

# Worksheets

# The Beginning of Wisdom

Your personal character counts!

**Book 6 – Personal Study Guide**

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# *The Hypocrites*

## the Pharisees

### Discussion Questions

A1. If the term "Pharisee" comes up in a conversation, what do you instantly think of? What is your immediate thought about the meaning and implication?

A2. Look up in whatever source you have and list the major things that the Pharisees believed.

A3. Does what you learned in A2 above change for the better or worse your answer in A1? Explain.

A4. Carefully read Mt 23:2-3a. Jesus says to do what the Pharisees told them and to observe what the Pharisees were teaching. How does that line up with how you answered A1, A2, and A3 above?

A5. Describe what you would say were good and bad Pharisees.

Good Pharisees: \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Bad Pharisees: \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

A6. Explain Mt 23:4a, "*They tie up heavy loads that are hard to carry and put them on people's shoulders.*"

A7. What is the definition of hypocrite or hypocrisy?

A8. Do you know a group, organization, or well-known person that you would call a hypocrite? How has his/her hypocrisy impacted those around him (friends, co-workers, church, general public)?

A9. Why do you think Jesus was so negative towards the Pharisees and scribes?

A10. Let's assume that the people all followed the rules and regulations of the Pharisees, regardless of whether the Pharisees followed their own rules. Would Jesus have been upset? With whom? Why? Why not?

A11. In Mt 23:24 what does Jesus mean when he says, "*You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel*"?

Q. What are some of the little things that will cause great division in the local church?

A12. Based on this passage and your understanding, what was Jesus criticizing: the theology of the Pharisees or the Pharisees themselves?

A13. In Gal 2:11-14 Paul accused Peter of hypocrisy. What did Peter do and who was impacted?

Gal 2:11-14 *But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. 13 And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"* ESV

A14. Have you seen this kind of behavior in the modern church today? If yes, explain. Where could it easily occur?

## B. RULES OF MEN

### Matthew 15:2-3, 6b-9

*"Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." 3 He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? . . . So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. 7 You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: 8 "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 9 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."* ESV

B1. The Pharisees are being accused of revoking or nullifying God's word, which is a serious charge. What does Jesus mean here and how does that relate to the charge of hypocrisy?

B2. What rules does the church follow today that might be considered rules of men rather than rules of God? Are we teaching and requiring practices that are only the commands of men? What might those be? Possible subjects are listed below; you may think of others. What are the rules men have developed for these areas?

a. Works.

- b. Sin and salvation.
- c. Baptism.
- d. Freedom.
- e. Sunday/Sabbath.
- f. Worship.
- g. Teaching authority.
- h. Communion.
- i. Tithing.
- j. Tattoos.
- k. King James version.
- l. Doctrine.

B3. In your opinion, do any of these "rules of men" nullify the doctrines or teachings of God?

B4. If we have nullified the commands of God, (1) who will be held accountable, and (2) what will be the result? If you are a disciple who has been led away from the truth by a trusted church leader, are you less accountable?

Q. What if the issue is one of salvation?

B5. How would you compare the church today with the church when Jesus was exhorting the Pharisees?

C. APPLICATION

C1. Are you a Pharisee? Do you have any Pharisaical tendencies?

C2. Do the rules of the church take priority for you over a relationship with Jesus?

C3. What spiritual rules or "doctrines" do you hold dear? Are these doctrines of God or rules of men?

C4. Do you know any whitewashed tombs (beautiful and clean on the outside, dead on the inside)?

# ***Benaiah***

killed a lion in a pit

## **Discussion Questions:**

### **A. The LION ENCOUNTER**

A1. What do we know about this lion incident?

- 1) The day was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) He went after or followed the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) The lion was faster and stronger than \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) The lion went into a \_\_\_\_\_ and Benaiah followed him and \_\_\_\_\_ him.

A2. List what we don't know.

A3. What is significant about it being a snowy day?

A4. What thought would go through your mind if you were in a field and came face-to-face with a lion?



Q. Would you ever consider going into a pit after a lion? Why? Why not?

A5. What kind of courage or mental strength must exist for a man to engage a lion in a pit?

A6. Which of the following words best fit this act by Benaiah?

Faith - Courage - Crazy - Bravery - Daring - Fearless - Gutsy - Moxie - Insane - Bizarre?

