

The life of Job in the Bible illustrates the frailty of man, the complexities of life and the undeniable love of God for his people. It teaches us to look past our short comings by placing our trust on God to provide and care for us.

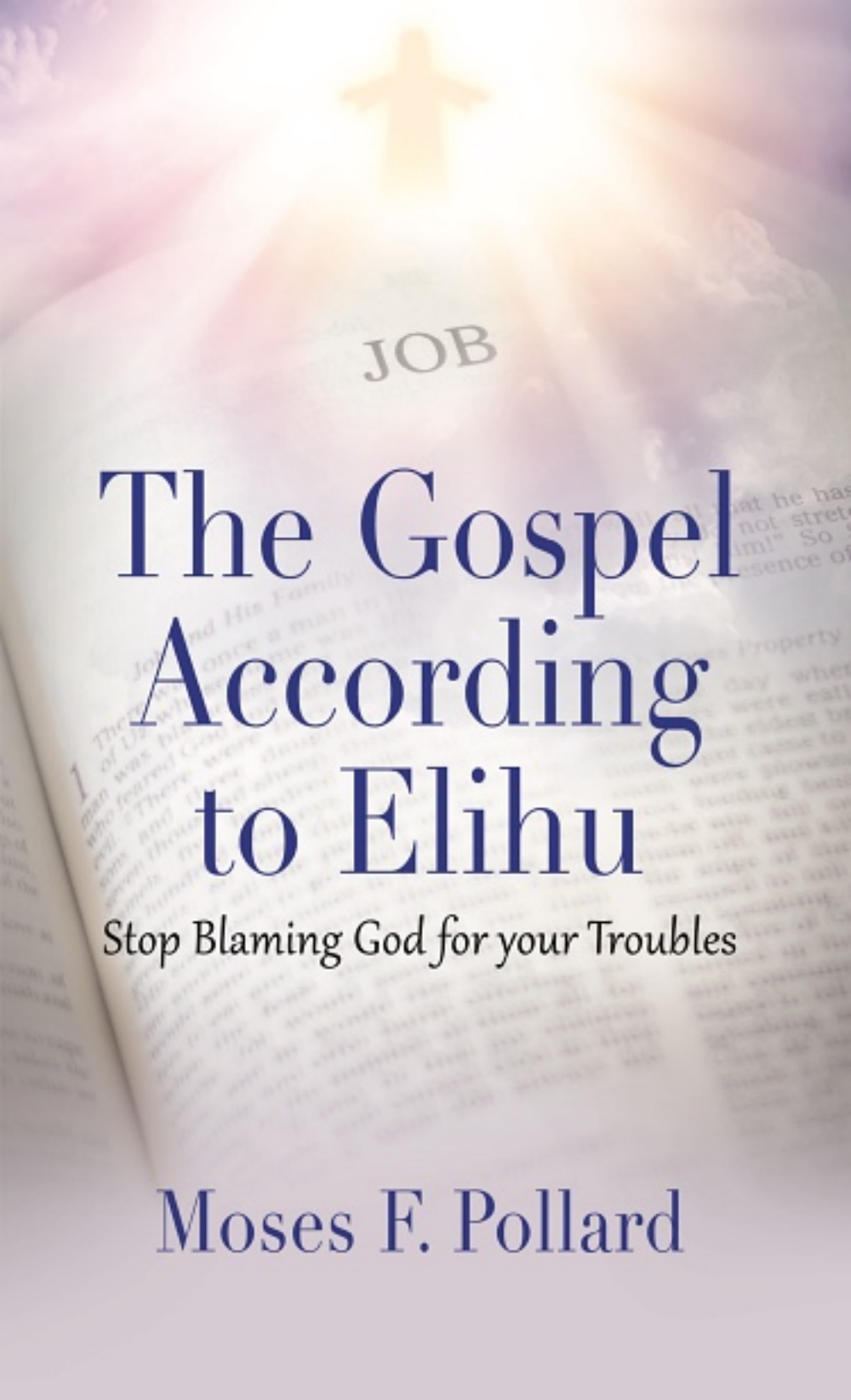
The Gospel According to Elihu

By Moses Pollard

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JOB

The Gospel According to Elihu

Stop Blaming God for your Troubles

Moses F. Pollard

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Chapter One

Stop Blaming God for Your Troubles

Have you ever been guilty of blaming God for troubles in your life, or problems in the lives of your loved ones? I have heard people who wrongfully make negative comments about God bringing about calamity in someone's life. One example is statements we hear in the media, such as, "This is an act of god." This points a finger at God as the perpetrator of an evil event. Yet, seldom do we go to the biblical word of God to determine just where these attacks originated. Do they originate from the bosom of a loving God who loved mankind so much that he offered up His own begotten son as a ransom for the sins of one man?

