

In our last podcast, in addition to reviewing Job's spiritual resume, we began discussing the code behind the number of animals which Job possessed. The numbers of the animals and the specific kinds of animals, expressed in **Code**, reveals the entire narrative of Job. The Spirit loves to embed secret messages in text, for as He says in **Proverbs 25:2**, "*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.*"

Let's pick back up with understanding this **Code**.

Animals and Servants

"His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants..."

In the introductory paragraph, the Spirit could have simply told us that Job was beyond wealthy and managed a sizeable farming and ranching operation. But instead, He gave us some specifics and some contrasts to get our attention, to tease us to look deeper. He quickly glosses over the servants, gives us no numbers, but informs us that Job (and behind the scenes **Yahweh**) has a great number of servants, but then draws our attention to the animals, a very specific type of servant.

Animals have an interesting role throughout the scriptures. They are often used as part of the **Code** to depict spiritual entities, angelic entities, both good and bad ones. The Spirit even uses a lamb to depict the Son of God who would be sacrificed for all of mankind.

In terms of the bad angelic entities, the most obvious example is the way the Satan is referred to as a dragon, a serpent, a twisted or coiling serpent. But other animals are used to connect us to the spiritual realms, including goats, rams, frogs, birds, wolves, lions, beasts.¹

Though drawing our attention to the animals, beyond the numbers, the Spirit is cluing us into the fact that Job's travail will be implemented at the hands of unseen spiritual forces. As we learned in the book of **Revelation**, everything in our lives is initiated in the heavenly realms and played out in our physical realms through the assistance or the agency of the angelic. In this instance, the purpose of the spiritual forces will be focused on bringing chaos and destruction.

It is a good thing that the Spirit tells us that these spiritual forces, even the wicked and evil ones, are mere servants, ministers. As it says in the book of **Hebrews**, they are now caused to be sent out by God to render service (or minister) to all those who are now about to now be heirs of salvation.²

Despite the destruction they bring, they are a blessing for they are the tools that are necessary for Job to learn such a critical lesson. Their intentions may be malevolent, but God's intentions, in the utilization of these spirits, are good. He knows that they will be successful, which He knows will give Job the best opportunity to relent of his delusion and prepare him to encounter God where he will learn that true righteousness comes only from God, and it is not about what we do for God.

¹ **Genesis 3:1, Revelation 12:3-4, 9, 14-15; 20:2; Isaiah 27:1; See also Genesis 22:13-14; Daniel 7:3-8, 8:3-22; Zechariah 5:5-11; Matthew 7:15, 13:4, 19; Revelation 5:5-6, 16:13-14, 18:2**

² See **Hebrews 1:7, 14**

Animals Specific

“His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys ...” Let’s examine this according to the **Code**, according to how these images are used throughout the Bible and their specific application to the Job narrative.

Sheep symbolize the people who follow **Yahweh**, indicating their need for a good shepherd. The picture of sheep also provides us an image of innocent sacrifice of an unblemished lamb.³ With seven being **Code** indicating completeness, God is communicating that as Job’s shepherd, He will accomplish a complete work through Job’s sacrifice.

Camels symbolize wealth and abundance. For instance, in **Genesis 24**, Abraham’s servant brings 10-camels laden with gifts when he went to claim a wife for his master’s son, which was a symbol of provision and blessing in Isaac’s marriage narrative.⁴ In Job’s day, Camels were the animal of choice of commercial businesses to transport goods amongst various countries, they were the tool which made intercontinental trade possible.

The use of the number three indicates that Job’s wealth and abundance was a perfect provision from **Yahweh**, as He is the one who gives the us the power to make wealth.⁵ **Yahweh Jireh**, is a name of God that speaks of **Yahweh** being the source of all our provision.⁶

Oxen symbolize labor and servitude, submission and faithful service.⁷ With the use of the number five, the Spirit is communicating that Job’s labor, servitude, submission and faithful service of God needs to be an expression of the grace of God that has been extended to him, and it is not be rooted in the work of his hands. However, since the number 5 is doubled in this expression as the Spirit is specific in identifying 500 **yoke** of oxen not 500 oxen, for a yoke binds two oxen together, the message is Job’s strength and service is to be derived from grace and then more grace. In fact, the only way Job will make it through this lesson is by the continual outpouring of the grace of God into his life.

This brings up an issue that is generally ignored within the religion of Christianity, yet it serves as a huge **WARNING**. In **John 1:16**, the Spirit, in speaking about Jesus, said, “*for from His fullness we all received, and grace in place of grace.*” Most translations say, “grace upon grace,” but the key Greek word translated as “upon” (“*anti*”) means “instead of,” “in exchange for,” “replacing,” or “one after another.” With the use of this word, the Spirit is describing successive replacement and not accumulation.