A7. Do you think Benaiah had a Plan B when he jumped in the pit?

A8. Do we know if this was an accidental encounter or if Benaiah was tracking the lion?

A9. What was Benaiah's purpose in going into a pit containing a lion? What logical reasons can you think of for Benaiah to go down into the pit to kill a lion?

A10. Why would he go down into the pit? Wouldn't the wiser course of action have been to throw spears or shoot arrows?

A11. How would you think this act of courage may have changed Benaiah's life?

A12. Do you think this event wore on Benaiah? Might he have wondered if he could ever reproduce that level of courage again?

A13. This could have been a "defining moment" in Benaiah's life. This may have changed the path of his life. What are the defining moments in your life? What are the decisions you made or life events that changed the road on which you were traveling? [exclude marriage and the birth of children]

#### B. THE EGYPTIAN:

B1. List what we know about this incident.

- The Egyptian was \_\_\_\_\_ tall.
- The Egyptian had a spear like a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Benaiah had a \_\_\_\_\_ in his hand.
- Benaiah \_\_\_\_\_ the spear from the Egyptian.
- Benaiah killed him with his own \_\_\_\_\_.

B2. List what we do not know about this incident.

B3. This incident appears immediately following the verse about killing the lion and then 11:24 says, "*These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and won a name beside the three mighty men.*" (ESV) What do you think it means that Benaiah had a reputation or "won a name" among the three mighty men?

### C. RESULTS

C1. This passage tells us that Benaiah killed two Moabites, a lion, and a big Egyptian, but it tells us almost nothing about the circumstances. Why?

C2. Do you think Benaiah ever became overly confident?

C3. The text says that, "*He was the most honored of the Thirty, but he did not become one of the Three.*" This seems strange. What might have caused Benaiah not to be part of the inner circle of Three, given he was the most honored of the Thirty?

Q. Do you think it mattered to Benaiah?

C4. Solomon later appointed Benaiah as Commander of the Israelite Army. Why?

C5. What job did Benaiah ultimately hold under King David (1 Chronicles 11:25)?

Q. Based on 2 Sam 23:20-23 why might David have chosen Benaiah for this position?

C6. What job did Benaiah hold under King Solomon (1 Kings 2:35)?

C7. Do you think Benaiah wanted these jobs?

#### D. APPLICATION

D1. Would you ever consider going into a pit after a lion, or doing anything in your life that required extraordinary courage? Explain.

D2. Is there some act of courage or bravery you need to perform?

D3. Are you one courageous decision away from changing your life? Think about it!

D4. When life gets really scary, what do you do? What is your source of comfort?

D5. Have you ever been in a group where you excelled and others recognized your special skills or abilities? How were you treated? Were you chosen to be the leader on special projects or functions?

# ***The Ten Lepers***

Jesus healed

## **Discussion Questions**

A1. Describe the life of a leper in Jesus' day.

A2. If you were a leper how would you feel, think, or act?

A3. What would you have done if you were one of the lepers in this story? Why?

A4. If you were a leper today and were healed in a miraculous way, how would you feel? What would you do?

A5. Why did the ten lepers not approach Jesus?

A6. Lev 13:45ff outlines the behavior required of people with leprosy. It appears that these ten lepers did not follow all the instructions of the law. For example, they did not cry out "unclean." Do you think this is a serious breach of the Law? Does this show or indicate hearts of rebellion and disobedience? If you think it does, then why did Jesus heal them?

A7. What are the things the lepers did that we might conclude indicates they deserved healing?

A8. Why did Jesus tell the lepers to go to the priests?

A9. When did the lepers receive their healing and what are the implications?

A10. Since the lepers were not healed immediately, why do you think they were on their way to the priest?

A11. If some of the lepers were not Samaritans, the group could have been a mix of both Jew and Samaritan people. Jews and Samaritans did not associate together – Jews considered Samaritans unclean. Since it is not said otherwise, and because Scripture points out that the one who returned was a Samaritan, I believe we can reasonably assume that the group was a mix of peoples. There would have been no logic in pointing out one was a Samaritan if they were all Samaritans. What conclusions might you draw from the probability that the ten consisted of both Jews and Samaritans?

A12. How would you characterize (short descriptions) the nine that did not come back?

A13. What reasons do we have to think the nine made the wrong choice? Why did they not thank the one who healed them?

A14. What do you think spawns or creates ingratitude?

