

# IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

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**JOB 25:4-6 • TV088A**

A television broadcast sermon delivered

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By

**HENRY T. MAHAN**

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### **Job 25:4-6**

*“How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?*

*Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?”*

There are several kinds of preaching. You men who are listening to the telecast today will appreciate what I'm going to say. I don't know whether the ladies will fully understand or not but there's preaching that we call “shooting from the hip;” that's irresponsible preaching.

And then there's scatter-gun preaching; that's preaching in generalities and really dealing with nothing; that's dealing with everything and touching nothing.

And then there's that preaching that takes dead aim on a subject, sees it through, deals with it, answers the questions and tries to find the leadership of the Spirit of God on that particular subject.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

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Now, that's what I plan to do today; I'm going to take dead aim on the subject: **"JUSTIFICATION."** I want to speak to you on the subject: **"IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION."**

And we're going to read from the **25 chapter of Job, verses 4 through 6.** And I would like very much, if you would, to take your Bible and turn to **Job chapter 25** and read along with me **verses 4, 5, and 6.** Now listen carefully to it:

*"How then can man be justified with God? How can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon and it shineth not; yea the stars are not pure in God's sight. How much less man, that is a worm and the son of man which is a worm?"*

Now, is not this the question of all questions; *"How can man be justified with God? How can he be clean and holy in the sight of God who is born of woman?"*

I can't think of a more important question than this one with which we are faced today. It is asked twice in the book of **Job** back in **chapter 9:2.** Job asked the same thing that Bildad asked here in the **25 Chapter;** *"How can man be just and holy in the sight of God?"*

Now, to be justified, first of all is to be free from guilt, to be free from all blame before God. As Paul wrote in the Colossian letter **chapter 1:22:** *"In the body of his flesh to present you holy, unblameable, and unreprouvable in God's sight."*

That's what it means to be justified. It means as Webster said, "to be free from all guilt and free from all blame and that in the sight of God," *"holy, unblameable, unreprouvable in God's sight."*

In the **book of Jude verse 24,** he said: *"He will present you faultless, before the presence of his glory."* Now, that's what it means to be justified. And then again it means to have peace with God.

Not many people have peace, a lasting peace, a true peace and a heart-peace, a peace of conscience and mind. Very few people have that. And there's just one place to have it and that is to be justified before God.

Paul wrote in **Romans 5:1:** *"Therefore, being justified by faith,"* we have peace, peace of heart, peace of conscience, peace in our minds, and peace with God. The enmity has all been removed. Wouldn't you like to have that? That's what we are talking about. To be justified means to have peace with God.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

And then to be justified means to be free from all condemnation and all charges, from sin's curse, from sin's penalty, and from sin's power. **Romans 8:33** says: "*Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifieth.*"

If a man is justified before God, the angels of God, the demons of hell, the angels, the demons, and even God Himself can lay nothing to that man's charge. That's exactly what we are talking about when we are dealing with justification, to be free from all charges from all condemnation.

And then to be justified further; now listen to this; this is a serious subject. As I said, we are not shooting from the hip. We are not shooting in a scatter-gun fashion. We are taking aim on this subject of justification.

This generation needs some questions answered. We holler: "Believe, believe," but we don't tell men what to believe or why to believe or how to believe.

To be justified means to have peace with God. It means to be free from guilt and free from blame. It means before almighty God to be free from all charges, and then last of all, it means to have eternal life.

"*Whom he justified he glorified;*" that's exactly what it means. "*Whom he called he justified, whom he justified he glorified.*" Just four times in the Bible it says this: "*The just, (that is the justified) shall live by faith.*"

Now my friend, you certainly should be interested in justification. You should be in search of justification. If you are, you are in good company. You know, David said: "*O Lord have mercy upon me. Wash me from mine iniquities. Blot out my transgressions. Cleanse me from my sins.*" David was seeking justification.

And then the apostle Paul said, "*O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" The Publican in the temple cried, "*O God; merciful (be reconciled) unto me a sinner.*"

Well, how can God be reconciled to me a sinner? How can man be just with God? "*How can he be clean that is born of a woman?*" Well, if anyone can bring us the answer to these questions; it can truly be said of Him; "*How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings of good things.*" How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel, if they can answer these questions.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

Well, I'm going to deal with them today and I trust by the power of God's Spirit I'll be able to answer these questions for you.