To blame God for destruction, mayhem, and disorder in the lives of the very souls that he sent His son to save is like the New Testament religious leader's assertion that Jesus himself was a devil who was casting out devils.

God has a plan for each one of us and, yet, he has given us the autonomy to choose the path by which we should travel. God also, according to

His written word, empowers man to speak to situations, storms, and mountains and, with the tiniest of faith, still the storm, and move the mountain. So, we must withdraw from blaming God for troubles in our lives because He has already given us power and authority over it.

“The Gospel According to Elihu” is a for real, in your face look at how we personally but unjustly complain about God’s role in our lives when we are the ones in control. Elihu’s message will serve as a reminder to all of us about the importance of trusting and relying of God in all matters, and in all ways, according to His word. The message is simple yet profound in that God loves humanity, and desires for all of mankind to be in fellowship with him. This book will serve as an announcement of just who God is and the fact that He does not need any of us to tell Him how to be God. Simply said, God cannot be explained in the words of men. He must be revealed in men’s hearts.

This book will use Job’s plight as an example to show the reader a more spiritual approach to life’s challenges. Without revealing the entire plot of this writing, we will show the reader that they, not God or their circumstances, control their outcome.

It is time for the body of Christ to come clean, and admit that we don't always like the way things happen to us, as well as our family, while we are in the process of serving God. We put on a good face in public but, deep down inside, some of us do question God's timing, absenteeism, and seemingly inability to intervene in a tragic situation. If we could be honest with ourselves, there are times when we have the attitude of Martha, the sister of Lazarus. She said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

"Martha's attitude was one of disappointment in the un-timeliness of Jesus because He showed up several days later than He was expected. If you really notice in this story, both sisters, Mary and Martha, had an attitude toward Jesus because the Bible says that Mary did not even come out of the house to greet Jesus. It appears to me, from my many years of ministry, that there are still some Mary and Martha attitudes toward God. When a loved one died, or we received a bad medical report, an eviction notice, experienced a divorce, or endured other life-changing events, were we expecting a specific intervention by God? And, if so, why did it not

happen? The first thought that comes to mind is “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” The question is: Was God to blame for your troubles? Was God at fault when death occurred when His word says that it is appointed once for man to die? Did not His word declare that not even death can separate us from His love? Is it not in His word that He went to prepare a place for us and, if He has prepared that place, that, one day, He will come to take us to the prepared place?

Let us remember that God’s perfect plan for our lives will often differ from the imperfect plan that we want to paint for ourselves. In our plan for our lives, we draw out a design that is based on our limited scope of knowledge. We generally are not able to comprehend the vast complexities of life changing circumstances that may lie just around the bend in the road. In David’s famous 23 Psalm, he writes that God leads him beside the still waters. If God is doing the leading, we will surely obtain the promised goal for our lives but, if we are doing the leading, we could end up in places where we should not be. This does not mean that being led by God is going to be an easy, unobstructed road to your Godly life’s goal. But,

the outcome will still result in you reaching that goal in God's perfect timing. David was led by God but, if you have read and paid attention to the life of David, during the course of his journey, there were many pitfalls, stumbles, and detours. But, he did accomplish the goal that God had set for his life.

One of David's setbacks in his pursuit of his promised kingdom occurred as he attempted to be a leader and fighter for God's cause. David's role as troop leader almost ended in tragedy. While David and his exiled troops were out fighting a battle, their families were taken captivity by the Amalekites, from the camp at Ziklag.

What a stressful situation it must have been to return from battle only to see smoke rising up from the direction of your camp in the distance! When David and his men arrived in the camp, there was nothing and no one there. In their grief and despair, David's soldiers considered stoning him to death because they thought they had lost all that they had in lives.

David went before the Lord, and inquired as to what he should do. Shall I pursue after the men who attacked our camp, asked David of the Lord.

Pursue, answered the Lord. Following God's direction, David and his men pursued the men, and retrieved all that they had lost. Not one woman or child had fallen to any harm.