A15. How could you relate and compare this story to the nation of Israel?

A16. The returning leper's faith was demonstrated by his praise to God and falling in worship at Jesus' feet. We are left to speculate about the other lepers. Jesus told the returning leper that his faith had made him well. What, then, healed the other lepers?

A17. It would seem likely that the returning leper received something more than the others. What do you think Jesus means when He says, "*Your faith has made you well?*"

A18. How would you describe this story with regard to the requirements for salvation and particularly the difference between faith and saving faith?

A20. What does it mean to you to "live with an attitude of gratitude?" List three to five things:

(1). \_\_\_\_\_.

(2). \_\_\_\_\_.

(3). \_\_\_\_\_.

(4). \_\_\_\_\_.

(5). \_\_\_\_\_.

A21. How would you apply the following proverb to the story of the Ten Lepers? Do you think this proverb is true? Why? Why not?

***"Who does not thank God for little,  
will not thank Him for much!"***

**B. APPLICATION**

B1. Is there someone in your life you need to thank?

B2. What are you personally thankful for?



B3. Do you have an attitude of gratitude that others can see?

B4. Given your lifestyle and your Christian walk, how might you show or demonstrate gratitude to God?

B5. Psalm 103:2 says, "*My soul, praise the Lord, and do not forget all His benefits.*" Name several significant benefits that the Lord has given you, other than life, health, and salvation.

# ***Stephen***

stoned to death

## **Discussion Questions**

### **A. STEPHEN**

A1. What do we learn about the nature and character of Stephen in the following verses?

6:5/7:55 \_\_\_\_\_.

6:8 \_\_\_\_\_.

6:15 \_\_\_\_\_.

A2. What does it mean to you to be "full of the Holy Spirit"? Answer in personal terms rather than theologically correct language.

A3. What would being "full of grace" mean to you?

A4. What did they do for Stephen in 6:6 and what does that mean?

A5. What does 6:10 mean, "*They could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking*"?

A6. When Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin (6:11-15) to give an account of what he had been doing and saying, Stephen did not say his false accusers were lying. Did Stephen answer the high priest's question?

A7. Chapter 7:1-50 is a history lesson. It is often said that the best defense is a good offense and Stephen went on the offensive. He described how the Jews wanted to keep everything as they were and would not consider new revelation even if it came from Moses or God. What was described in Acts 7:37-43?

A8. What does Acts 7:51-53 mean?

*"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did not your father's persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, 53 you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."* ESV

Q. What does "stiff-necked people" mean?

Q. What does "uncircumcised hearts and ears" mean?

Q. How would you describe "resisting the Holy Spirit"? Have you ever done that? Explain.

A9. Verse 7:56 angered the leaders to the point that they stoned Stephen. What is so damning about what Stephen said?

*("Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.")* ESV

A10. What would Stephen’s reference to Jesus as the "Son of Man" imply to the Sanhedrin?

A11. As a summary, list the characteristics of Stephen or his life that you might want to emulate in the following verses:

6:5 \_\_\_\_\_

6:5 \_\_\_\_\_

6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

6:10 \_\_\_\_\_

6:10 \_\_\_\_\_

7:51-53 \_\_\_\_\_

6:15; 7:60 \_\_\_\_\_

7:55-56 \_\_\_\_\_

**B. STANDING FIRM**

B1. Which one of the instructions above do you think would be the most difficult and why?

B2. In Php 3:19 what would you do to stand firm in this area of Christian living? Consider what radical things you might do!

Philippians 3:19 *Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.* ESV

B3. Which one of the world’s values do you find most difficult to ignore? Why?

B4. What happens if we don't stand firm? If we examine the train of thought for several of the key verses in the Philippians passage above, we find that the consequences of not standing firm are significant. In each of the three verses below, what is the likely or implied result of not standing firm?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_.

*To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples."*  
(John 8:31NIV)

(2) \_\_\_\_\_.

*By standing firm you will gain life.* (Luke 21:19 NIV)

(3) \_\_\_\_\_.

*By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.* (1 Cor 15:2 NIV)

B5. What do you think is meant by "you have believed in vain"?

B6. Does 1 Cor 15:58 help us understand the use of "in vain"?

1 Corinthians 15:58 *Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.* ESV

B7. Paul tells his readers in Ephesians 6 to stand firm. In fact he uses the word "stand" four times in four verses. Based on Ephesians 6:11-14, how is the believer to stand firm?

