

Message #5**Job 2:1-7a**

What would it take to get you to deny God? What would it take to get you to turn from your commitment to God and His Word? What would it take to get you to walk away from your responsibilities and chuck it all?

We may be certain that Satan knows which buttons to press in an attempt to get people to turn from God and His Word. He has done this and succeeded time and time again. Sometimes he will use some former struggle or sin to lure one away from God. Sometimes he will use some person or relationship to turn one away from God. Sometimes he will use some financial or emotional crisis to get one to turn from God, or he may use a physical crisis to lure one away from God.

When it came to Job, Satan threw every thing at him that he could throw. He came at him from every angle and he didn't strike once. His multiple attacks came fast and furious.

When Job was going through all of this he had absolutely no idea why. This is a key point for us to realize. When we are going through difficulties we will not be able to figure it all out. We have no idea what is taking place behind the scenes. We don't know how Satan is working or what is going on between Satan and God. All we can do is trust God and continue to worship God.

ONCE SATAN HAS SEVERELY ATTACKED GOD'S FAITHFUL PEOPLE AND THEY STILL REMAIN FAITHFUL, THEY CAN EXPECT THAT HE WILL ATTACK AGAIN; AND IF THEY CONTINUE TO REMAIN FAITHFUL, GOD WILL EVENTUALLY SOVEREIGNLY BLESS AND PROSPER THEM.

I am totally convinced that the theme of this book is the sovereignty of God. If God sovereignly permits Satan to attack at this level, He will also eventually prosper at a very unusual level.

Now this actually is a bigger attack than the others because this attack will actually cause Job not only to lose his health, but he will also lose honor, respect, status in the community (16:10; 30:1, 9-10), he will lose friends (12:4), and the support of his wife and brothers and relatives (19:13-19). This will be a major test because all Job will have to cling to is his faith in the sovereignty of God.

PART #1 – The presentation of the angels before God. 2:1

For the most part, we have the same verbal formula that we had in round #1. Notice in 1:6, "Satan also came among them," and in 2:1, "Satan came to present himself to the Lord."

In both cases, Satan must report to God.

It is not known for certain how much time elapsed between the two satanic angelic appearances. The Aramaic Targum suggests one year had transpired, but the text does not exactly say.

The scenario of this verse is very similar to 1:6, but it is also very different. **Satan does come again into the presence of God, but now he comes as a loser.** All the angels knew about the challenge and they all knew he lost.

We may recall he had made a bold prediction before all of these angels that if God took down His hedge, Job would curse God. God did take down His hedge and Job didn't curse God and all of those angels had watched it all. So Satan has proved to be a liar in front of all the angels. It is critical to see that Satan must answer to and give an account to God. He is diabolical, but he is also accountable. He cannot do one thing unless God permits him to do it. He must actually give reports to God about all that he is doing.

PART#2 – The communication between God and Satan. **2:2-6**

There are five different communications that take place between God and Satan:

Communication #1 - God's first question to Satan. **2:2a**

God's first question to Satan is, "Where have you come from?" as if God didn't know. This is basically the same question God asked Satan the first time, except the circumstances are very different. Satan is back at God's throne before these angels and he has failed in what he said he would accomplish and God is going to force him to admit it.

Again notice that no one speaks at God's throne, not even Satan, unless they are permitted by God to speak. Satan is not very impressive when he stands before God. He rants and raves while here on earth; but once in the presence of God, he does not dare speak unless God permits it.

People may verbally and arrogantly puff themselves up on this earth, but their tongues will be silenced the moment they are in eternity.

Communication #2 - Satan's first response to God. **2:2b**

We may remember that Satan had made this big grandstand challenge to God in front of all the other angels (1:9ff). But now that his plan has backfired, he is not about to bring up Job's name; because this would show he is a failure, and Satan is far too proud to acknowledge he is a failure in front of all these angels. So he simply says he had been "roaming around and walking around on the earth."

There is no question that this world is an arena in which Satan operates. Satan randomly moves around the world seeking those he may devour. Now of course we know that he had devoted a lot of his time to Job, but he doesn't bring Job's name up.