Now first of all, I know how a man cannot be justified. *"How can man be just with God? How can he be clean that is born of a woman? How can we be holy, unblameable, and unreprouvable? How can we be without fault, faultless in his presence?"* How can we be without guilt, without charge, and without condemnation?

Well, I know how we can't be justified before God!

**First of all:** A man is not justified holy and clean in God's sight by words or because he says he is! Now, go back to the **Book of Job** there in **chapter 9:20** and Job says: *"If I justify myself, mine own mouth will condemn me. If I say that I'm perfect; mine own mouth will prove me perverse."*

So first of all, a man is not justified before God by just saying it is so. Now, you may justify yourselves before men. You may claim what you don't have. You may claim what you can't produce and you may deceive men. You may appear beautiful unto men *"but God knows your hearts."*

Over there in **Luke chapter 16:15**, He said unto them: *"You are they which justify yourselves before men but God knows your heart."*

So, you can't justify yourself before God by claiming perfection, by claiming piety, by claiming righteousness, by claiming holiness in word only. In **1 John 1:8** it says: *"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves. If we say we have not sinned we make God a liar."*

So, a man's not justified because he says he is. Job said, *"If I justify myself; mine own mouth will condemn me. Condemnation will come from my own mouth."*

**Secondly:** I know that a man is not justified by the law!

Now, the Scripture is very plain on this. It says in **Galatians 3:10**: *"By the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight."* In **Galatians 3:10**: *"Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."*

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

I don't have my choice as to which law I shall keep. The law does not command partial obedience; it commands perfect obedience. The law does not demand that I be a pretty good fellow; it demands that I be a perfect man.

The law of God does not just require my approval but my obedience. And **Romans 3:19** says: *"What the law saith; it saith to them who are under the law,"* and that's every one of us. Every subject in the universe is under the law of God, who is the King of the universe.

*"And cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. For what the law says; it says to those who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God."*

There's just one thing that the law can do and that's condemn us by revealing our sin to us. It can't atone for it, it can't cleanse it, and it can't take it away; it can just show it to you. It can show it to you in plain terms. So, a man is not justified by keeping the law.

**Thirdly:** I know this, a man is not justified by works; that is religious works, works of charity, humanitarian works, good deeds, religious righteousness, ceremonies, ordinances, rituals, and all of these things!

We're not justified by works. I can go to church every Sunday all the rest of my life. I can burn the candles. I can bow, I can make crosses, I can preach and teach, and do all of these things and I can give my money to the poor.

But if I have not Christ these things profit me nothing. That's what **1 Corinthians 13: 1-3** tells us. *"I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love it profiteth me nothing. I may bestow my goods to feed the poor and have not love it profiteth me nothing. I may give my body as a martyr to be burned and have not love (Christ's love); it profiteth me nothing."*

Listen to this Scripture in **Titus 3:5**: *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he hath saved us."* See; it's not by works, it's not by works.

Whatever anyone says, "Do the best you can; it'll be alright for you." Well, the best we can do is not good enough because the best we can do comes far short of what God demands, the glory of God.

But we're not without hope. We're not without help but *"our help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth."* Our hope is in Jehovah God, not in ourselves.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

This is what I am trying to do is to take your confidence out of the flesh, mine, yours, or anyone else's. I'm trying to turn your eyes to God for mercy: *"Lift up your eyes unto the hills from whence cometh your help."*

My hope, refuge, salvation, and deliverance are not in us; it's in Him. Our righteousnesses Isaiah said, *"are filthy rags."* So, let this be settled. We hit our target right in the middle; a man is not justified by words because he says he's perfect, he says he's righteous, he says he's holy, and he says he's justified; it is not so."

He's not justified by the law or by the works of the law: *"By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified."* He's not justified because he's a religious worker serving the Lord: *"Not by works of righteousness which we've done."* That's plain and clear!

**Fourthly:** I know who it is that justifies!

It's not the law, it's not man himself, it's not the church; it's God. It says here in **Romans 8:33:** *"It is God that justifieth."* Now, that's clear. It couldn't be clearer. If words mean anything at all it means just what it says: *"It is God that justifieth."*

He says: *"Whom he foreordained he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. And whom he predestinated he called. And whom he called he justified. And whom he justified he glorified."*

No one but God; now get this, no one but God can justify you. No one but God can pardon you. No one but God can forgive you. Do you know why? It's because you have sinned against God. And the only one who can forgive is the person against whom we've sinned. The only one who can forgive is the person whom we have offended.