Ephesians 6:11-14 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore . . .* ESV

Put on the full armor of God:

1) belt of \_\_\_\_\_

2) breastplate of \_\_\_\_\_

3) shoes of \_\_\_\_\_

4) shield of \_\_\_\_\_

5) helmet of \_\_\_\_\_

6) sword of the Spirit, which is the \_\_\_\_\_

7) and \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

B8. What important conclusions can you draw about standing firm from the instruction to put on the armor of God?

### C. APPLICATION

C1. Are you standing firm? Do you ever waver?

C2. Is there any significant portion of the Christian doctrine that you question, are not sure you believe, or tend to ignore because you have trouble with it? What is it? (Consider talking to your small group, group leader, or pastor.)

C3. If you do not have concerns, can you be a "rock" to someone who is struggling with standing firm? Are you allowing friends or family to go unchallenged?

C4. In Question A11 we examined and listed a number of the attributes of Stephen's character and life as outlined in Acts 6:5 – 7:56. Which one of those characteristics or aspects would you like to emulate? Why?

- full of faith
- full of the Holy Spirit
- full of grace
- full of power
- wise
- speak by the Spirit
- bold
- stand firm
- not intimidated by power and authority
- see into the throne room of God

# ***Demas***

he deserted Paul

## **Discussion Questions**

A1. Put yourself in Paul's situation. How would you feel?

A2. Why did Paul tell Timothy about Demas? Did he have to tell Timothy?

A3. What positive impact do you think the news about Demas could have had on Timothy?

A4. Describe what you think it means that Demas "deserted" Paul.

A5. Paul identified five problems for Timothy (listed below). How would you compare Timothy's problems with today's church or culture?

- 1) Not tolerate sound doctrine.
- 2) Follow their own desires.
- 3) Listen to leaders who tell them what they want to hear.
- 4) Turn away from the truth.
- 5) Turn toward myths.

Q. Can you think of an example of each one of these problems in today's church?



A6. Which one of the above issues is the most prevalent today? Why?

A7. If you were in Paul's position today, giving advice to a young co-worker, what would you tell them?

A8. Today, (1) what "things of the world" might pull people away from Christ and (2) what things of the church might push people away?

A9. What happened to Demas? What might have produced this situation, other than great appeal of the "world"? Describe below how the following might have negatively influenced Demas.

PAUL:

EXCITEMENT:

FOUNDATION:

PERSECUTION:

FRIENDS:

FAMILY:

STRENGTH:

EMOTION:

A10. Do you think Paul had reason to warn the Thessalonica church that Demas was coming?

A11. If you were Paul and you saw Demas struggling, what should be your priorities? What if spending more time with Demas would negatively impact your ministry? What do you do?

## B. THE WORLD

B1. Do you personally know anyone who quit a ministry or the church and turned to the world? What did you or they learn from that experience?

B2. If worldly values and desires were starting to become too important in your life, what would you want to happen?

B3. Why do you think God wanted a comment in the Bible about someone abandoning their faith for the world?

B4. What are some typical feelings, emotions, or sinful desires that would cause one to love the world? What do we have to guard against so as not to be entrapped by the attraction?

B5. What do you think are the two most important things that 1 John tells us about the world? Note: The word "world" occurs 187 times in the New Testament.

B6. James 4:4 tells us that friendship with the world is hostility toward God and desiring the world and its values makes us enemies of God. How would explain this to a new believer?

B7. What advice does Romans 12:2 give us in this regard?

Romans 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* ESV

B8. Compare Demas to the prodigal or lost son (Luke 15:1-3; 11-32). Fill in the contrasting or parallel behavior of Demas:

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: He had been an obedient son in the past.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: He left home, took all he had, and he did not plan to come back.

3. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: He went to another (distant) country.

4. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: He squandered his wealth, spending it on wild living.

5. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: No one (father or brother) went after him.

6. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: He returned to his father who welcomed him home

7. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: Repentant.

8. \_\_\_\_\_.

Lost son: There was a happy ending.

**C. APPLICATION**

C1. What do you personally love most about the world?

C2. Could anyone accuse you of loving the things of this world more than the things of God? Why?

C3. How big is the influence of the world on you?

