

(Through the Bible) Job - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon on Job explores the profound themes of suffering, faithfulness, and the challenges faced by godly individuals in a world filled with misunderstanding and spiritual warfare.

Duration: 56:50

Topics: "Suffering And Faith", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

The sermon delves into the book of Job, highlighting the problem of suffering and the heavenly perspective on human suffering. It emphasizes Job's integrity and worship in the face of immense loss and physical affliction. The sermon explores Satan's tactics, the importance of being a worshiper, and the challenges faced by godly individuals, including attacks from the enemy, misunderstandings from religious people, and the need for steadfastness in faith and character.

Transcript

Let's turn today to the book of Job. Job in chapter 1. The book of Job is dealing with the problem of suffering and there are a number of things that we can learn in this book. It gives us an insight into certain things which are not found almost anywhere else in the New Testament or even in the Old Testament or New Testament and that is as to what is actually happening in the heavenly realm when one of God's children is suffering on earth.

Now Job himself did not know that. He did not know what was going on up in the heavens. If he had known it, he would have been greatly comforted and strengthened in the midst of his suffering.

But now this has been revealed to us. So we are in a much better position than Job because here we are given a glimpse of what happened in the heavenlies and Job probably knew that at the end of all this suffering, after he had come through and been blessed by God, then he may have discovered all this and shared it with whoever wrote the book. So we can understand why Job complained so much.

We must not find comfort in Job's complaints and say that we also can do the same thing because we have been given a revelation to whom more is given, more is required. Much less was given to Job. The other thing is that Job lived even before Abraham as far as we know and he was one of the earliest men of God that we can think of after Enoch and Noah. Between Noah and Abraham was Job.

It's possible that Job could even have had fellowship with Noah's son Shem. He lived in that period of time and if this book was written, nobody knows exactly when this book was written. We know that Genesis was written by Moses 1500 years before Christ approximately.

But Job, if it was written in Job's lifetime or soon after his death, then this book is the first book of the Bible written even before Genesis. It comes in the middle of the Bible because the poetical books, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon are all put together. But otherwise I think it's the first book in the Bible because I can't imagine that all these details were written hundreds of hundreds and hundreds of years after Job died.

There's so much detail here even concerning what his wife told him in private that it's almost certain that it was written towards the end of Job's life by somebody else. And if this is the first book of the Bible, it's very interesting that when God decided to write scripture, the very first book that he wrote was the story of a godly man because that's what God is always looking for. He looked for a godly man in the time of Enoch, in the time of Noah, in the time of Job.

And the delight that God found in a godly man is the theme of the very first inspired book of scripture. And that's something for us to think about. See, God knew that there would be 66 books, but when he wrote the first one, he wrote something that was uppermost in his heart as he looked into the future.

A godly man, a godly woman. Ultimately, God deals with individuals. Though we say we are one body in Christ and we are part of the church, it's true God works through the body and he has given gifts to different members of the body.

But we have seen in the history of Christendom also that in order to build that body, God very often uses one man. Think of the Apostle Paul. What tremendous loss there would have been to the church if that man had not been the man he was.

Even in his time, the Lord used others and used the body of Christ, but that man made so much difference that when he left the scene in Ephesus, he says things are going to go pretty badly. So I want each of you to think of that, that God requires individual men and women who are going to be faithful to him. And so much depends on the faithfulness of the individual.

The other thing we learn here is that when a man is a godly man, God allows him to become the target of Satan's attacks. This is what is written in the first book of the Bible, that a godly man will be the target of Satan's attacks. And throughout history we have seen that.

And if you're going to be a godly man, you're going to be the target of Satan's attacks. And the other thing we see in the very first book of the Bible is that a godly man's family is the target of Satan's attacks. His children are the targets of Satan's attacks.

That is why I say, don't criticize when you see trials and sufferings in the family of a godly man, because he is probably more a target of Satan's attacks than you are, because you're half-hearted. His children are greater targets of Satan's attacks than your children, because you're half-hearted. Job lost his children.

