

Abounding Grace Christian Church

What about the Book of Job? – Part 2

I. Opening Text: Job 1:1-12

A. Last time, we were introduced primarily to Job. It was mentioned that in Job's time, there was very little, if any, revelation of Satan. In fact, the entire Old Testament gives us sparse insight into the person and work of Satan. In this lesson, we're going to examine the individual called "**Satan**". In the Hebrew, this word was not being used as a proper name but as a description. The word "**satan**" means; "**adversary, one who withstands.**"¹

B. Scholars tell us that in the Ancient Near East, people, in general, believed quite rigidly in what is called the "**retribution principle.**" Andrew Hill and John Walton explain:

"The retribution principle can be summed up in two two-part affirmations: (1) The righteous will prosper and the wicked will suffer, and (2) those who prosper are righteous, while those who suffer are wicked."²

1. Though there is Biblical evidence that there is truth to this principle, (e.g. **Deuteronomy 28; Proverbs 11:8; Galatians 6:7-8**), it does not always manifest in this fallen world. Sometimes the wicked do prosper (cf. **Psalm 73:3-5**), and sometimes the righteous do suffer. Job expresses confusion and frustration in this because it looked contrary to his beliefs (**Job 21:7-14**). Certainly, in eternity, the righteous will only prosper and the wicked will only suffer, but, in this world, it doesn't always work that way.

2. In the book of Job, the rigid belief in the retribution principle explains why Job's "friends" accused him of having sinned and that he needed to repent. Hill and Walton also state:

"The retribution principle provides a framework for the philosophical discussion presented in the book of Job... Though the principle was widely believed to be true by the Israelites and their neighbors, it is clear from the Psalms (cf. 37) that theory and experience did not always mesh. In Israel the gap between theory and experience created an especially poignant problem because of the Hebrews' view of God. Since there was only one sovereign God, suffering could not come from any other source. Because this one God was believed to be absolutely just, suffering must have a logical explanation. Furthermore, if God were to be truly just, suffering would be in proportion to wickedness, and prosperity would be in proportion to righteousness."³

3. The fact that the Israelites believed that suffering could only come from God, shows their limited knowledge of the adversary – Satan.

4. **Job 1:6-7** – First, we see that the adversary comes before the Lord, along with the "**sons of God.**" This could be referring to angels or some other kind of spiritual beings in heaven. Even though Satan shows up here, it's possible that he was not invited. God addresses the adversary (Satan) and asks; "**From where do you come?**" (verse 7). Satan's answer is: "**From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.**" This coincides with **I Peter 5:8** which reads; "**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.**" The word "**devour**" means; "**destroy, ... to suffer ruin or destruction**"⁴ (NOTE: The context of this verse has to do, in part, with suffering as a Christian. See **I Peter 4:12-19; 5:8-10.**)

5. **Job 1:8** – God asks Satan; "**Have you considered My servant Job...**" The Hebrew has "**have you placed your heart on Job?**" This means "**direct your mind to**"⁵ Based on this, it doesn't seem that God was pointing out Job to Satan but was, instead, recognizing that Satan had already been planning on targeting Job.

6. **Job 1:9-11** – Satan's goal was to prove that Job only served God for the blessings. Satan wanted to prove that if Job's blessings were taken away, he would curse God. In other words, he was saying that Job only served God for selfish reasons. Some suggest that it was God's policy of blessing the righteous that was on trial here rather than Job.⁶

¹ J. Barton Payne, "2252 שָׂטָן," in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 874.

² Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 432–433.

³ *Ibid.*, 414.

⁴ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁵ Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible* (Biblical Studies Press, 2005).

⁶ Hill and Walton, 408.

7. **Job 1:12** – With this verse it becomes obvious that there are some things we just don't know. If Satan is telling the truth and God did have a “**hedge around**” Job (**verse 10**), somehow, this hedge of protection had been removed. Many scholars believe that God sovereignly decided to just take away His protection for no reason other than to prove Satan wrong. This theology, however, seems to be contrary to what we see in other portions of Scripture, especially the New Testament, in regard to the character of God. God is a loving, caring Father who gives good things and is for us and not against us (**John 17:23; Romans 8:31-39; James 1:17**). An alternative view of this is that everything Job had was already in Satan's hands and he just wasn't aware of it. He is called the “**god of this world**” (**II Corinthians 4:4**), the “**ruler of this world**” (**John 12:31**) and “**the prince of the power of the air**” (**Ephesians 2:2**). God, however, because of His love, said essentially, “**Job's belongings and children are in your hands but I'm not going to let you touch him physically.**” No matter what the situation was, we must remember that the New Testament believer is in a different covenant with God than Job was, if Job had one at all.

8. The Origin and Fall of Satan.

a. Before his fall, some believe Satan was known as Lucifer. **Isaiah 14:12-15**. “**Lucifer**”

means; “**day star**”; “**son of the morning**”; or “**light-bearer**”.

b. Satan is a created being, therefore dependent upon God for his very existence.

Ezekiel

28:13,15.

c. Satan was perfect in the day he was created. **Ezekiel 28:15.**

d. Satan was beautiful in his original created state. **Ezekiel 28:12-13.**

e. Satan was full of wisdom. **Ezekiel 28:12. (compare with James 3:15-16.)**

f. Satan was an anointed cherub. **Ezekiel 28:14,16,18.**

g. Satan was possibly created with musical instruments built into him. Possibly was a leader of worship to God. **Ezekiel 28:13.**

h. Satan was in the holy mountain of God. **Ezekiel 28:14,16.** This refers to being in the Kingdom of God.

9. Some Specific Activities of Satan.

a. **In Relation to God** - He opposes God's Person and Truth. In Satan's rebellion and hatred toward God, he attempts to either sway people to not believe in God at all or to

sway them to believe in a false god(s). He is ultimately responsible for the false concepts of our world such as evolution, humanism and relativism as well as every false religion such as Islam, Hinduism, Mormonism, etc..

b. **In Relation to the Unsaved.**

1) Prevent Acceptance of the Truth.

2) Snatch away the Gospel. **Luke 8:12.**

3) Blind minds to the Gospel. **II Corinthians 4:3-4.**

4) Promote Attractions to Falsehoods.

a) Indoctrinating in false religions. **I Timothy 4:1-3.**

b) Ingraining a false lifestyle. **Ephesians 2:1-3.** The “**course of this world**”.

c. **In Relation to the Believer. (Christian)**

1) Deception. This is Satan's greatest weapon against the believer. **Colossians 2:8; Ephesians 4:22; Hebrews 3:12-13.**

2) Temptation to Sin. **Matthew 4:1-10; Galatians 6:1; I Thessalonians 3:5; James 1:13-14.**

3) Inciting Persecution. **Matthew 13:21; Galatians 6:12; II Timothy 3:12.**

4) Promoting Divisions. **I Corinthians 1:10; II Corinthians 2:10-11.** Taking offense has been called “**The Bait of Satan.**”

10. Satan is Defeated!!

a. The enemy has been “spoiled”. **Colossians 2:9-15. See also Colossians 1:13.**

- b. The devil's work has been undone. **I John 3:8.**
- c. The devil has been rendered paralyzed or idle. **Hebrews 2:14-15.**
- d. Satan is under our feet. **Ephesians 1:20-23.**