In this story, David could have reacted like many of us would, by placing the blame for our problems on God. We may have considered our mission a failure because it did not go as smoothly as we wanted it to go. We could have quit, given up, retreated, or just simply stopped believing. Yet, David did what anyone who believes that God should do the leading in their lives should do, and that is to enquire of the Lord as to what direction we should take. Those of us who depend on a GPS (Global Positioning System) to navigate from place to place understand that, when we come to a detour, he GPS will re-direct our travel. The same goes for our lives when we are being led by God. The enemy may place a detour in your path but God will direct you around, through, over, and under the obstacle that's blocking your progress.

In David's Ziklag experience, we notice that he did not blame God but, rather, he encouraged himself in the Lord. What we can learn from this story is how David's wisdom to go before the Lord

with his dilemma is the exact same way that we, as believers, should conduct ourselves. David and his men all grieved until they had no more tears to shed. But, unlike his men, David went to the Lord for answers. David's men discussed the prospect of stoning him to death because their losses. But, killing David would not have returned their loved ones to them. David's men represent the inability of men to place their trust in God but, rather, to trust in their own understanding. If these men had followed through on their threats, and had killed David, they would have doomed their loved ones to slavery or death. The resolution to your dilemma lies in the hands of God but you must trust him to be your deliverer.

God is not the author of confusion in the lives of believers, He is our savior. God is the author and finisher of our faith and the just shall live by faith. As I have stated before, God has a plan for each one of us. The key is to allow Him to lead and guide us throughout His plan. Rejoice in the knowledge that God has all things in control. I used to read a comic strip in the local Sunday newspaper called "Family Circus." In this comic strip, there was a post of the mother sending a son out to the mailbox to retrieve the mail. The

son, who appears to be six to eight years old, goes out the front door of the house to the mailbox, which is not more than 30 feet from the front door. But, instead of retrieving the mail, and returning it right away to his mom, he takes an adventure throughout his neighborhood. In the comedic depiction by the artist, dots are used to illustrate the path that the son took as he went to visit some of his friends, to the park, past the local store, through the backyard, and other activities which had nothing to with retrieving the mail from the mailbox. Our lives sometimes are like “Family Circus” in the way we venture off course from where God wants us to be. And, when things did not work out for us, we blamed God.

David said, “He leads me in the path of righteousness for His name’s sake.” The key to that verse is that God was leading David. It does not depict that David was leading himself. We must always allow God to do the leading because we are the sheep of His pasture and sheep are to be led. Sheep depend on a shepherd to lead, and guide, and care for them. When we take David’s advice about being led, we have no reason to blame God for our troubles because God never leads us astray.

Chapter Four

Understanding Grace

Freedom for the saints of God begins when we learn to understand the value of the gift of grace.

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:24 (KJV)

Grace is often misunderstood as it relates to the body of Christ. Yet it is grace that is the most important blessing given to us from God. Grace is described in the Bible as God's unmerited favor. Grace is a gift of God. None of us can earn or obtain it by humanistic natural resources, nor by an inheritance. Man's fall from grace was a supernatural occurrence. Therefore, to regain grace requires a supernatural, spiritual intervention to make it available to us. From the writings of the New Testament we find that the Apostle Paul described grace to the believers in Rome as a redemptive blessing through Christ.

The New Testament writing of the book of James 4:6, But He gives more grace. Wherefore He

saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

This gives us the understanding that grace is not to be taken lightly, but it is a gift of God to those who will humbly recognize that we cannot of ourselves give ourselves this supernatural gift

James describes the recipient of this gift of grace as one who is willing to recognize the power and authority of God. In doing this one act of humbleness before God, we receive more grace.

8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not of yourself (it is) the gift of God. 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV)

When I was a young Christian boy growing up in Gloucester County, Virginia, the only thing that I knew about grace was that it was a prayer spoken before dinner.

The church that I was baptized in did not teach us about grace. Especially, not as it pertained to the true definition of the word according to scripture. It may have been due to the number of sermons that focused more on hell and damnation than on grace and God's love for mankind.

We were taught that, if you sin, you would go to hell. The Church did not explain the difference between un-confessed sin and living in sin. It was confusing how God could be so cruel, to send us to hell if we committed one sin, even if we were sinless in every other aspect of our lives. It was not explained to me that many of the characters of the Bible, who we trusted and believed represented God, were men who sometimes failed in their faith walk. In fact, the Bible openly exposes the fallacies of men and women of God. Yet, God is a forgiving God.