They all died. Another thing we learn in the very first book of the Bible is that a godly man may have a very difficult wife, who's a real problem to him. Don't think that if a man is godly, his wife has to be godly.

No, not true. John Wesley had a terrible wife, who used to pull the hairs from his face. But the more evil the wife is, the more the godly man stands out as godly.

It's like the stars shine when there's darkness around. It's something like that. The other thing we see here is that a godly man will be misunderstood by other religious people of his generation.

This is all in the first book of the Bible. You see that there were four people who preached to Job, and none of them could understand what God's purpose was in dealing with Job. They criticized him.

They found fault with him. And that is what we learned, that a truly godly man will be misunderstood by almost every religious person. If you don't want to be misunderstood by other people, don't be godly.

It says those who live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 2nd Timothy 3.12. And we don't, a godly man does not find his comfort from the religious people around him. A truly godly man is very often a lonely man, because nobody can understand him.

1 Corinthians 2.14 or 15 says that a spiritual man cannot be discerned by other people who are not spiritual. And since there are very few spiritual people, even in the church, a godly man finds his life very lonely, and his actions are misunderstood, his words are misunderstood, even by others who know the scriptures and know a lot of facts about God. Religious people are not people who know God.

They are people who know facts about God and facts about God's Word. Most believers fall into that category. But in the midst of these, there are a few believers who know God, and that's the type of person you should be.

And if you're a person who knows God, you will be misunderstood by people who know about God. If you're a person who knows God, you will be misunderstood by people who just know the Bible. They may even think that you're carnal.

If they thought that Jesus was the devil, the prince of devils, can you imagine? And those were religious people who read the Bible who thought that Jesus was the prince of devils. So how do you expect people who read the Bible to know your godliness if they couldn't recognize Jesus? And I want to tell you there were two groups of people in Jesus' time, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees were the evangelicals and the fundamentalists, and the Sadducees were the liberals.

And do you know who fought with Jesus more? The evangelicals and the fundamentalists of his time. And that's how it'll be with a godly man today. It won't be the liberals who criticize him and misunderstand him.

It'll be the evangelicals and the fundamentalists, because they know about the Bible. They know the doctrines. They don't know God.

They don't know God's ways. They have just studied the book. Their knowledge is intellectual, not spiritual.

This is what we see in the very first book of the Bible. Why did God put this book as the first book of inspired scripture? To teach him, to teach us some of his principles. We learn from the very first book of the Bible, Job, first written book, that a godly man will suffer.

His pathway is a pathway of suffering. Suffering in his family, suffering in his body perhaps, suffering from misunderstanding. And that's what makes him a very lonely person.

But God does not forsake him. All this is part of his education. God is a God of tremendous compassion.

James says, quotes Job as one of those examples of patience. James says in James chapter 5 and verse 11, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome or the end of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and merciful.

And ultimately the testimony of a godly man will be, the Lord is full of compassion and merciful. And even if I could not understand the difficult ways he led me through, it was to fulfill a glorious purpose in my life. And above all, to glorify God in heaven, where this conflict was going on between God and Satan.

So the first book of the Bible, as I said, also reveals that many things that happen on earth are being closely watched by God, the angels, Satan, and all in the heavenlies. The first book of the Bible, Job teaches us that Satan moves around the earth. Peter says, seeking whom he may devour.

And that he knows the condition of every person. God asked Satan, have you seen my servant Job? And Satan said, I know all about him. The other thing that I see in the very first book of the Bible is this, that God pointed out Job to Satan.

He didn't point out all the people on earth. There were many others who knew about him, like all these other four preachers who thought they were very holy people. But he didn't point them out.

God doesn't point out everybody to Satan. But certain individuals here and there on the face of the earth, he points out to Satan and says, have you seen that man? You know, when Satan accuses people to God, the Bible says in Revelation 12, that Satan is an accuser. He's always accusing people Lord, see those people over there.

They say they are your children. See how they behave. See how they fight with one another.