Q. Where do you spend your time, resources, and energy?

Q. What do you really love and treasure?

Q. What are your top two life priorities?

Q. What would you desert your faith for?

C4. Is there someone in your life who would confront you if you began to "love the world"? Are you sure?

C5. What is the life lesson for you in this story?

# ***Onesimus***

a slave of Philemon

## **Discussion Questions**

A1. How did this letter get to Philemon?

A2. What was the common relationship between Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus?

A3. Why do you think Paul addressed this letter to the church (v2) and not just to Philemon?

A4. What was Paul doing in v4-v10?

A5. How does Paul commend Onesimus in v4-v10?

v4 I thank God for you in my \_\_\_\_\_.

v5 I have heard about your \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ, and your \_\_\_\_\_ for the saints

v6 I pray you are active in sharing your \_\_\_\_\_, and have full understanding of \_\_\_\_\_.

v7 Love encouraged me [Paul], because you have \_\_\_\_\_ of the saints.

v9 Paul appeals on the basis of \_\_\_\_\_.

v10 Paul describes Onesimus as his \_\_\_\_\_.

A6. On what basis did Paul appeal to Philemon in v9 and what did he mean?

A7. What did Paul mean in v10: "*my child, whom I fathered?*" Why did he use this description? What else could he have said?

A8. Find a definition of the word "onesimus" and then describe how that definition relates to v11?

A9. Given that Paul was probably in Rome and Philemon in Colossae, what was Paul doing in v12? Why?

A10. What does v13 say about how Paul compared Onesimus to Philemon?

A11. Read the text again and fill in answers to the following:

1) What did Onesimus do?

v15 \_\_\_\_\_

v18 \_\_\_\_\_

2) What did Paul ask Philemon to do?

v8 \_\_\_\_\_

v15-16 \_\_\_\_\_

v17 \_\_\_\_\_

v18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

A12. In v21 Paul referred to Philemon's obedience. What do you think Paul meant? What kind of relationship would call for Philemon to obey Paul in this matter?

A13. In v21 Paul also stated that he hoped that Philemon would do more than he asked. What evidence is there that Philemon did anything, let alone doing more than Paul asked?

A14. Do you think this letter sounds more like a friend writing to a friend or a mentor pressuring a disciple? Why?

A15. Let's assume that Paul was coercing Philemon. Was this appropriate or not? How do you feel about the "feel" of this letter?



A16. Is there any indication in the text that Onesimus was returning willingly to Philemon?

A17. Why would Paul go to all this trouble for Onesimus? What do you think is the overriding reason Paul took up Onesimus' cause? Why do you think Paul encouraged Onesimus to return to Philemon? Why not just let the whole thing go away? Why send Onesimus back? Why not just ask Philemon to free him?

A18. Other than returning Onesimus to Philemon, what else might Paul have done to extricate the slave from his situation?

A19. Why do you think this story is in the Bible? What would have been the result if this personal letter had not been preserved and this event had not been recorded in the canon? What important insights do you find here?

A20. If you, as a third party in this scenario, wanted to persuade Philemon to forgive Onesimus, what would be the main points of your argument?

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_.

**B. APPLICATION**

B1. List the words that Paul uses to describe Christians or believers in his letter to Philemon:

v1, 9 \_\_\_\_\_.

v1, 7, 20 \_\_\_\_\_.

v1, 24 \_\_\_\_\_.

v2 \_\_\_\_\_.

v2 \_\_\_\_\_.

v5, 7 \_\_\_\_\_.

v10 \_\_\_\_\_.

v16 \_\_\_\_\_.

v17 \_\_\_\_\_.

v23 \_\_\_\_\_.

Q. Do these words describe you? If not, why not?

B2. What do you personally learn about forgiveness from the following passages?

Q. Do you have any issues with or questions about forgiveness that you need to clarify?

B3. Is there anyone in your life you need to forgive?

B4. Is there someone in your life that you hold a grudge against because they have not asked you for forgiveness?

# ***Rabshakeh***

title of Assyrian official

## **Discussion Questions**

A1. The Rabshakeh used threats and intimidation in his long speech in Isa 36:4-10. He used well-chosen words to shake the confidence of his adversaries.

Q. These are very strong words. Would you be convinced by this argument?

A2. In the above speech the Rabshakeh referred at times to the king of Assyria and at other times to himself. Why do you think the Rabshakeh used this technique?

