

Job 2-3 – Thursday, February 1st, 2018

Job 2 -- 1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." 3 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause."

- Chapter two begins as chapter one did, with the exception of what we're told in verse three about Job holding fast his integrity.
- This in spite of what God had already allowed Satan to do, which is arguably that which most of us would not be able to handle.
- I mention this because while Job has successfully passed the test of round one, it's now about to get even worse in round two.

4 So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. 5 But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" 6 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life."

- What we have here is yet more evidence though we really don't need it that proves just how evil our adversary the devil can be.
- It's interesting to note that when Satan says "Skin for skin" he's drawing upon a bartering term of trading one's life for another.
- In other words, he actually makes the accusation that Job didn't curse God to his face, because he has still saved his own skin.

7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes.

- I don't know if it's possible to adequately describe the utter horror of this scene with Job sitting in the ash of a rubbish heap.
- This is where it's believed they burned the rubbish, and here's Job sitting in the midst of this ash heap scraping all his boils.
- If this weren't bad enough, unbeknownst to Job, it gets even worse in terms of the physical, emotional and psychological pain.

One commentator has listed the references that Job makes to his unspeakable pain and suffering.

- Intense itching (to scrape himself; Job 2:8)
- Intense pain (My bones are pierced in me at night, and my gnawing pains take no rest; Job 30:17)
- Peeling and darkened skin (My skin grows black and falls from me; Job 30:30a)
- Pus-filled, erupting sores (My flesh is caked with worms and dust, my skin is cracked and breaks out afresh; Job 7:5b)
- Emaciation (My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh; Job 19:20)
- Fever (My bones burn with fever; Job 30:30b)
- Depression (I loathe my life; I would not live forever; Job 7:16)
- Turmoil (My heart is in turmoil and cannot rest; days of affliction confront me. I go about mourning... Job 30:27-28)
- Weeping (My face is flushed with weeping; Job 16:16a)
- Sleeplessness (When I lie down, I say, 'When shall I arise, and the night be ended?' Job 7:4)
- Nightmares (Then you scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions; Job 7:14)
- Putrid breath (My breath is offensive to my wife; Job 19:17)
- Difficulty breathing (He will not allow me to catch my breath; Job 19:18)
- Failing vision (On my eyelids is the shadow of death; Job 16:16b)
- Rotting teeth (I have escaped by the skin of my teeth; Job 19:20)
- Haggard looks (When they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him; Job 2:12)
- Painful swollen sores all over his body (painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head; Job 2:7)
- No relief (Oh, that I were as in months past; Job 29:2 and I have been allotted months of futility; Job 7:3)

9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!"

- I have to confess the Lord had me revisit this well-known verse concerning Job's wife, and in so doing, really ministered to me.
- Specifically as it relates to what she herself had suffered in the loss of her children and wealth and now seeing Job suffer too.
- While it doesn't excuse what she says, it does explain what she says in the sense that, she wants God to end Job's suffering.

I like how one commentator explained it, "She can't bear to see her husband suffer like this. Her heart, already crushed by the loss of her ten children, is now without hope. She is saying, 'Curse God and He'll strike you dead too. Then you can escape this pain. Death would be better than this.'"

10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

- It's important to understand that Job is not calling his wife a fool; rather, he is telling her that what she is saying to him is foolish.
- It's interesting to note in the midst of unthinkable and unspeakable pain and suffering on Job's part, he still ministers to his wife.
- Not only does he minister to his wife, he passes the test of round two under the banner of accepting both good and adversity.

Ecclesiastes 7:14 (NKJV) — 14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, So that man can find out nothing that will come after him.

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place— Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him. 12 And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven. 13 So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

- Chapter two ends by introducing us to Job's three friends who to their credit are off to a good start just by being there for him.
- There's something to be said of a true friend who is willing to not only be there, but to weep with you and just sit next to you.
- As it's been said, sometimes the best thing that can be said is nothing at all, and certainly their tears said what words could not.

G. Campbell Morgan of Job's friends had this to say, "While it is true that Job suffered more at the hands of these friends ultimately than by the attacks of the foe, yet some recognition must be made of the goodness of the men."

Job 3 -- 1 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. 2 And Job spoke, and said: 3 "May the day perish on which I was born, And the night in which it was said, 'A male child is conceived.'

- Chapter three begins where the battle begins in Job's mind and soul, such that, he is now entering into the arena of expression.
- By that I mean, here-to-fore, the battle has been external and as such he has been processing the adversity that's befallen him.
- Now, he opens his mouth and gives voice to his utter despair, as he expresses himself and what he thinks about his suffering.

Oswald Chambers in Baffled to Fight Better says it this way, "Facing facts as they are produces despair, not frenzy, but real downright despair, and God never blames a man for despair. The man who thinks must be pessimistic; thinking can never produce optimism. The wisest man that ever lived said that "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." The basis of things is not reasonable, but wild and tragic, and to face things as they are brings a man to the ordeal of despair."

4 May that day be darkness; May God above not seek it, Nor the light shine upon it. 5 May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; May a cloud settle on it; May the blackness of the day terrify it. 6 As for that night, may darkness seize it; May it not rejoice among the days of the year, May it not come into the number of the months. 7 Oh, may that night be barren! May no joyful shout come into it! 8 May those curse it who curse the day, Those who are ready to arouse Leviathan. 9 May the stars of its morning be dark; May it look for light, but have none, And not see the dawning of the day; 10 Because it did not shut up the doors of my mother's womb, Nor hide sorrow from my eyes. 11 "Why did I not die at birth? Why did I not perish when I came from the womb? 12 Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts, that I should nurse? 13 For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep; Then I would have been at rest 14 With kings and counselors of the earth, Who built ruins for themselves, 15 Or with princes who had gold, Who filled their houses with silver; 16 Or why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, Like infants who never saw light? 17 There the wicked cease from troubling, And there the weary are at rest. 18 There the prisoners rest together; They do not hear the voice of the oppressor. 19 The small and great are there, And the servant is free from his master. 20 "Why is light given to him who is in misery, And life to the bitter of soul, 21 Who long for death, but it does not come, And search for it more than hidden treasures; 22 Who rejoice exceedingly, And are glad when they can find the grave? 23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, And whom God has hedged in? 24 For my sighing comes before I eat, And my groanings pour out like water. 25 For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, And what I dreaded has happened to me. 26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes."

- Couple of thoughts here before we bring the Bible study to an end, the first of which has to do with what Job is expressing here.
- While he will never curse his God, he will and does curse the day he was born, wishing that something would have thwarted it.
- Secondly, Job has no idea what God is doing in and through this, though as the author of the book will yet future understand it.

I'll close with one final quote from Oswald Chambers, "Satan's aim is to make a man believe that God is cruel and that things are all wrong; but when a man strikes deepest in agony and turns deliberately to the God manifested in Jesus Christ, he will find Him to be the answer to all his problems."