See how they yell at each other at home. See those people unrighteous with money. See those people.

They say they are serving God. You know that they are serving money. They're only interested in that.

And you know, God is a righteous God. He has to admit. Yeah, that's true.

But in the midst of all this, what tremendous delight God finds when he finds one man who is upright, it doesn't have to be 10,000, one, one woman who is not like this, who whom Satan cannot accuse. Jesus said, the prince of the world comes and he finds nothing in me. Why did Jesus say that? John 14, verse 30, the prince of the world comes and he has nothing in me.

And that's why the father could say, this is my beloved son in whom I am well-pleased. He was so delighted in his son because there was one person he could find out to Satan. See, see how he's walking.

And today it says in one John two, six, he who says he abides in Christ must walk as Jesus walked my brothers and sisters. It doesn't matter one bit what your fellow believers think about you. It matters a lot.

What God thinks about you. It matters a lot. Whether God can point you out to Satan and say, in the midst of all this compromising carnal Christianity, that God can say, okay, Satan, I agree.

There's all a lot of this compromise and carnality among a lot of people who call my children. But have you seen that man in that town who lives in that street? Have you seen that woman who lives in that town in

that street? She is different. He is different and Satan's mouth is shut.

Are you one of those who can shut Satan's mouth because God can point you out to Satan? I tell you, that's the greatest longing of my heart. I'm not bothered if all the 6 billion people in the world turned around and call me a heretic, a false prophet, a deceiver, gone astray, or even an evil man. Let them call me a gluttonous man and a drunkard and a wine bibber and an adulterer and a thief and everything they like.

If God will say to Satan, have you seen that man? That's enough for me. I hope it is enough for you because in the final analysis, when we stand before the Lord, all the opinions of these 6 billion people will be thrown in the garbage bin and only God's opinion of you will matter. That's so important.

And if, as I believe, this is the first written inspired scripture, what are the very first words of inspired scripture? Very first words. There was a man, Job 1.1. There was a man who lived in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. So that you don't confuse him with some other, Job was living in some other town.

It's this particular person who lived in this particular street, in this particular town. There was a man who was blameless, upright, fearing God, turning away from evil. Those are the very first words of inspired scripture.

There was a man who was blameless, upright, who feared God and turned away from evil. Can you see something in the heart of God there? Can you see something in the heart of God when he wrote that first sentence of inspired scripture? I hope you can. And I hope it challenges your heart as it has challenged mine.

Lord, this is what you're looking for even today. More than 4,000 years after that was written, this is what he's looking for even today. A man who is blameless and upright, who fears God and turns away from evil.

A woman who is blameless and upright, who fears God and turns away from evil. Not just a person who's got a lot of knowledge. Remember, Job did not have a Bible.

He did not have any Bible knowledge because there was no Bible. There was not even one sentence of inspired scripture written in his time because he was the first. Perhaps Moses at least had this book, but Job had nothing.

Nothing. Absolutely nothing. He had no fellowship.

There were no godly believers around. He had no meetings he could go to. Nobody to encourage him.

Even the so-called preachers only came and discouraged him even more. And in spite of all this, he stood upright. The other thing that I learned in the first book of scripture is that the pathway of suffering and misunderstanding by other people is the pathway to perfection.

It's the pathway of blessing because it says at the end of the book of Job, God blessed him double of what he had in the beginning. So that is something that we can think of. There are a number of other things that I want to mention as we go along.

Let me just mention one more thing. In the very first book of the Bible, you have at least three prosperity preachers who preach that if God blesses you, you'll be prosperous. If God blesses you, you'll be healthy.

This health and wealth gospel is there in the book of Job. And it was preached by people who did not know God. Please remember that.

Job lost his health and lost his wealth and he was in the perfect will of God. And those preachers who preached health and wealth were completely out of the will of God. God said, I'm angry with all of you.

Get Job to pray for you or I'll punish you. Please keep that in mind all your life. There's a lot of deception and counterfeit in the world today.