A3. What did the Rabshakeh do in Isa 36:12?

Isa 36:12 *But the Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?"* ESV

A4. What did the Rabshakeh say in Isa 36:13-18 about Hezekiah?

A5. What did the Rabshakeh say about Hezekiah's God?

Q. What were the Rabshakeh's tactics?

A6. Who were these other gods and why did the Rabshakeh compare the Lord with them?

A7. In Isaiah 36:21 what did the people do and why?

Q. Why do you suppose Hezekiah told them not to respond?

A8. What did the Rabshakeh hope would happen because of his rhetoric in 36:4-19?

A9. How is Satan similar to the Rabshakeh?

## B. THE TONGUE     James 3:4-10

B1. How did you react to the story about the feathers? Do you think the story is an accurate representation of what happens to our speech?

B2. What does James 3:4-10 tell us about the tongue?

3:4-5 It's power is out of \_\_\_\_\_ to its size.

3:6a It is a \_\_\_\_\_, implying it can do both good and bad.

3:6b It is a world of \_\_\_\_\_ .

3:6c It pollutes or stains the \_\_\_\_\_ .

3:6d It can control/impact the \_\_\_\_\_ .

3:6e It is directed by \_\_\_\_\_ .

3:8a No human being can \_\_\_\_\_ the tongue.

3:8b It is evil full of \_\_\_\_\_ poison.

3:9-10 It can \_\_\_\_\_ (do good) and \_\_\_\_\_.(do evil)

B3. How would you argue that the tongue could "control the entire course of life"?

Q. Do you know anyone who constantly brings calm and comfort with their speech? How would you describe their life?

Q. Do you know anyone whose speech is constantly a burning fire? How would you describe their life?

### C. WISDOM LITERATURE

C1. Proverbs 18:4-8 has a great deal to say about our speech:

Q. What do you think 18:4 means? (see also 20:5)

Q. Have you ever experienced 18:6?

Q. What does verse 18:8 mean to you?

C2. What do we learn about our speech from the following verses?

**Matt 12: 37** *for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. ESV*

**Matt 12:36** *I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak. ESV.*

Q. Does "every careless word" seem like an exaggeration? Is this intended to get our attention or do you think it is literally true?

Q. James gives us further wisdom about speech in James 5:9. What does he mean?

James 5:9 *Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ESV*

C3. Compare the positive and negative characteristics of our speech in Proverbs 15:1-4:

Q. Define "foolishness" or folly as used in 15:2.

Q. How can a "devious tongue break the spirit"? (15:4)

C4. What do the following two passages teach us?

Luke 6:45

Matt 15:18-19

Q. What does the "heart" represent in the above passages?

C5. Describe the speech of the wise in the following verses.

Eccl 9:17-18 *The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools.* ESV

Eccl 10:12 *The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him.* ESV

**D. EXERCISE**

D1. Which words below best describe your tongue? Circle all that apply to your speech 80% of the time.

Empty	trusting	persuasive	challenging	confident	weak	cursing
Fear	intimidating	deceiving	quiet	misleading	slandering	gossip
Effective	soothing	powerful	accurate	blessing	hopeful	nasty
Inspiring	mean	aggressive	strife	gentle	healing	foolish
Angry	encouraging	comforting	gracious	threatening	strong	untrue

Q. What did you learn from this exercise?

**E. APPLICATION**

E1. If you were mute, do you think you would tend to get into more or less trouble? Why?

E2. If you set your heart and mind to it, what and how much good could you do with your words?

E3. How difficult is it for you to remain silent? Is taming (controlling) the tongue a challenge for you?



# ***Elihu***

Job's young protagonist

## **Discussion Questions**

A1. In general, why might Elihu have decided to speak?

A2. Based on Job 32:2-3 why was Elihu angry?

*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. 3 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. ESV*

WITH JOB:

WITH FRIENDS:

Q. Elihu's response is in chapters 32-37. What might we conclude, without reading the text about what Elihu had to say?

A3. Job 32:4 says that Elihu waited to speak. Why?

A4. What might have happened if Elihu had spoken first or inserted himself into the conversation earlier?

A5. Job 32:5 says that Elihu became angry. Why?

A6. What was Elihu saying in 32:6-10?

ABOUT BEING YOUNG:

Q. Do you think this is true today?

ABOUT BEING OLD:

ABOUT WISDOM/UNDERSTANDING:

A7. What did Elihu do in 32:11-12?