Grace comes into our lives and then it is replaced by a greater grace, and then another outpouring of grace, like the waves of the sea, it keeps coming wave after wave. God does not give us a single outpouring of grace when we are born-again, rather He gives grace that is intended to be replaced by another grace in an ongoing cycle of renewal and **not** accumulation. This truth has massive implications for the life of a believer.

³ See **Psalm 23:1; Isaiah 53:6-7; John 10:11; Revelation 5:6**

⁴ See also **Genesis 30:43; Judges 8:26; 1 Kings 10:2; Isaiah 60:6**

⁵ **Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Samuel 2:7, literal translation “Yahweh makes poor and makes rich; He brings low—He also exalts.” See also Ecclesiastes 5:19**

⁶ **Genesis 22:14; Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:8**

⁷ See **Proverbs 14:14; See also Deuteronomy 25:4 and 1 Corinthians 9:9**

John 1:16 aligns with **James 4:6** which speaks of a greater grace, “*But He **now** gives a greater grace. Therefore, it **now** says, “God **now** chooses to be opposed to the proud but **now** gives grace to the humble.”* As we humble ourselves, as we dig down in our soul and choose to live like a little child, as instructed in **Matthew 18:3**, God gives us grace, and renews that grace for we continually need His grace to face situation after situation in our lives. As it says in **Lamentation 3:22-23**, His lovingkindness never ceases for His compassions never fail, new every morning. Again, this speaks of renewal and not accumulation.

Think of this concept of renewal versus accumulation in the context of the parable of the ten virgins in **Matthew 25**, which is a story that also provides believers a huge **WARNING**.

If you are not familiar with the story, here is a very quick synopsis. There are 5 wise virgins and 5 foolish virgins who are waiting and waiting for the bridegroom to arrive so they can join with him in His marriage feast. When they originally began to wait, all the virgins had oil in their lamps so that they could last, if necessary, through the long night of waiting.

The Lamps are symbolic of the New Creation which is an indication that these ten virgins were “born-again” or converted by God and were infused with the Spirit of God. The oil in the lamps is symbolic of the Spirit of God and His outpouring of grace into our lives, a grace that bears the light of Jesus. The flame from the lamp is symbolic of the light of Jesus which we bear in the darkness of night, which is symbolic of this current age of darkness. And the grooms return for his wedding feast is symbolic of the events associated with the rapture of the church, “*Blessed are those who have been caused to being invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb*” ... “*These **now** are true words of God.*”⁸

The 5 wise virgins brought extra supplies of oil so that they could renew their source of the flame and keep the light glowing in the night. The 5 foolish virgins did not, and when they ran out of oil they had to go to the marketplace in an attempt to purchase more. While they were gone, the bridegroom came and everyone who was ready, everyone who had oil, was permitted to enter the marriage feast. When the 5 foolish virgins returned, the door was shut and locked. They banged on the door and asked to be let in and the bridegroom said, “*Truly I **now** say to you I have not known you.*” Needless to say, He did not open the door for them.

The verb “*known*” is in the perfect tense indicating an act that was completed in the past once and for all, not needing to be repeated. In other words, when they allowed their lamps (their spiritual life) to be drained of oil (the provision of the Spirit of grace), their relationship was cut off, for it is the Spirit that binds us in grace to **Yahweh**. If we do not, or no longer possess the Spirit, then we are no longer recipients of grace, and we have no relationship with the bridegroom and therefore no invitation to the marriage supper of the Lamb. It is a terrible thing to live as if we are not desperate for the Spirit of God and His outpouring of grace into our lives in all things all the time.⁹

“*But if anyone does not **now** have the Spirit of Christ, he does not **now** belong to Him.*”¹⁰ “*For all who are now caused to be led by the Spirit of God, these now are sons of God.*”¹¹

The number 5 expressed with the imagery of a **yoke** of oxen provides us a serious **WARNING**. Our labor and servitude, submission and faithful service must result from God’s grace being renewed continually in

⁸ **Revelation 19:9**

⁹ **Zechariah 12:10; Hebrews 10:29**

¹⁰ **Romans 8:9**

¹¹ Romans 8:14

our lives, for if we are those who let the lamp run dry, we will not enter the marriage supper of the Lamb. That is why Jesus said in **Matthew 18:3** that we must be converted by God **AND** choose to live like a little child, or we may not enter the kingdom of heaven. Our humble dependence upon **Yahweh** for all things all the time is how the oil is renewed in our lives, day after day after day after day. Great is His faithfulness! He is to be the strength of our lives, the source of all our productivity.