And the first book of the Bible is enough to set all that straight. If you read it with understanding. Now, I just want to go into a little detail now.

Well, let me mention one more thing that even in the Old Testament, you know, sometimes when you read of a man who suffered so much that he lost all his property and ten children in one day, you can begin to think maybe this is a parable. Clever people have a lot of problems like that. But let me tell you what God said about Job about more than a thousand years after he lived.

We know what God said about Job in Job chapter one. But let me tell you not what James said, but what God said about Job more than a thousand years after he lived. And that's in Ezekiel chapter 14 and verse 14.

When God talks about three of the most righteous men that he can think of in the history of humanity up to Ezekiel's time. And Ezekiel lived about maybe 600 years before Christ. So that's nearly 1400 years after Job.

1400 years after Job, God tells Ezekiel who God thinks are the three most righteous people on that ever lived. Verse 14, Noah, Daniel, and Job. Ezekiel 14, 14.

And he again repeats it so that there's no doubt in anybody's mind. Verse 20, Noah, Daniel, and Job. He recognizes them as righteous people.

Daniel was living at that time. It's quite amazing that God would speak of a man who's living. And Noah, whatever his Noah's son Ham thought about his drunkenness, God had a different opinion.

And Job, whatever those preachers of his generation thought about him, God had a different opinion. And I want to tell you, it does not matter what all of evangelical Christianity thinks about you. It's what God thinks about you that matters.

Everybody can praise you to the skies and God may think nothing of you. Everybody may tear you down to pieces and God may think you're the greatest man of your generation. Very few are spiritual to have discernment, to recognize a man's worth in our time.

So don't get discouraged if you find people don't understand the way you are going. I've had to battle with this almost all my life. And if you really follow the Lord, you may find that people won't understand the way you're going.

But if God is giving you grace, then he recognizes that you're humble. Humility is something only God can recognize. Now we go to Job chapter 1 and we read here, I want to point out something here, first of all, concerning his concern.

First of all, let me mention here about his concern for his children. A godly man has concern to bring up his children in godly ways. That is mentioned in the very first book of inspired scripture.

A man who has no concern to bring up his children in godly ways cannot be a godly man. I don't care what else he is. Can you walk with God and bring up children? Do you know the Bible says in one sentence, Genesis 5, it says, Enoch walked with God and had sons and daughters.

It's one sentence. You walk with God and have sons and daughters? Sure. Job walked with God, and he had seven sons and three daughters, and he was very concerned that they should not fall away from God.

Here is the proof. Verse 4, chapter 1, verse 4, his sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one in his day. That means on his birthday, everybody's birthday, they would have a feast.

They were grown up because each had their own house. Job was an older man now. His children all had their own houses, and they would invite their sisters to come and eat and drink with them.

Perhaps the three daughters lived with Job, but the seven sons all had their own houses. And it came about, they celebrated their birthdays for a number of days of feasting, and Job would send for them. He said, my sons and daughters come here.

Okay, now your feasting is over. Come here. And he would consecrate them.

I don't know what he did, but this is probably what is described later. This is how he consecrated them. He would rise up early in the morning.

A godly man rises up early in the morning. It's all there in Scripture. The very first pages of inspired Scripture.

And he offers offerings to God early in the morning, not only for himself, for his children. He prays. He prays for his family.

Early in the morning, he prays for his family, and he calls his children and consecrates them. Now, what was the reason? The reason was Job felt, perhaps my children have sinned in their hearts. You notice that verse 5? He's concerned about sin in the heart.

A godly man is concerned about sin in the heart. This is all way back before any Bible was written, any unconscious, unconscious sin. None of all this psychology and all these things were there.

It was just Job and God, and he understood. Perhaps there's sin in my children's hearts. Perhaps, maybe unconsciously they, without being aware, they said something which dishonored God.

Oh God, please forgive my children. It was not their going and committing adultery or doing something on the outside. It was sin in their heart.

Look at the sensitiveness of this man. The sensitivity, rather, of this man to sin. That's why the Bible says he was a blameless and an upright man.