Let us look at Peter, one of Jesus' disciples. Peter said to Jesus that he would die for Him before he would allow anything to happen to Jesus. Jesus rebuked Peter, and said, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." Peter went on to do exactly what Jesus had said yet Jesus forgave him of his sins. In the 17th chapter of the book of Acts, the writer says that, in times past, God winked at the ignorance of man but now he calls all men to repent.

If that previous verse was not about God's grace, then I am at a loss as to a better definition.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful (Jesus) and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

John 1:9

Notice in this scripture that the author uses the plural (sins), meaning more than one, and the plural (all) unrighteousness.

The only one with the power and authority to grant such a request is Jesus, the Christ. The scripture reads, “He (Jesus) is faithful and just.”

Only Jesus is faithful, meaning that he totally accomplished all that God sent him to complete here on earth. Jesus was faithful to God to the very end of his mission. Jesus is just because God made him our advocate. I want to raise an expectation for the reader of this book to fully enjoy the gift of grace in our everyday lives. Understanding grace will open your eyes as a result of his faithfulness in carrying out his assigned mission. Jesus said, “I came to do the will of my Father who sent me.” Because Jesus accomplished His mission without committing a sin, He was justified to die for our sins.

Grace can be defined as God's unmerited favor but I want to explore deeper into the depths of this cave of misunderstood blessings.

To fully understand grace, we must first understand the spiritual nature of God. God is a supernatural being. In the book of Numbers, God is described as not being a human who has the capability to lie. Instead, if God promises, then those promises must come to pass.

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Numbers 23:19 (NIV)

Man has the capability of lying because of being born in sin but God is a spirit, and was not born in sin. Mankind is not able to always fulfill our promises. Thus, a statement unfulfilled becomes a lie. If God speaks it, it must come to pass. God said, "Let there be light," and it was.

Since grace is God's unmerited favor then, once God grants it to us, no one can take it away. Once God promises a thing to us in his word, nothing can stop us from receiving it. In the story of

Balaam, in the book of Numbers, chapter 23, we find a clear picture of the power of God's word. A king named Balak tried to bribe a prophet of God, Balaam, to curse Israel. But, the prophet said, "I cannot curse what God has blessed." There is no power that that can curse God's blessings. Balaam simply explained the law of God as it relates to a blessing or a curse.

¹⁶ And the Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

¹⁷ And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, what hath the Lord spoken?

¹⁸ And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: ¹⁹ God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? ²⁰ Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.

Numbers 23:16-20 (KJV)

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So, the grace of God surpasses all understanding, it transcends beyond barriers both man made and supernaturally devised. When His grace abide in our lives no one can we are assured that are truly blessed.

Chapter Five

In the Land of Uz

Some theologians have said that the land of Uz was likely located between the city of Damascus and the Euphrates River, and to the southeast area of Edom. This is based somewhat on the home place of one of Job's friends, Eliphaz. Eliphaz was from Teman, which was a well-known city in Edom. Records of historical scholars have concluded that the land of Uz was a real place during biblical days.

It is not important as to where the incident involving Job occurred. What is important is that Uz could be anywhere. The land of Uz is only relevant because Job resided there. What about where you live? Is it relevant because you live there?

In every part of this world, we experience the same types of encounters that Job had to deal with. Wars and rumors of wars existed even during the days of Jesus. Earthquakes happened then, and are happening now.

Let us look at the land of Uz from a Biblical perspective. How is it important to us? How does the land of Uz compare to where you are today?

It all begins in the Garden of Eden. The second chapter of Genesis begins its narrative by explaining that God made provision for man before man was ever placed there.

Genesis 2:8 And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

One of the wonders of God is that He always knows what we have needed even before we know that we needed it. The Endemic man had no point of reference to judge whether being in the garden was a good thing. All this man knew was that he was in a place of beauty.

Later, in the first two chapters of Genesis, two major events occur. God makes the first covenant with man, known as the Edenic Covenant. In Genesis 1:28, the covenant declares that Adam would replenish the earth with children, use nature for his physical needs (food and shelter), have dominion over the animals, to eat fruits and vegetables, to labor for his sustenance, and to

obey God's rule of not eating from two trees (forbidden fruit) in the Garden. These six covenant rules were to be obeyed by Adam.