Now, if you've offended me, I've got to forgive you. The offense is against me. The man down the street can't forgive you. The lady up the street can't forgive you. I've got to do it because you have offended me. And so David said: *"O Lord; against thee have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight."*

So, our justification has got to come from Him who has been offended, against whom we have sinned, the living God. We've sinned against God. Do you see that? No one but God can justify it. Pardon has got to come from the one against whom we have sinned.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

And then no one but God would justify you or me as sinful as we are and wicked and guilty as we are. *“God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners; Christ died for us.”*

Natural men hate their enemies; God loves His. Natural men seek vengeance; God shows mercy. Natural men are impatient; God is longsuffering: *“God is longsuffering and plenteous in mercy.”* Only God can pardon, justify, forgive, and God can. He can because He has the power. And if God justifies you no one can condemn you.

Now, this is the thing: if some religious organization pronounces me justified there’s a possibility that that won’t hold water, that that won’t hold up in God’s court. But now, if God justifies me, *“who can condemn me?”*

That’s what the Scripture says: *“Who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.”* Now, *“if I justify myself my own mouth will condemn me.”*

But if God pronounces me holy, I’m holy. If God pronounces me clean, I’m clean; if the judge of all the earth acquits me; who can condemn me? If the Lord of the universe, if the highest court of the universe pronounces me holy, unblameable, unproveable and just; who can question my justification?

The old-time churches use to sing about these great doctrines. They didn’t sing the little silly songs that are being sung today in the name of God; they sang songs with depth, truth, beauty, and they brought glory to God.

They didn’t sing on Sunday morning **“This Little Light of Mine;”** they sang songs like this:

**“Behold; I stand in that great day  
Who ought to my charge shall lay?  
With his spotless garments on  
I’m as holy as God’s own Son.”**

That’s got depth to it. That’s got richness to it. That has a blessing to it.

And you know what else this Scripture tells us? It tells us that God is the one who justifies and it tells me something that’s good news to me and I hope to you, *“that God justifies the ungodly”* folks without Christ, without hope, without God.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

To be without God is to be ungodly. To be contrary to God in thought, or word or deed, is to be ungodly. *“Christ died for the ungodly.”* Listen to these Scriptures in **Romans 4:5**: *“God justifieth the ungodly.”* In **Romans 5:6**: *“Christ died for the ungodly.”*

And again the song-writer picks it up and says:

**“Come ye sinners poor and needy  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,  
Jesus ready stands to save you  
Full of pity, love, and power**

**Let not conscience make you linger  
Nor a fitness fondly dream  
All the fitness he requireth  
Is to feel your need of Him.”**

But the question that I asked at the beginning of this telecast was this: *“How can man be just with God?”* I tried to show you how he can't be just. He can't be justified, not by his works, not by his words, not by his deeds, and not by the law.

And I showed you how it is that God justifies. He's the only one who can. He's the only one who will. And if He does my friend; none can condemn you; if God justifies you *“who can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus?”*

Well, how? How can God justify you? That's the question that we've got to deal with. *“How can he be clean that is born of a woman?”* How can this blessing be mine?

Well, we face two insurmountable problems. We have two solemn and serious things to be considered: How can man be clean that is spiritually unclean? That's the question and all of us by nature are spiritually unclean.

Some feel it to a greater degree than others but it's there. How can man be righteous who is unrighteous? How can man be holy that's unholy? Now, how in reality; let's face it, how in reality can you and I be clean, the second unsurmountable problem for us that is, with men it is impossible but not with God.

*“How can God be just and justify the ungodly?”* How can God be righteous and pardon the unrighteous? How can God almighty punish my sins and yet forgive my sins? Now that's the problem. Those are the two great problems, (in reality) to making me holy.



## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

Well, I'll tell you how God does that by giving me a new nature, by regeneration, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the imputed righteousness of another, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But now, here's the answer; if you want the answer to that question turn to **Romans chapter 3**. And this question is answered right there in **Romans 3:19-26**.

And I'm going to take you right through it now and if you are really in search of justification in the sight of God, not before men; we are not talking about before men or even before the courts of your own feelings and thoughts.