What did all those other preachers know about this type of life? A godly man becomes a godly man because he's got a life in secret. He shuts the door, and in secret, behind that door, he's got dealings with God which other people know nothing about. That's what makes a man a godly man.

Job shut the door, and he had dealings with God. He was concerned about his family, those whom he had responsibility for. He was concerned about them.

He did a lot of other good things. You can read in chapter 31. Cared for the poor, helped the blind, and cared for the widows and the orphans, a lot of things.

But primarily, he cared for his family. He was concerned. He prayed for his family, and brought up his children in a good way.

And this is not something that he did once in a while when he felt like it, or when he got a stirring sermon. He never heard sermons in any case. It says in the last part of verse 5, thus Job did continually.

Continually. Now, a lot of people seek God when they're in trouble. That is common.

But Job was not in any trouble here when he offered these offerings. A godly man offers things to God when there is no trouble, when everything is going smoothly. Not when there's trouble, but when things are going well.

That's the time he gets along with God and offers his thanksgiving and his praise, and confesses his sin, and consecrates his children. And he did it continually. Nobody can become a godly man who does not have steadfast principles in his life that he practices continually.

Are you surprised that Satan made such a man a target? Sure. Satan doesn't want such people on the face of the earth. He didn't want them 4,000 years ago, and he doesn't want such people on the face of the earth today.

And that's why he'll do everything in his power to discourage you. He got a wife to trouble Job. He got preachers to trouble Job.

But it didn't make a difference. What a man, what an example. If you can be a man or a woman like that, that you're not disturbed by what people say, or even your family members say, because you live in humility and brokenness before God's face.

Think that God can make you a witness in the heavenlies against Satan. Long for that, my brother, sister. Please, please, I beg of you, be free from seeking the honor of men.

You will never be a servant of God in your life if you seek the honor of one man on the face of the earth. Galatians 1.10, if I seek to please men, I can never be the servant of Christ. The surest way with all your Bible knowledge, never to become a servant of Christ, is by seeking to please even one man.

Live before God. And now we read of a time when the created angels were called sons of God. It's an expression used, verse six, of direct creations of God.

Sons of God means direct creations of God. See, all of us were not born as a direct creation of God, like Adam was. Adam was called the son of God.

We were born through our parents. But when we are born again, then that is a direct creation of God. And again, we are called sons of God.

So sons of God is an expression. It doesn't mean God's children. It means direct creation of God here.

And it's speaking about the angels who do not multiply or have sex. And Satan also came among them. He was also a direct creation of God.

And the Lord said to Satan, where are you coming from? Of course, the Lord knew. It is written there for our instruction. And Satan said, from roaming about on the earth and walking around on Satan is a world traveler.

You want to be a world traveler? They call it the jet set. On a plane here, going here, going there, going to every country here and there. Satan did it 4,000 years ago.

Jesus never traveled like that. Jesus traveled only in Palestine. He stayed where God wanted him to be.

Don't think it's great to be a world traveler. If God calls you to do that, that's fine. But be satisfied with the will of God.

Don't think that those who travel the world are the most blessed. Jesus didn't. I just mentioned that because a lot of people can get wrong ideas in today's Christendom.

So Satan travels around the world and roams about watching, observing. He's got all his demons in this entire structure, organized structure of people examining everybody's lives and reporting to Satan. Satan knows about everybody in the world.

And the Lord said to Satan, have you considered my servant Job? See, there's where we find the Lord pointing out Job to Satan and say, there's a man whom, have you, you roamed around the earth. Did you see this man in Uz? Perfect, blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil. In the very first book of Scripture, we see God commending his servant.

The very first paragraph. What a challenge. If God can say that about you to Satan.

God, forget all the honor you get on the earth, all the approval of men, all the appreciation of men, all the things that make you appear so qualified and great and important, forget it. What does God say about you to Satan? When God picks out your name and says, Satan, have you seen this man or this woman in that place? God won't tell a lie. What does he say? It's very important.

