

5. Witnesses for the Prosecution must have completed the spiritual advance through spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and spiritual maturity while executing the last 4 of the ten problem-solving devices, 7 through 10.
6. Paul indicates this last phase of the spiritual advance in:

**2 Corinthians 2:9**      And He [ **God** ] has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness [ **suffering is necessary for spiritual advance** ]. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

**v. 10**      Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (NASB)
7. The word “power” is **δύναμις (dúnamis)** and refers to the omnipotence of God accessed by the believer when filled with the Holy Spirit inside the bubble.
8. The word “weakness” is **ἀσθένεια (asthénēia)** which makes reference to the progressive stages of suffering for blessing that every advancing believer must endure and pass for continued advance in the process.
9. The pressures, adversities, dangers, and hardships common to the devil’s world eventually overcome the unbeliever and reversionistic believer.
10. However, suffering for blessing is what is common to the advancing believer. It is he who understands that our earthly life is a brief “hour upon the stage,” but it can have eternal impact.
11. The weaknesses are obvious, but what about the power? It is two-fold. First, the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit followed by consistent inculcation and application of what the Spirit teaches the believer from the Word of God.
12. No person engages the areas of suffering and testing without accommodating these two power sources on a regular and ongoing basis.
13. The part some believers play in the Church Age is their demonstration of steadfastness while being cross-examined by Lucifer during the rebuttal phase of his appeal.

## The Background

1. Philosophers spend a lot of time trying to decide why we are here. Their peroration, after much high-toned folderol, bloviations, and bombast, concludes with sesquipedalian mumbo-jumbo but when translated means, “We live, we suffer, we die.”
2. Without knowledge of God, His plan, policy, and purpose, man is left helpless to evaluate the meaning of life.
3. Religion gives the idea a try, but absent biblical theology, it’s all guesswork although often lifting quotes from Scripture, but with erroneous application.
4. Recently, I was told by a member who attended a memorial service that the pastor informed the congregation that the deceased was doing just fine in resurrection body.
5. Ignorance of systematic theology, the timeline of human history in light of eternity past and eternity future, and the ultimate difference between the afterlife of believers and nonbelievers means many Christians do not fully understand the structure or the details of biblical eschatology.
6. We will not take the time for a detailed study of the sequence of events in angelic and human history, but a brief overview is in order.
  - (1) In eternity past, before the creation of angels, the universe, or the human race, God existed in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
  - (2) During this period, the Trinity occupied heaven, an abode inscrutable to our understanding.
  - (3) At some point, the Trinity decided to create a lifeform to occupy heaven with them. These beings were created instantaneously and simultaneously and are primarily referred to in Scripture as angels.
  - (4) These angels were placed in a system of authority. Those in leadership are called cherubs with an insignia of rank described as having four wings. The cherub-ranked officer in command of the angelic hoards is Lucifer.
  - (5) Rank and file angels have no designated insignia of rank. Their numbers are inscrutable since the Bible describes their number as “myriad”:

**Daniel 7:10** “A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him [ **Jesus Christ** ]; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads [ **רבו** (*ribbo*): innumerable; unknown numbers ] upon myriads were standing before Him; and the court sat [ **the Great White Throne judgment** ], and the books were opened [ **Revelation 20:11–12** ].” (NASB)

- (6) We also learn from Job that God decided to create a new environment in which these angels would be assigned to carryout official duties:

**Job 38:4** “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth [ **creation of the universe, ex nihilo, Genesis 1:1** ].” Tell Me, if you possess understanding!

**v. 5** “Who set the measurements—if you know—or who stretched a measuring line across it?

**v. 6** “On what were its bases set, or who laid the cornerstone—

**v. 7** when the morning stars [ **the angelic choir** ] sang in chorus, and all the sons of God [ **another term for the angelic congregation** ] shouted for joy?” (NET)

- (7) It was in this setting that Lucifer fomented the first rebellion in all of universal history. He has since been the catalyst for all succeeding uprisings within human history.
- (8) Lucifer organized his rebellion against divine authority, reported by Isaiah in:

**Isaiah 14:12** How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you have weakened the nations!

**v. 13** “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north.

**v. 14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the most high.’” (NASB)