israel now understands its need for a *Redeemer*, the Redeemer *anointed as the Seed raised up from David*. For, only the Son of David, the best of his sons, would be *worthy of Israel's devoted service*. And, Israel knows it needs its Redeemer to be the Anointed One, the Son of God, whose "wrath is quickly kindled" and whose "anger" causes the rebel nations to "perish in the way" (Ps. 2:12) and who "rides out victoriously" in His "majesty" to make the "peoples fall under" His foot (Ps. 45:4-5). For, Israel is *forever matched* to serve "the Lord their God" whom God *raises up for them* (Jer. 30:9).

But, of which of David's sons will this coming Mashiach be? The nation will lift up its eyes one last time before *the end*, and Israel will gaze upon the face of Jesus.

At long last, the people will look upon the face of the One they had *pierced* in their *fleshly rebellion*.

Freed of *the Serpent's hardening deception*, the hearts of the people will respond in natural affection and kinship as they *long for their Firstborn Son*.

And, as they see in His eyes not wrath but the simple *mercy of God* to welcome them home, they will finally mourn. Genuine tears will mark the *end* of their destitution and their prayers the *beginning* of their forever life as the truly sanctified and Holy Servants of God. No longer merely children of the earthly father, but spiritual children of their Heavenly Father, reborn to now inherit the Heavens and the Earth.

### 3. Weeping and Mourning in Repentance

<sup>11</sup> On that day the **mourning** in Jerusalem will be as **great** as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. <sup>12</sup> The **land shall mourn**, each family<sup>[a]</sup> by itself: the **family** of the house of David by itself, and

their wives by themselves; the **family** of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; (Zech. 12:11-12).

Thus, all Israel will be “saved.” For, the “Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins” (Rom. 11:26-27). In the same way that the Lord’s prolonged testing *ends quickly* for Job, with no lingering blame or retribution. So, Israel’s wandering ends in the *final recognition* of Jesus as its Firstborn Mashiach. Now, Israel begins a new life in the Kingdom—proclaiming the name of Jesus Mashiach to a world being *devoured by the Serpent’s darkness and the rampage of its Antichrist*. So, Israel’s “mourning” moves it to *anoint* 144,000 sons to now serve Jesus Mashiach as His apostles to the nations, bringing the Gospel to all the world in the span of 3.5 years, a task which the Church left *uncompleted* after two thousand years of labor. This honor, the Lord God reserves for Israel! (Revelation 7).