Your sins will always be before you but that's not we are dealing with. We want our sins between us and God removed, where God won't deal with them, God won't see them, blot them out, cleanse them, wash them, forgive them, pardon them, put them away, *"separate them from me as far as the east is from the west, in God's sight."*

Alright, **Romans 3:19**: *"Now we know that what things soever the law saith; it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God."*

That's where we start; all are guilty. You can't go a step further until you lay that foundation stone out there, guilty, guilty. All right, **verse 20**: *"Therefore, because we are all guilty and to be offended in one point of the law is to be guilty of all the law of God."*

I wish I could convince you that we're all sinners in God's sight. *"All we like sheep have gone astray."* And there's no reason for you to feel to be a greater sinner than anybody else because sin is sin and guilt is guilt and death is death.

Alright, *"Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight."* The law can't save; it can only condemn. All right, **verse 21**: *"But now, the righteousness of God; (we are talking about the holiness of God) the righteousness of God without the law,"* what does that mean?

Does God disregard His law? Does God junk His law? Does God repeal His law? No sir! Without the law means without my obedience to it. The law will be obeyed. The law will be honored but not by me, but by someone in my place.

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

The holiness of God, the righteousness of God (without my perfect obedience) is manifested *“being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”* That is; all the Old Testament writers wrote about this. They wrote about salvation. They wrote about redemption. They wrote about salvation in Christ; all the Old Testament writers did.

*“And this is the righteousness of God,”* the holiness of God, the purity of God which is mine, not because I obeyed the law but because Christ did it; now watch that next verse there: *“Even the righteousness of God, (the holiness of God), which is by faith of Christ Jesus.”*

That is Christ our Representative, Christ our Surety, numbered with the transgressors, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, came here to this earth and He did for us what we couldn't do; He met God's perfect law and He obeyed it in every jot and tittle.

He said: *“I didn't come to destroy the law. (I didn't come to whittle it down. I didn't come to take the edge off it) I came to fulfill it.”*

Christ came as a man. Why do you think He was born of a woman, in order that those who are born of a woman might be saved? Why do you think that Christ took on Himself flesh and blood, in order that He might save those who are in flesh and blood?

Why do you suppose Jesus Christ came to this earth and wrapped Himself in the likeness of sinful flesh that He might save those who are wrapped in sinful flesh? He did for me what I couldn't do.

*“The just died for the unjust that he might bring us to God. He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made in him the righteousness of God.”* And it's unto all and upon all; see **verse 22** there; *“It's unto all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference.”*

**Verse 23** says: *“There's no difference. All have sinned and come short of God's glory.”* All men need the same thing; they need a righteousness before God. They need a perfect standing before that holy law and that's what Christ gives us by imputation.

He reckons it to our account. *“Blessed is the man to whom God will not charge sin.”* Blessed is the man to whom God imputes a perfect standing, a perfect holiness. That's justification, not by my works, not by my words, not by my deeds, but by His works and His words and His deeds.

*“It's unto all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference. All have sinned and come short of God's glory.”* **Verse 24:** *“Therefore; we are justified freely (without cost, without charge, without merit, and without any return) by his grace through the redemption that is in*

## IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFICATION

JOB 25:4-6 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

*Christ Jesus.*” That’s how we are justified by the act of another, by the work of another, by the obedience of another, by the death of another, and by the shedding of the blood of another.

Now; look at **verses 25 and 26**: “*Whom God hath set forth, (His own Son) to be a propitiation; (that word means a mercy seat, an atonement) for our sins and for the sins that are past through the forbearance of God; (that is the Old Testament people) in order to declare his righteousness that he might be just and the justifier of them that believe on his name, (on Jesus Christ).*”

Do you see that? That’s how men are justified before God. That’s how men become clean, holy, unblameable, and unproveable. Can you reach out and take hold of that? Can you lay hold upon that?

It’s just not believing some doctrines or believing a certain way a denomination teaches. This thing is to receive a person. And with that person all that He accomplished, and all that He is, and all the benefits and blessings of His grace, what we couldn’t do and what we can’t do, and what we’ll never be able to do.

Christ in the body of this flesh obeyed that law, honored that law, and in His own body He went to the tree and bore my sins. And now God can be just and righteous and holy and forgive me because in Christ I don’t have any sin.

I have a perfect righteousness in Christ as I stand in Him.

**“God sees Christ and then He sees me,  
In the Beloved, I am accepted and free!”**