These other angels already knew he hadn't succeeded, but his pride was not about to let him admit it. Here is one of the great tactics of Satan—not tell the truth when it makes you look bad in front of others.

Communication #3 - God's second question to Satan. **2:3**

God once again brings up Job's name. Do not miss this—God is the One who brings up Job and this leads to Satan's next attack. From a human perspective, we would tend to wonder what in the world God is doing by bringing up Job's name again. The last time He did this Satan made a mess of that man's life.

But keep this in mind, God knows who He can trust with big things like this. When Martin Luther was going through the trials of the Reformation in the 1500s, he said, "Not all can bear tribulations alike; some are better able to bear the blow of the devil as we three Philip Melancthon, John Calvin and myself."

But the truth is God has great cause for doing this. He is disproving Satan's slanderous lies to the entire angelic world; and by people who study God's Word, He is disproving his lies to the entire world. Satan cannot stop God's sovereign work and will in the life of one faithful no matter what he does.

Now God immediately describes Job a second time in front of Satan and all the other angels. This second description is really far different than the first although the words are similar, because Job's character is this way after he has been satanically assaulted. There are six facts brought out:

(Fact #1) - Job, having been attacked by Satan, is still unique . **2:3a**

No one had ever been assaulted so much by Satan and remained so faithful.

(Fact #2) - Job, having been attacked by Satan, was still blameless . **2:3b**

Job was still a complete man of God. There was nothing phony about his relationship with God. The tragedies that he had faced and the trials had not affected his commitment to the Lord.

(Fact #3) - Job, having been attacked by Satan, is still upright . **2:3c**

Job was still an upright, straight-shooting man. He was not crooked in any way. He walked straight in accordance with God's Word and will as he knew it.

(Fact #4) - Job, having been attacked by Satan, still feared God. **2:3d**

Instead of Job cursing God, he continued to fear God, reverence God, and worship God. He maintained a high and holy and healthy concept of God, regardless of what hit him.

(Fact #5) - Job, having been attacked by Satan, still turned from evil . **2:3e**

Job did not use the negative things that hit him as some excuse to plunge into a binge of evil.

(Fact #6) - Job, having been attacked by Satan, still had his integrity. **2:3f**

The picture of “holding fast” to integrity is one in Hebrew of guarding one’s integrity by holding tightly or to be strongly bound to it (Gesenius, p. 269). The “Hiphil” stem of the verb means to get possession or grab something you didn’t once have and then bind yourself tightly to it (*Ibid.*, p. 270). The word “integrity” is one that means to be whole and upright, to maintain one’s full spirituality (*Ibid.*, p. 866). His integrity meant that he was consistent and constant in his focus on God even when under attack.

Job had been severely attacked by Satan; but instead of crumbling and blaming God and shaking his fist at God, he grabbed tightly to a full and deeper spirituality and maintained his complete integrity. God said that Satan had incited Him to “ruin him without cause.” What this means is that God had permitted this to happen to Job when Job had done nothing wrong in life to deserve this. Job stayed true to his commitment to the Lord. As Robert Alden said, “Job did not tarnish his perfect record” (*Job*, p. 64).

Now in my opinion, all of us have probably done and said things that would merit God to let us be ruined. But in His amazing grace He does not let it happen. Have you ever known any rebellious believer who has ever suffered like this? This is big time suffering about to hit the most faithful man on this earth. If you find that you are hit with negatives and you do deserve them, learn the lesson, repent and get it right with God and the negatives will leave. On the other hand, if you are hit with negatives and you don’t deserve them, maintain your integrity, keep reverencing and worshipping God, and watch and see what God will do.

Communication #4 - Satan’s second response to God. **2:4-5**

Satan says as long as Job is healthy he will maintain his integrity; but if God would put forth His hand to physically cause Job to lose his health, Job would curse him to His face.

Satan uses an interesting phrase “skin for skin” which may refer to the disease he wanted to inflict on Job. The words “skin for skin” in **verse 4** have been interpreted at least four ways:

1. So long as God doesn’t touch Job’s skin, Job won’t deny or curse God’s Person.
2. One skin a man will trade for another skin—a man will trade anything for his own skin.
3. One will give up someone else’s skin to save one’s own skin.
4. Job’s outer skin had been touched, but not his inner skin—his flesh and bones.