There's no one like him on the earth. He was the only man on earth who was so outstanding. God compared him with others.

You think God doesn't compare his children with each other? Here it is. There is no one like him on the earth. How could God say that? He compared Job with the others and said, this man's different.

He compares you with other believers and says, this man is different. And it's not because of knowledge. It's because of character.

He doesn't say he's a clever man. He doesn't say he's a rich man. He was a very rich man.

But God doesn't mention one word about his wealth to Satan because God's not impressed by wealth. Whether you're wealthy or poor makes no difference. Unless you think that you have to be poor in order to be spiritual.

The very first person in scripture mentioned as the first book of the Bible was a very rich man and he was spiritual too. And that's what provoked the jealousy of so many other people who couldn't bear to see somebody who was rich and spiritual. They would have thought if he's poor and spiritual, okay.

See, I mentioned that because some people have the idea that you have to be poor in order to be spiritual. That's up to God. Paul was very, very poor.

So was Peter, but Job was very rich. That's up to God as to how he deals with that. All I'm saying is it makes no difference.

It's like saying, do you have to have a white skin to be spiritual or do you have to have a black skin to be spiritual? And you say skin doesn't matter. I say money doesn't matter either. It's exactly the same.

Whether you earn 20,000 rupees a month or whether you earn 1,000 rupees a month. That's got nothing to do with spirituality. Spirituality is character.

And that's what we see here. A blameless and upright man fearing God and turn away from evil. And Satan accuses even the most godly man on the earth.

Satan accused Jesus. Satan accuses Job. And do you think Satan will not accuse you? He certainly will.

And do you think Satan does not have agents to accuse you? He's got plenty of them. These three friends of Job were accusing him all the time. Even the fourth one, Elihu, accused him.

And so we see accusation is characteristic of Satan and all his agents. And a godly man faces all types of accusations, but he's not affected by them. Those who have discernment like God will be able to see this is a blameless and an upright man.

One who fears God and turns away from evil. The fear of God, reverence for God is mentioned so much in the very first book of inspired scripture. Reverence for God.

That is so important. And we see here that there is a difference. I just want to mention in passing between the way God works and the way Satan works.

Satan is roaming to and fro. There's a haste about his activity and movement. God works slowly.

And Satan says, you have made a hedge around him, verse 10, and his house and all that he has in every side. You have blessed the work of his hands and his possessions. Now, from what he says, we learn three things.

God has put a hedge around a godly man's life, around his family, and around his finances and his property. There are three hedges around the lives of all godly people, around his personal life, around his family, around his bank account and his property as well. Satan recognized that.

Satan could see in the spiritual realm. We cannot see those hedges, but Satan could see it. He's a spirit and he could see this.

I cannot get through because he tried to get through to Job and he found hedge after hedge after hedge. He couldn't get at his property. He couldn't get his family.

He couldn't get at him. It's true. And that's a great comfort to me to know that if I live a godly life, there are three hedges around and none of those hedges will be open except without God's permission.

The Lord told Peter, Satan has asked for permission to sift you. And here we find in the book of Job, Satan had to ask God for permission to get through those hedges and God gave it to him one by one. He didn't give it all together and he said you can only do so much.

For example, he told later on him you cannot touch Job's life. You can trouble attack his body, but you cannot kill him. And Satan couldn't kill him.

Satan would have liked to kill Job, but he couldn't. He could only give him boils. But he gave, Satan gave, God gave permission first of all said, okay, hedge one and hedge two are open.

Who was inside hedge one? What was inside hedge one? All his property. Satan destroyed all of it. He came down from millions to zero in one day.

What was inside the second hedge? His children and his wife. God said, go inside, do what you like. He killed all his children.

Why didn't he kill his wife? Because he felt I can use her. It's better to keep her alive. It's true.

If she's dead, she's no use. If she's alive, she'll keep on nagging him and nagging him and nagging him and troubling him. When you see a nagging wife, you know why Satan has kept her alive.

