

## Stories 3.0: Absolute Awareness

Today's Story: Devan Bogstad

📖 Job 5:7 (NIV) "...man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward."

### We have an **adversary** that is aware and **cunning**.

📖 1 Peter 5:8 (NIV) "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."

📖 Job 1:1–5 (NIV) "In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. <sup>2</sup> He had seven sons and three daughters, <sup>3</sup> and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East. <sup>4</sup> His sons used to take turns holding feasts in their homes, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. <sup>5</sup> When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular custom."

📖 Job 1:6–11 (NIV) "One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. <sup>7</sup> The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." <sup>8</sup> Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." <sup>9</sup> "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. <sup>10</sup> "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. <sup>11</sup> But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

📖 Job 1:12–19 (NIV) "The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> One day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, <sup>14</sup> a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, <sup>15</sup> and the Sabeans attacked and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" <sup>16</sup> While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" <sup>17</sup> While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" <sup>18</sup> While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, <sup>19</sup> when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

📖 Job 2:3b–8 (NIV) "...he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason." <sup>4</sup> "Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life. <sup>5</sup> But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face." <sup>6</sup> The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life." <sup>7</sup> So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. <sup>8</sup> Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes."

📖 Job 2:9–10 (NIV) "His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" <sup>10</sup> He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said."

### We have a **social network** that is unaware and **critical**.

📖 Job 2:11–13 (NIV) When Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him. <sup>12</sup> When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. <sup>13</sup> Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him because they saw how great his suffering was."

### 1. Eliphaz the **arrogant**.

📖 Job 4:7–8 (NLT) “Stop and think! Do the innocent die? When have the upright been destroyed? <sup>8</sup> My experience shows that those who plant trouble and cultivate evil will harvest the same.”

### 2. Bildad the **bigmouth**.

📖 Job 8:1–4 (NLT) “Then Bildad the Shuhite replied to Job: <sup>2</sup> “How long will you go on like this? You sound like a blustering wind. <sup>3</sup> Does God twist justice? Does the Almighty twist what is right? <sup>4</sup> Your children must have sinned against him, so their punishment was well deserved.” How’s that for compassion?

### 3. Zophar the **Zealot**.

📖 Job 11:3–5 (NLT) “Should I remain silent while you babble on? When you mock God, shouldn’t someone make you ashamed? <sup>4</sup> You claim, ‘My beliefs are pure,’ and ‘I am clean in the sight of God.’ <sup>5</sup> If only God would speak; if only He would tell you what He thinks!”

📖 Job 16:2 (NIV) “I have heard many things like these; miserable comforters are you all!”

📖 Job 19:1–6 (NIV) “Then Job replied: <sup>2</sup> “How long will you torment me and crush me with words? <sup>3</sup> Ten times now you have reproached me; shamelessly you attack me. <sup>4</sup> If it is true that I have gone astray, my error remains my concern alone. <sup>5</sup> If indeed you would exalt yourselves above me and use my humiliation against me, <sup>6</sup> then know that God has wronged me and drawn his net around me.”

### We have a **God** that is aware and **cares**.

📖 Job 38:1–5 (NIV) “Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm. He said: <sup>2</sup> “Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? <sup>3</sup> Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. <sup>4</sup> “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. <sup>5</sup> Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?”

📖 Job 38:33 (NIV) “Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God’s dominion over the earth?”

📖 Job 39:1 (NIV) “Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you watch when the doe bears her fawn?”

📖 Job 40:1–5 (NIV) “The Lord said to Job: <sup>2</sup> “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!” <sup>3</sup> Then Job answered the Lord: <sup>4</sup> “I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. <sup>5</sup> I spoke once, but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more.”

📖 Job 42:7–10 (NIV) “After the Lord had said these things to Job, He said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. <sup>8</sup> So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.” <sup>9</sup> So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the Lord told them; and the Lord accepted Job’s prayer. <sup>10</sup> After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.”

📖 Job 42:12–13, 16–17 (NIV) “The Lord blessed the latter part of Job’s life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys. <sup>13</sup> And he also had seven sons and three daughters. <sup>16</sup>...Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. <sup>17</sup> And so he died, old and full of years.”

📖 Job 19:25–27 (NIV) “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. <sup>26</sup> And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; <sup>27</sup> I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”

**Digging Deeper:** The devil is real, prowling around like a lion, looking for an opportunity to pounce. Are you self-controlled and alert? How would discrediting you hurt God’s kingdom? In your pain, do you blame God or trust God? What kind of friend are you? Have you considered that the best thing you could say to someone hurting is to say nothing at all? Before you say it, did GOD really tell you to say that?