

The background of the entire page is a detailed architectural blueprint on a blue grid. The blueprint features various lines, rectangles, and handwritten notes in yellow and white ink. Some visible notes include "500. De 101", "500. De 101", and "500. De 101".

THE PLAN

A JOURNEY THROUGH GOD'S PLAN
OF SALVATION FOR ALL PEOPLE

Part 3

“THE PLAN”

A JOURNEY THROUGH GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION FOR ALL PEOPLE

“The Plan” © Rev. Kurt R. Klaus 2014

“Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School” © Lutheran Hour Ministries

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“AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT”:

Starting this week we will take a little detour back to the time of the patriarchs like Abraham, and look at the account of Job; a man who is intimately acquainted with the problem of suffering. This book is different from the ones we have been previously reading because, even though it is a narrative, it is done in poetic form. We will hear questions and answers to important subjects and ideas, but we will hear them in a poetic form that is very reminiscent of the book of psalms. It may not be the narrative we have become used to over the last few months but it will be beneficial for us to learn more about God’s plan of salvation in a different way.

This week’s “*Stuff They Didn’t Teach Me In Sunday School*” suggested videos:

➡ **Episode 101: Join Our Poetry Circle**

These videos can be found on www.lhmmen.com under the “Shorts” heading or there is a link at www.messiah-lutheran.org under “The Plan” page.

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WEEK 36 – WHEN GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOD’S PEOPLE: This week we are introduced to a man named Job and the book that bears his name. It is a book that is very focused on the topic of suffering and pain and it’s causes. However, the question of “Why do I suffer?” isn’t directly answered and instead the book focuses on three other main questions.

The first theme that is addressed in the book is the nature of faith. Is faith a God given blessing that creates a loving relationship between us and God or is it a self-serving tool that we use for our own enrichment? Satan’s whole point about faith at the beginning of the book is that faith is nothing more than a selfish tool used by people to get God’s favor and benefit. His accusation cuts to the heart of our relationship with God because if faith is nothing more than our attempt to get stuff from God and treat Him like a genie, then it’s worthless, or even worse, it’s evil. If faith is by its nature evil, then our redemption is impossible. However, if faith is a God given gift that creates a really loving connection between us and God, then even the worst of us can be saved. With so much at stake God allows Job to be tempted to prove to Satan and the world what faith real is.

The second and third themes in Job of “Why do we suffer?” and “What does suffering say about the nature of God?” are interconnected. When the world sees suffering it assumes that either the suffering was deserved or that God is not good or just. However, the Bible gives another explanation. There is not a single person on the earth that is innocent and because of that there is suffering in the world. However, even with that understanding sometimes the reason for suffering is unexplainable. The Bible tells us that even in those times God is faithful and just, we may not see it, we may not understand it, but God will still work all things for our good and His glory in the end. What we see and understand is only a little portion of the big picture and even the smartest of us is in the dark compared to God.

The book of Job is best understood from the perspective of this side of the cross. As Jesus was being crucified, Mary, the disciples and Jesus’ followers saw nothing but injustice and unfairness, much like Job. However, God had a bigger plan and just as He used Job’s suffering to witness to the world and ultimately bless Job, He used the injustice and suffering of the cross to save all humanity. Neither Job or Jesus’ followers understood what God was doing at the time. They thought God was being unfair and evil, when in reality he was working toward a bigger purpose for the benefit of all.

- Job 1:1-5** - Who is Job and what kind of guy is he?
- Job 1:6-22** - Tragedy strikes Job from all corners
- Job 2:1-10** - Physical problems afflict Job
- Job 2:11-13** - Job’s three friends come to visit him.
- Job 3:1-26** - Job curses the day he was born.
- Job 4:1-21** - Eliphaz tells Job that he is being punished for some sin but that God will restore him.
- Job 5:1-27** - Eliphaz part 2

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WEEK 37 – I DIDN'T DO IT! YES, YOU DID! This week we begin a pattern that will repeat itself many times and in many ways over the coming month; Job will cling to his innocence and his friends will hold fast to the worldly idea that Job must be being punished for some specific sin. In their mind, suffering only comes if you have committed some sin worthy of the suffering. They feel that if Job would just confess the horrible thing he has done, God will give him back all of his stuff. But Job's faith isn't just a shallow grab for possessions like Satan claimed last week. His faith is genuine and clings to God, even in uncertainty and pain.