Q. Specifically what does Elihu say he did?

A8. Based on 32:1-16 how would you describe Elihu? What kind of person was he? Underline or highlight below the words or phrases that describe Elihu's character.

Job 32:1-16

*So these three men quit answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. 2 Then **Elihu** son of Barachel the Buzite from the family of Ram became angry. He was angry at Job because he had justified himself rather than God. 3 He was also angry at Job's three friends because they had failed to refute him, and yet had condemned him. 4 Now **Elihu** had waited to speak to Job because they were all older than he. 5 But when he saw that the three men could not answer Job, he became angry. 6 So **Elihu** son of Barachel the Buzite replied: I am young in years, while you are old; therefore I was timid and afraid to tell you what I know.*

*7 I thought that age should speak and maturity should teach wisdom.*

*8 But it is a spirit in man and the breath of the Almighty that give him understanding. 9 It is not only the old who are wise or the elderly who understand how to judge. 10 Therefore I say, "Listen to me. I too will declare what I know."*

*11 Look, I waited for your conclusions; I listened to your insights as you sought for words. 12 I paid close attention to you. Yet no one proved Job wrong; not one of you refuted his arguments. 13 So do not claim, "We have found wisdom; let God deal with him, not man." . . . Job's friends are dismayed and can no longer answer; words have left them. 16 Should I continue to wait now that they are silent, now that they stand there and no longer answer? HCSB*

Q. Summarize Elihu’s character or attributes:

A9. If you were Job, would you have listened to Elihu? Explain.

**B. HUMILITY**

B1. List words or phrases describing how a truly humble person might act.

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B2. Who is the best example you can think of (outside of the Bible) of someone living a life of humility?

**C. LUKE 18:9-14**

C1. What is wrong with what the Pharisee did?

C2. What Old Testament passage would you recommend the Pharisee read?

C3. What did the tax collector do that would have pleased Jesus?

#### D. APPLICATION

D1. How important is humility to you in your relationships?

D2. What is the most humble thing you have ever done? Who noticed?

D3. If you were going to do one thing on a regular basis to practice humility or to be more humble, what would it be? Why?

D4. The tax-collector said, "*God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*" Have you ever said that?

# Coming in 2020

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Meet Shamgar, Jethro, Manoah &amp; Hathach</b></p> <p>This book of four lessons is provided at a reduced cost so that students and leaders can get a first-hand experience and introduction to The <i>OBSCURE</i> Bible Study Series.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Blasphemy, Grace, Quarrels &amp; Reconciliation</b></p> <p>This book presents Joseph of Arimathea, Joanna, Ananias, Hymenaeus, and Cornelius (one of the centurions). It illustrates the nature and challenges of life as a first-century disciple. Life has real challenges, but they can be overcome.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Beginning and the End</b></p> <p>This book has four lessons from Genesis and four from the book of Revelation. It covers such topics as creation, rebellion, grace, worship, and eternity. It illustrates how God is leading us to worship in the Throne Room. This book will be a great introduction to "The Story of the Bible" (28 lessons) to be published in 2021.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>God at the Center</b></p> <p>This book touches on the virgin birth, worship, the sovereignty of God, prayer, compromise, and trust. In all these stories and events we find God. He is there in the shadows or openly orchestrating our lives. Regardless of the situation He is at the center of our lives – a sovereign almighty God.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Women of Courage</b></p> <p>This book examines the lives of Jael, Rizpah, the woman of Tekoa, Tabitha, Shiphrah, and Lydia. We see these women exhibiting great courage and faithfulness. God used them in amazing ways and we can use their example for encouragement and spiritual leadership.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Beginning of Wisdom</b></p> <p>In this book we find courage, loyalty, thankfulness, love, forgiveness, and humility. It is clear that personal character counts. It is critical to make good decisions because they have consequences. Building our lives on wisdom will help us stand firm in our faith. We don't want to follow the example of Demas who deserted Paul for the values of the world.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Miracles and Rebellion</b></p> <p>This book contrasts the stories of biblical characters who rebelled against God and those who trusted and believed. God hates sin and loves to heal the faithful. The rebellion of Korah, Haman, and Alexander are included to compare with the healing stories of Aeneas, a slave girl, and the crippled man at Lystra.</p>

End