

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.

This verse seems to imply a time of scheduled regularity for these presentations.

Job 2:2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

This verse mirrors verse 1:7. Even though Satan had failed in his attempt to cause Job to curse God, he doesn't give up. Failure doesn't slow him down; he is constantly looking for potential "victims."

Job 2:3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.*

This verse mirrors verse 1:8 until the very last section. It was a statement of Satan's failure in his attempt to cause Job to curse God—"still he holdeth fast his integrity." Obviously, Satan wasn't going to bring Job up again, but he had made a public challenge to God in the presence of the other sons of God and was made to acknowledge his failure.

Emphasis is given that Satan could never have attacked Job without God's permission, which is essentially saying that God was the one acting against Job. That helps explain a verse in Isaiah that is difficult.

Isaiah 45:7 "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."

Emphasis is also given that Job was "destroyed without cause." No sin in Job's life had prompted this action. In fact, it was quite the opposite. It was Job's commitment and faithfulness to God that brought disaster upon him.

This thought goes against human logic. If we are truthful, we must admit that we Christians more often than not equate health, wealth and protection to God's blessing. In fact there are many sections in the Bible that support this thinking, but that is not always true. That is why the book of Job is so important to us. It is a clear-cut case of testing, trouble, or disaster in our life as an opportunity to glorify God and not punishment for wrongdoing.

Job 2:4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

Job 2:5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Is Satan at all flustered? No. His answer was ready. Nothing is as important to a man as his own life. If God would allow him to attack Job personally, he is sure that Job would curse God to his face. He wants another chance at Job. His failure is sticking in his craw. Remember, it was pride that caused Satan's rebellion. Satan is trying to save face in the presence of the sons of God.

Job 2:6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

Probably much to Satan's surprise, he is granted another opportunity to attack Job. God extends the limits of Satan's powers to include Job's person, but not his life.

Job 2:7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

The wording here indicates that Satan's attack was immediate after leaving the presence of God. He causes boils to break out all over Job's body—head to toe.

There are other places in scripture that indicate that Satan is allowed to inflict health problems within parameters set by God.

Luke 13:16 "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"

2Corinthians 12:7 "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."

My brain gets going with weird thoughts sometimes. Doesn't Satan know that God already knows the outcome of every opportunity he is allowed? What keeps him going? Does he actually think he can get the victory in the end? He is an amazing creature.

Job 2:8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

How does Job respond? According to the accepted customs of the day. He separates himself so as not to cause infection to anyone else. He sits down among the ashes, which most reflects his feelings about life about now. Research indicates that these ashes were the residue of the dung that was burnt outside the city. You would have thought that a man of his position would have been tended to with great care. Evidently, his loss of possessions also resulted in loss of position and esteem of any sort. Oh how true to human nature that is. How many friends of people in positions of wealth and authority would remain their friends if they lost that wealth and/or position?

I would assume that scraping the boils with the broken piece of pottery must have provided some relief to endure the pain of the scraping. What a humiliating, tormented position to be in.

As we continue to read in Job, we will find that these boils were painful to Job in many ways—causing sleeplessness, causing nightmares when he could sleep, making him depressed, making him repulsive to his wife, losing a great deal of weight, etc.

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

Now we get to the first mention of Job's "loving" wife. Matthew Henry made an interesting statement regarding her being left behind by Satan as a tool of torment. "If Satan leaves anything that he has permission to take away, it is with a design of mischief." Why not? He had already succeeded with Adam by using Eve.

Some commentators seem to think her comments are out of her love for her husband and the desire to see him put out of his misery. I have a hard time accepting this thought. She was the wife of a very godly man. She had to know that cursing God would jeopardize his eternal life. We know he is confident of that life according to chapter 19.

Job 19:25-26 *"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God...."*

In his wife's defense, however, I know she had to be beside herself with grief in light of losing all her children and becoming a pauper all in one day. I think she was angry at God and wanted to justify her own anger by getting her husband to respond in like manner. She did, however, hit the nail on the head—It was Job's integrity that was being tested (2:3).

"integrity" = moral innocence; Webster: moral soundness, freedom from corrupting influence or motive

Job 2:10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Job rebukes his wife. The Hebrew for the phrase "foolish woman" indicates that it was a strong rebuke.

5036 nabal, *naw-bawl*'; from 5034; stupid; wicked (especially impious):—fool(-ish, -ish man, -ish woman), vile person.

The wording indicates that his wife's speech was not in accordance with her normal character. He reminds her again of God's sovereignty in choice of

bestowing blessing and removing blessing. Still Job does not sin with his lips (as Satan had said he would), but his time of testing is not over.

Job 2:11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

Job 2:12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

Job 2:13 So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

Enter Job's friends. How much time did it take for the news to travel to these friends? We don't know. Job 7:3 indicates that it might have been months. I would assume that these were some of the other most wealthy and influential men of the east. It would seem that they were quite good friends since they contacted one another regarding coming together to visit Job for the purposes of mourning with him and comforting him.

Commentators offer many possibilities for the identities of Job's three friends, but nothing more is necessary to the narrative than to be able to identify each one by name as they dialogue with Job.

They evidently knew where to look for Job. As they approached the city, they saw the figure at the ash heap, but they couldn't identify the pitiful figure they saw as Job. I would assume he was dirty and emaciated and even disfigured. They knew it had to be he, so they lifted up their voices in weeping. Just as Job had previously, they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads as an outward sign of mourning.

The next verse is quite amazing to me. They sat down on the ground with him with complete lack of communication for seven days and nights. His grief was so great that they couldn't bring themselves to say a word to him. I know there have been times when I had no clue what to say, but I have always found words meant for comfort. The older and wiser I have gotten, I now know that there are times when just quiet companionship and shared tears are the greatest comfort one can offer.

I think it was a sign of the strength of their friendship that they would be willing just to sit in companionship in silence for a show of support for seven days and nights. According to my study, the seven days and nights were the accepted period of mourning for the dead.