- Job 6:1-30** - Job chews out his friend for falsely accusing him of wrong instead of comforting him.
- Job 7:1-21** - Having denied he has done anything wrong Job now takes his case to God.
- Job 8:1-22** - Bildad yells at Job for saying he doesn't deserve what is happening to him.
- Job 9:1-35** - Job knows he is not innocent but he is confused by the fact that God seems morally indifferent. Job wants answers.
- Job 10:1-22** - Job asks, “Why?”
- Job 11:1-20** - Zophar tells Job to just admit his guilt.
- Job 12:1-25** - Job replies that his three friends' advice is obvious but it still doesn't explain why God is doing what He is doing. Sometimes God's ways are not obvious like they are saying.

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WEEK 38 – ROCK BOTTOM: Many of us have had a time when we felt like we have hit rock bottom. That time is this week for Job; he has lost everything, he is physically tormented and his wife and best friends are convinced that he has done something horrible. With all these troubles threatening to overwhelm him, Job hits his lowest point and pleads with God to hear his case.

In his pleading Job can be an example for us in our suffering because even at his lowest point Job is looking up to God. He is angry and upset but he never turns his back on his Lord. In Job 19:25-27, Sunday's reading, Job declares that God is his redeemer and one day he will see Him face to face. Even though Job doesn't understand why these things are happening to him He still has faith in God and looks to Him for his salvation.

- Job 13:1-28** - Job pleads to have his case heard by God. He wants to be vindicated or have his sin revealed so that he can die.
- Job 14:1-22** - In Job's frustrated state he sees all life as useless struggle.
- Job 15:1-35** - Eliphaz responds to Job. Previously he had been the most sympathetic of the three friends but he has now had enough of what he sees as Job's unwillingness to repent of some sin.
- Job 16:1-22** - Job rebukes his friends and longs for a heavenly intercessor.
- Job 17:1-16** - Job longs for a glimmer of hope.
- Job 18:1-21** - Bildad responds to Job by telling him that bad things are what happen to bad people, not good people.
- Job 19:1-29** - Job is angry at his friends for their words and upset that God would allow the things that have happened to come upon him but in the end of this chapter Job makes a wonderful confession of faith that God will be his redeemer.

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WEEK 39 – WHY DO EVIL PEOPLE GET GOOD THINGS AND I GET THIS?: Have you ever been frustrated when you saw someone who cheats on their spouse, has a terrible work ethic, treats others like dirt and still gets everything they want, while at the same time you follow the Lord and try to live your life in a God pleasing way only to struggle just to make ends meet? Well, Job did too and he brings up the point to his friends who are sure good deeds get good things and bad deeds get bad things from God. Unfortunately, Job’s friends’ answers are based on bad theology but after some contemplation Job finds the answer himself; God is just and justice will be done in the end.

- Job 20:1-29** - Zophar once again drives home the worldly idea that the good prosper and the bad are punished.
- Job 21:1-34** - Job hears his friends but he tells them that experience would show him otherwise. The good do not always prosper and the evil often prosper and live long lives. This realization makes Job even more confused about God.
- Job 22:1-20** - Eliphaz changes the direction of his argument and wrongly tells Job that God is indifferent to the good things man might do because good things are expected of men. However, God does pay attention and repays man’s wickedness.
- Job 22:21-30** - Eliphaz believes that if Job would just “submit to God” prosperity would come.
- Job 23:1-17** - Job ignores most of Eliphaz’s argument and returns to his desire to have God hear his case. However, he doesn’t miss the chance to reiterate that he has followed God’s ways and that he is innocent.
- Job 24:1-25** - Job continues and agrees with his friend in the point that the wicked will ultimately become nothing and be punished.
- Job 25:1-6** - Bildad reiterates what he has said before, Eliphaz and Zophar have been silenced.

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WEEK 40 – CLOSING ARGUMENTS: In many ways the book of Job is a court room drama with Job's tent as the court chamber. Both the prosecution and the defense have stated their cases and now Job, after responding to a few more points, lays out his closing arguments.