Satan makes another big mistake. He assumes that self-preservation is what leads to any of Job’s responses. In **verse 5**, Satan challenges God to afflict “his bone and his flesh” and he claimed Job would curse God. The challenge concerning “bones” and “flesh” is a challenge to give Job some disease that will affect everything and leave him in total pain and agony.

Satan operates by a feel good, self-centered philosophy. Now there is no denying that self-preservation is a strong motive and instinct for survival, but it is not the only motive or instinct.

People get into situations sometimes where they love something more than their own life. Many a father or mother has sacrificed their lives so their children could live. Many a soldier has sacrificed his life so a country might live. Many a Christian has sacrificed his life so the Gospel might live.

Job feared God and loved God; and if it came right down to it, he would never curse God but would die first. That is real spiritual integrity.

What would it take to get us to trade our spiritual integrity? Would we trade it for money, pleasure, a job, a sport, a pressure, or our health? Could something come our way that would prompt us to turn away from God and His Word? For Job the answer was no.

Communication #5 - God's response to Satan. **2:6**

Again, notice that God will not hurt one of his faithful people, but he does permit Satan to do it. God sovereignly gave Satan permission to physically hurt Job, but He set the parameters in that he could not kill him. Why would God spare Job's life? Because what Satan and Job did not know is that God was going to bless Job's life at a brand new level.

Obviously if Satan could kill Job, God could not prove His point to the other angels that Job was his faithful man who would not curse him. God permitted Satan to take everything away from Job except his life. You can be sure of this, if Satan had his way he would kill Christians.

Notice how the sovereignty of God is seen in the limitation He puts on Satan. This is God's world and He determines who lives in it and who dies in it. He determines when a person comes into this world and when they will leave it. He knows and controls the very circumstances of everything and wise people reverence Him and worship Him.

PART #3 – The attack of Satan. **2:7**

As soon as God gave him permission to attack Job, he was not interested in spending anymore time at God's throne; he got back to earth and attacked Job with "sore boils." The Hebrew root for "boil" is one that denotes a fever and an inflammation. Satan attacked Job from head to foot with very painful and fevered sores and inflammations, which broke out as ulcers all over his body.

There were no medicines, no cures, no miraculous healings—Job was a very sick man. From the book of Job we may observe at least twelve symptoms of this satanic infliction:

(Symptom #1) - The infliction included inflamed ulcers and eruptions all over his body. **2:7**

(Symptom #2) - The infliction included intolerable itching. **2:8**

(Symptom #3) - The infliction caused a disfigured appearance. **2:12**

(Symptom #4) - The infliction included worms in the skin. **7:5**

(Symptom #5) - The infliction included hardened skin and various skin oozing. **7:5**

(Symptom #6) - The infliction caused terrifying dreams at night. **7:14**

(Symptom #7) - The infliction caused deep darkness of the eyes. **16:16**

(Symptom #8) - The infliction caused putrid and offensive breath. **19:17**

(Symptom #9) - The infliction caused an emaciated body. **19:20**

(Symptom #10) - The infliction caused bones to ache in severe pain. **30:17**

(Symptom #11) - The infliction caused skin to turn black. **30:30**

(Symptom #12) - The infliction caused a fever in the bones. **30:30**

Many medical doctors who have studied these things believe the satanic disease described here could be a form of elephantiasis. Others have said they thought it was smallpox or leprosy or psoriasis or a form of aggressive melanoma, which is a skin cancer. Dr. Robert Benninger, a medical doctor from the University of London, said that to analyze these symptoms of Job and determine the specific disease “would appear to be an impossible task” (John Hartley, *Job*, p. 82). It appeared to him to be a combination of several deadly diseases. Whatever the disease was, it hit Job hard and fast.

If Satan does not succeed the first time, he will try again. Satan has the belief that he can turn you against God and God’s Word and that is what he is out to do. He will come at us from many different angles. When Satan attacks, he will try to make our lives miserable. It is at that moment when we need to remember the sovereignty of God!

If we will purpose to remain faithful and worshipful, if we purpose to reverence God and try to understand His precious Word, we will see His wonderful and powerful blessings.