Yeah, it's true. Some people are more useful alive than dead to the devil. That's why he knows whose life to take and whose life not to take.

I want to say here that he could not do it without God's permission. Okay. The Lord said to Satan, all that he has is in your power, but don't put forth your hand, verse 12 on him.

Now there are a number of things that we can learn about Satan also from the very first book of inspired scripture. First of all, he can only be in one place at one time. God is everywhere.

But Satan, if he is in this place, he cannot be in that place because he's a created being. He's got demons, plenty of demons roaming around the earth. But Satan himself as a being, if he's up there talking to God, he can't be down here.

And if he's down here in one place, he cannot be in another place. That's one thing. And second thing we see in the book of Job is that Satan cannot see the future.

I mean, if he saw the future, he would know that what is ultimately going to happen to Job. He's going to be far more blessed. Why should I bless him more? Let me just leave him alone.

At least let him only get half a blessing. If he knew what was going to be the ultimate end of Calvary, that he himself would be defeated. Do you think he would have urged people to crucify Christ? He cannot see the future.

If he knew that this gallows, Haman himself will hang on it. Do you think he would have made Haman create, construct those gallows? He doesn't know one bit about even tomorrow. But supposing you're planning something evil, the devil knows that.

I mean, not your thoughts. That's the other thing I want to say. Satan cannot read your thoughts.

He can only see what you're doing on the outside. All he could say was Job was on the outside. And he said, I guess that he's doing it with the wrong motives, but it was not wrong motives.

He couldn't see Job's thoughts. If he could see Job's thoughts, he would have seen that Job was not living for property and money and all those things. He really loved God.

He could not see people's thoughts. And the other thing we learned here is that he needs God's permission in order to attack his children. As I said, he has to get God's permission and he has to report to God.

That's a great comfort for me to know that, that this man whom, this spirit whom I'm battling, he doesn't know anything about my thoughts. He doesn't know anything about my future. And he has to ultimately go and report to God.

And he's under God's control. That's what I see. And that takes away all my fear of him.

It's a great comfort to know that in the first book of scripture, that he cannot touch you without God's permission. Now, I want you to see how Job reacted to all this. He heard that everything was lost.

One after the other servants came and said, everything is gone. And Job arose, verse 20, and tore his robe, shaved his head, fell to the ground and worshiped. In the very first chapter of the very first page of inspired written scripture, I see that a man of God is a worshiper more than Bible teaching and more than evangelism.

To be a man of God, you must be a worshiper. And you must be a worshiper when you have lost everything. And you must be a worshiper when you have everything.

Be a worshiper. Jesus said, God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship him in the spirit and truth. And the father seeks for people who will worship him.

And worshiping him is giving him everything. Job said, I came from my mother's womb naked and I shall return there naked. He's probably referring to mother earth from which he came naked.

And he returns now that to the dust naked. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord through all this Job did not sin, nor did he blame God.

He accepted. He had no example before him to follow. We have so many examples.

I tell you when I compare myself with Job, I hang my head in shame. And I say, Lord, this is amazing what this man, he had no example, no example of Jesus, no Holy Spirit, no scripture, no brothers, nothing in front of him, just him and God. And if he could come to such a life, why can't I come to such a life? I certainly can.

That's the challenge that comes to me from the first chapter of Job. And we read here that in chapter two, the devil was very unhappy because Job did not react the way he thought he would react. And so the Lord asked him, where have you come from? And again, he's been roaming around on the earth.

He's always roaming around. And again, the Lord says, have you considered my servant Job? He still holds fastest integrity. Chapter two, verse three, even though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.

And then Satan says, yeah, that's because he loves his own life so much. He doesn't care for his property. He doesn't care for his children, but he really loves himself.

Everything that a man has, he will give for his own life. He knows the selfishness of man. And it is true what he said there.

Almost all men are selfish. They think of themselves. Ultimately, in a time of pressure, a man thinks of himself.

And Satan was saying, Job is no different, but now touch his body. And then let me see whether he still will stand true to you. And so Job, the Lord said, okay, go ahead.