- Job 26:1-14** - Job responds to Bildad with biting sarcasm.
- Job 27:1-23** - Job continues to respond to Bildad by declaring his own innocence and the ultimate fate of the wicked.
- Job 28:1-28** - Job rejects his friends' use of worldly wisdom in trying to understand the problem and he replies that wisdom cannot be found in mines, nor can it be bought with the riches found in mines. It can only be found in God.
- Job 29:1-25** - Job begins his closing arguments. Chapter 29 is part one and focuses on his previous life of riches and happiness.
- Job 30:1-31** - Job continues his closing arguments and now bemoans the loss of his previous blessings and how people young and old now mock him.
- Job 31:1-22** - Job finishes his closing argument by attesting his innocence.
- Job 31:23-40** - Part two of the last section of Job's 3 part closing arguments. He continues to attest his innocence and signs his name to it. He is begging to be vindicated.

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WEEK 41 – ELIHU: Just when you thought everyone was done, a surprise witness takes the stand and a new voice emerges. Elihu is a younger and less experienced friend of Job’s. He has been in the room this whole time but he has remained silent out of respect for Job and for the elder friends. He has allowed them to speak without interruption but now that they are done he wants to add his own words. Words that, even though they are not always correct, are far wiser than the words of the other three friends.

- Job 32:1-22** – A fourth friend named Elihu now speaks up. Elihu was younger than the rest of the friends so he remained silent out of respect but he can no longer hold his tongue. He is angry at Job for justifying himself rather than God and he is angry at his friends for not being able to refute Job’s arguments.
- Job 33:1-33** – Elihu tells Job that God uses suffering to chastise those He loves. He does it to bring them back from their sin and then when they repent he forgives them.
- Job 34:1-15** – Elihu addresses the “Wise men” who are most likely Job’s three friends. He is concerned that Job is accusing God of wrong doing.
- Job 34:16-37** – Elihu now talks to Job. The “you” in the following verses is singular. He tells Job that God is just and is impartial. If you repent, even of sin you don’t know, God will forgive you.
- Job 35:1-16** – Elihu says that Job is being inconsistent when he says in one sentence that he is righteous so God should hear his plea and in another sentence he says that God doesn’t care if we are righteous or not.
- Job 36:1-33** – Elihu finishes his indictment of Job with a request for him to repent of the evil Elihu is sure Job has committed.
- Job 37:1-24** – Elihu finishes by restating that God is beyond our understanding and Job shouldn’t try and tell God that he is innocent.

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WEEK 42 – JOB FINALLY GETS HIS HEARING AND IT DOESN’T GO THE WAY HE PLANNED: God finally responds to Job’s wish for a hearing and He points out how little Job knows and understands. God begins by showing His sovereignty over everything, a sovereignty that is working for Job’s and our good, even when we don’t see it.

God’s response is important for us to remember when we can’t see what He is doing or understand His motives. Unlike Job, we have the benefit of living after Christ’s sacrifice for us, where we can see not only God’s sovereignty and power, but also His justice and His love. Justice and love that are always working for our good and our spiritual growth, even when it may *seem* otherwise.

- Job 38:1-30** – God now responds to Job.
- Job 38:31-41** – God continues to ask Job who made the world and still provides for it in an effort to show him how little he knows and understands.
- Job 39:1-30** – God tells Job that all of creation declares His glory and power.
- Job 40:1-14** – Job admits he has no answer and God tells Job that if he is as great as Him then Job can save himself.
- Job 40:15-24** – God describes the first of two animals that are so big no man can tame them. God is telling Job, “If you can’t control these animals that I created, how can you battle with me?” (By the way, many Christian scientists notice the great similarity between the Behemoth and dinosaurs.)
- Job 41:1-34** – God now describes the Leviathan, another large creature. He describes it for the same reason as the behemoth, to show Job that he doesn’t know as much as he thinks he does.
- Job 42:1-16** – Job repents and God blesses him.

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The book of Job teaches us that we do not always see or understand what God is doing. Just as one cannot know what the blueprint on the cover represents with such little information, we often cannot understand God’s purpose or plan with what little we see and know.

However, because of God’s plan of salvation that obtained its final victory in the cross, we can trust that we have a God who always keeps his promises and that one day we will finally see the finished picture.

(The red square is the front cover)