The second event was that the caring infinite God saw that Adam was the only creation without a mate. Therefore, God made a woman (Eve) for him, a helpmate.

Now man had all the resources available to him that he would ever need to sustain his life. Adam had a beautiful place for him to dwell in all the days of his life. Man was all set for a paradise of happiness.

Job lived in a land called Uz and there was a sense of paradise for him and his family. God had caused Job to prosper in the land of Uz. Job's wellbeing from a financial perspective was seen by the locals as a true blessing.

In Job's town, he was considered to be a man of impeccable character. He was blameless in all respects, and living an upright life before the Lord. Job was reverent of God's supreme power. He put away any thoughts or acts of evil.

In the land of Uz, Job had a wife, seven sons, and three daughters. The sons and daughters lived in

their own dwellings in the area of Uz. Job was very concerned about the salvation of his sons and daughters. Therefore, he regularly made sacrifices of animals before God for them.

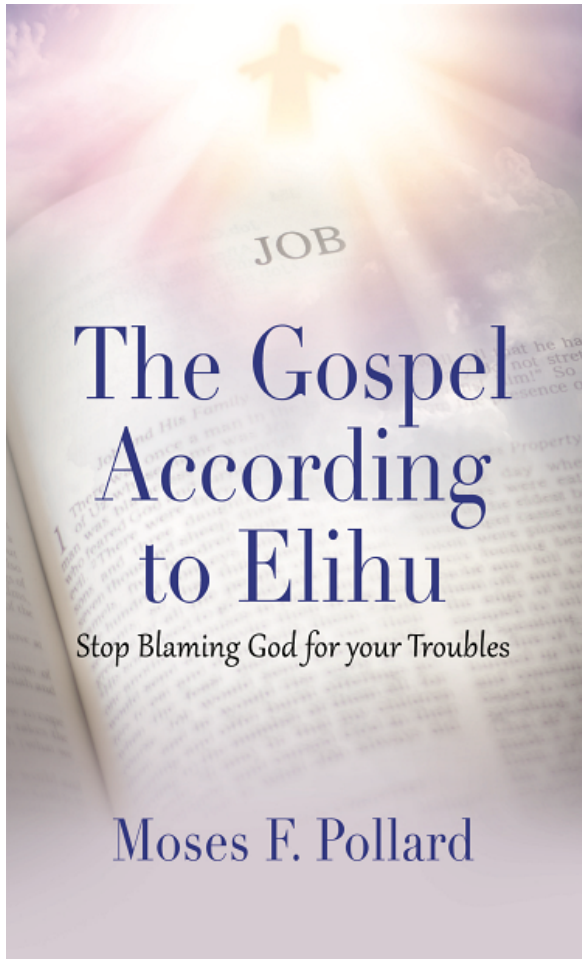
Job owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very great household. Job was the richest man in the land of Uz.

For all practical purposes, the land of Uz was a blessed place for Job and his family. The life of Job let us know that we can live in a blessed place, and still endure hardships. We may also be living in God's grace, and still endure hardships.

The area where we live, in and of itself, does not eliminate hardships or strife unless, like Job, there is a hedge of God's protection around you. A rich person, who is able to amass a great fortune of wealth, may still die of an incurable disease even if he lives in what many consider a blessed place.

The land of Uz represents just how wealthy the saints of God can truly be and that there is nothing spiritually wrong with being wealthy. Job never allowed his possessions to be gods in his

life because he openly expressed his commitment to his God. We must become accustomed to living in the spirit, and not in the materialistic wealth of this world. We certainly can be blessed to possess many things in this world but the land of Uz should not be our eternal dwelling place. The Bible says that, when we depart this place, there is a building not made with hands, eternal to the heavens. The land of Uz cannot be compared to what awaits us in Heaven. The number of livestock or houses, and the amount of wealth over in the land of Uz is just a glimmer of the goodness that God has prepared for those who love Him. Imagine living forever in a place where the streets are paved with gold. Where there is never any darkness and where the glory of God lights the heavens. Job truly understood that the land of Uz was not his final dwelling place.



The life of Job in the Bible illustrates the frailty of man, the complexities of life and the undeniable love of God for his people. It teaches us to look past our short comings by placing our trust on God to provide and care for us.

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