Only you can take away his life. And Satan went out and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Imagine getting boils from the crown of your head to the sole of your feet.

Can you think of that? From the crown of your head to the sole of your feet. Boils, boils, boils, boils, boils, some terrible skin disease erupting in boils. People think it was leprosy because we read that Job went outside the town.

He couldn't live in his house anymore. He went outside in the town and sat on a dung heap there. And among the ashes in verse eight, and there was crashing himself the whole day.

And there came his wife nagging him. Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse this wretched God of yours and commit suicide. That's what he was, she was telling him.

Curse God and die means how can Job die? There's only one way, commit suicide, commit suicide. There in the beginning of scripture, you'll find Satan tempting people to commit suicide through their loved ones. Adam was tempted through Eve.

Job was tempted through Eve. Think of that. The first two books of scripture, you'll find a man being tempted through his wife.

Satan came through Eve and Satan came through Mrs. Job. Yeah, Satan uses our loved ones to tempt us. It was Peter who told Jesus, don't go to the cross.

It wasn't the Pharisees, it was Peter. Satan can come through our loved ones. But he said to her, and I wish we had more husbands like this who would not listen to their wives.

You speak as a foolish woman speaks. Shall we accept good from the hand of God and not accept adversity? He says, you think that I must only accept good? You know, I heard this saying that when some calamity hits you, you should never ask this question, why does this happen to me? If you don't ask the same question, when some blessing hits you, when some blessing comes to your life, do you ever say, oh, why does this happen to me? So many others are not blessed. We usually don't ask that question when blessing comes.

We usually ask that question when some adversity comes. He said in this, he did not sin. Now, when Job's three friends heard of this adversity, verse 11, they came each one from his own place, verse 11 to 11.

Eliphaz, the Timonite, Bildad, Zophar, and they made an appointment and they came to sympathize with him and comfort him. I don't really believe they came to sympathize with him. As you read later on when they, the way they speak, there was no sympathy there at all.

That was criticism, accusation. You are a sinner, Job. All three of them accused him.

They were in fellowship with the devil. And I'll tell you what I feel they were, why they came. These were people who were jealous of Job.

Jealous because he was a godly man and a rich man and everything was going well for him and for his family. And a lot of believers are jealous of a godly man and his ministry and his influence, and they're waiting for some calamity to hit him. It's not just the devil who waits for calamity to hit the godly man.

There are believers who are waiting for some calamity to hit a godly man. You search your own heart and see if it's not true. And when that calamity hits this godly man, they are secretly happy.

Aren't you sometimes? And then they pretend on the outside, oh Job, we are so sorry, just like you go and pretend when you hear about some calamity and go to that brother's house and say we are so sorry to hear and actually you're secretly delighted. That happens. This is so true to human nature.

Pretending to sympathize but deep down delighted that at last this fellow has learned something. God has hit him. And they lifted up their eyes.

They did not recognize him. They wept. They're pretty good actors.

They tore their robes. They threw dust over their heads. You really think these people are sorry? And they sat down with him and they didn't say anything for seven days or seven nights.

Yeah, that's part of the suffering of godly people that they are, the others are jealous of them. They suffer from the devil. Sometimes they suffer from their wives.

They suffer physically. They suffer financially perhaps in the trials God takes them through and they suffer from the jealousy of sometimes even their co-workers. I've seen this in Christian work.

People are jealous of another man's ministry. They long that something bad will happen so that that man's ministry goes down. They are jealous of God blessing a man's work.

When there's an anointing upon a man's ministry or his work and the work spreads and God is using a man to spread his word or to save souls or to build churches or to reach many many places for Christ. There's jealousy even among those who claim to be his friends. And the only way to expose their jealousy is to allow something to happen to this man.

God allows something to happen to godly men to expose the wickedness and jealousy of other people. I have seen it many times in my life. Be warned.

We'll stop there and continue in our next session in the book of Job. Let's bow before God and pray.

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