*“For from His fullness we all received, and grace in place of grace” (John 1:16). “But He **now** gives a greater grace. Therefore, it **now** says, “God **now** chooses to be opposed to the proud but **now** gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).*

All that deep meaning and serious **WARNING** is communicated through the imagery of a **yoke** of oxen. The Spirit is amazing. Every word, every number, every animal, every image, all throughout the scriptures, is intentional.

Donkeys are typically known to symbolize peace. Kings and Judges rode donkeys during peaceful times, and not horses, as horses were used primarily for battle.¹² However, male donkeys were used primarily for this type of service. Whereas female donkeys were most often used in trade and commerce, to transport goods, and helping with domestic work, as they were less aggressive and easier to manage.

Perhaps this indicates that Job did not obtain his wealth through being a warlord or some oppressive ruler, as his friends will accuse him, but in consistent service and gentleness. This is a distinction that is important to the overall narrative. God had grace on Job, captured in the number five (5), and Job had grace on others. And even though Job will have to go through hell, it too will be an expression of God’s grace extended to Job.

And though Job had great wealth, he did not lord it over others. Rather, he was a faithful man who lived life with humility, submission, and faithful servitude not just to those in his household, but we will find out that he lived this way with his whole community. He was a trusted resource, a provider, for those in need. This is the reason he was referred to as *“the greatest of all the men of the east.”*

Though the use of these specific animals, sheep, camels, oxen, and female donkeys, we obtain an understanding of the life which Job lived. He was a follower of **Yahweh** who would soon come to understand sacrifice at many levels, as everything God extended to Him, in His grace, God will also sacrifice for Job, so that Job’s life and strength, productivity, and service can become a complete expression or extension of God’s grace renewed day after day after day.

The Typology of Sacrifice

Sacrifice is a big theme in this book. We are given the typology in this next paragraph when we are told that Job regularly sacrificed on behalf of his children. In this regard, Job himself, as a person, presents us with many parallels to Jesus and he provides us an example of how Jesus functions with those in His household.

Job 1:4-5

His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When the days of feasting had completed their

¹² See **Genesis 49:11; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:5**

cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus, Job did continually.

It is estimated that Job is the oldest book of the Bible, and we are never given any reference to the timing of all these events. By way of example, as we go through the book, there is nothing particular in the narrative that bears the mark of life post Moses or post the Law. Thus, these festivals or feasts celebrated by Job's children are likely not those feasts prescribed in *Leviticus 23*. Throughout the entire book, there is no mention of kings or priests, the torah, the law, the tabernacle, or Israel. In short, this is not a Jewish story.

It is believed that Job may have been a contemporary of Abraham in that he likely lived in the patriarchal era of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob where most people, but not all, were polytheistic. The patriarchal nature of the culture Job lived in, and the fact that this is not a Jewish story, are important details that we must keep in mind.

Details, details, details, so many details. These introductory verses, with all the detail about Job and his family are interesting, but it is easy to blow right by them and move on to the actual narrative. After all, this is just a general background and we get it, Job is a godly man, amazing even.

But hold on, there is so much more being communicated, including overtones, or typology, to Jesus as our High Priest, the one who sacrifices the innocent, as well as Himself, for those He loves, in case we might have sinned and cursed God in our hearts. The point is that the details are always important. The Spirit intentionally placed every single one of these details for our instruction.

The Feasts

Each son would "*send and invite*" their three sisters to eat and drink with them at these scheduled feasts, "*in the house of each one on his day.*" These feasts were planned, calendared even, and were not spontaneous celebrations, like a casual Friday night fish fry. Something more is going on.

The use of "*send*" implies that a servant would be sent to invite the sisters. It was a formal invitation. But why was this necessary if these feasts were already scheduled, "*each one on his day*"? Surely, the sisters knew about the feasts. And why were the other sons who were not hosting that particular feast not sent a servant to formally invite them along with the sisters? Just the sisters were sent these invitations. That is a very odd detail.

In ancient Semitic cultures, feasting was often tied to seasonal, fertility, or solar rites and these gatherings were often pagan in nature, in that they were dedicated to local gods, or secular in that they would be dedicated to nature, to the earth and the cosmos. Whether pagan or secular or even just a fun celebration, it appears that these feasts were not purposed on honoring **Yahweh**, which is why Job was worried that his sons might have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

In addition, it is extremely notable that Job was not invited to these feasts. No one was sent to invite or to gather dad. It seems that dad was intentionally excluded from these feasts.

Inversion of Authority: Seeds of Apostasy

In patriarchal cultures of the day, a man like Job would be considered the lord of the mansion, the lord of his household. Therefore, if there were to be any family feasts, it would be the father who would convene the feasts, not the sons.

In this instance, we are told that the sons would “send” and “invite,” which indicates that they are acting independently and assuming some authority over the household, an authority that is not yet theirs to exercise. The act of sending for their sisters reinforces this idea that they are making a statement on who controls and who participates, and just as important, who doesn’t.

This inversion of authority sets up a concept or theme that flows throughout the book:

***As humans we cannot wield autonomy, exercise our God given personal sovereignty,
without falling into self-deception or spiritual rebellion, i.e., apostasy!***

The Priest & Sacrifice

“Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all.” The typology of “sacrifice,” and “priesthood” is represented in Job’s actions.

Job is concerned for the spiritual division developing within his household, a division that is bordering on apostasy. But instead of demanding obedience and mandating right behavior, Job chooses to intervene via sacrifice. He makes his appeal to God and not directly to his sons. In so doing, Job functions as a mediator, as the priest of his family and his household. His concern is not so much to correct their actions by telling them they can no longer have these celebrations, but his concern is for the potential compromise, apostasy, that might be stirring deep within -- “*Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.*”

In the Morning

Job would “rise up early in the morning.” It seems that this practice of morning sacrifice is something that the Spirit of God puts into the hearts of His priests. We are told that Abraham rose early to offer Isaac, that Moses rose early to meet God with the stone tables, and that Jesus rose early to pray.¹³ It is as the Psalmist said:

Psalm 5:3

In the morning, O **Yahweh**, You will hear my voice; in the morning I will be ordering {or arranging} to You and watch.

¹³ **Genesis 22:3; Exodus 34:4, Mark 1:35**

Understanding his role as a priest of his family, Job does not wait for signs of wrongdoing or sin, he preemptively intercedes for his children. He is concerned about what is happening in their hearts, about the division that is growing, and so he makes atonement for them, to consecrate and to cleanse them, or to set them apart as “clean” before **Yahweh**. So, he rises early in the morning and orders or arranges each sacrifice on the altar, and like the Psalmist he waits and watches. This is the role of a priest.

This picture of a priest offering up priestly sacrifices on behalf of others highlights another interesting and prophetic concept. We already highlighted a truth that will run throughout the narrative, *“as humans we cannot wield autonomy, exercise our God given personal sovereignty, without falling into self-deception or spiritual rebellion, i.e., apostasy!”* This truth begs the question: what then are we to do?

Shall the father, the lord of the household, come to his children with dictatorial authority and control to reel in their behavior and keep them from being “bad”? Is he to take away their liberty, and shame them for their choices? Is he to demand their repentance, demand that a change of behavior so they do not stain the reputation of the household? Is he to beat or punish them into submission. Or is something more needed, something that does not try to control the rebellion but still addresses the rebellion?

With the imagery of the sheep (those innocent lambs who are set apart for sacrifice) and Job’s priestly example, we can discern that sacrifice is the solution!

The Spirit of God is addressing not just the need for a priest who intercedes for others, via sacrifice, but He is prophetically planting seeds of the ultimate sacrifice that will be provided to intercede for all of humanity, the sacrifice of the lamb of God.

Sacrifice is the Solution!

This theme of sacrifice comes all the way back around at the end of the narrative when God requires a sacrifice from Job’s so-called “friends” who tormented Job with all manner of religious pretense throughout his travail. Coinciding with the sacrifice, Job was required to mediate with God on behalf of these friends, otherwise, God was going to kill them for their impious and arrogant misrepresentation of who He is.

Job 42:7-8

It came about after **Yahweh** had spoken these words to Job, that **Yahweh** said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you [according to your] folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."

These friends, with all their grandiose religious knowledge, were completely wrong about **Yahweh**. But once again, sacrifice is the solution and a mediator, a priest, if you may, is necessary to avert the wrath of God.

The Number of Them All

We learned in the book of **Revelation** that everything God does is personal, all the time. And not just in the “God loves the whole wide-world” sort of way, but it is personal to each-and-every individual. We learned that if we ask God to now come, He will surely come and do what is necessary in our lives to give us a future and a hope. In like manner, in this example of a priest, Job demonstrates that it is always personal.

*“When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings **according to the number of them all**; for Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus, Job did continually.”*

This phrase “*according to the number of them all*” indicates that Job was not making a general act of atonement, but it was a personalized, individual act of intercession for all seven of his sons. He made a sacrifice for each of them.

Prophetically, this is a mind-blowing concept. Yes, Jesus was sacrificed for the sins of the world, but He was specifically sacrificed for you, for me, and for each individual who would accept His sacrifice. It is very personal. And we know this to be true because the Spirit tells us that He chose us before we chose Him, He loved us first before we loved Him, and that He chose us for to be recipients of this sacrifice before the foundation of the world.¹⁴ With God it is always personal!

Let’s stop here and we will continue in our next podcast with this issue of sacrifice.

¹⁴ **John 15:16, 19; Ephesians 1:4**