

## *Preview of Job*

The Book of Job is the first of what are termed the poetic books of the Old Testament. No dates identify the time of its writing, but we are confident that this book is historically accurate, divinely inspired, and preserved for our inspiration and encouragement.

The background for the dialogue that makes up the bulk of this book is the simple history of a man immersed in the deepest throes of human suffering. The writer gives us a glimpse into the heavenly scenes that precipitated Job's experiences. Following this, we witness the pathetic picture of a man who was systematically deprived of family, moral support, and wealth—things upon which many people depend for meaning in life.

Job maintained a strong confidence in God through it all. He reaffirmed his faith numerous times by such statements as "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15). In the end, God credited Job with having spoken the thing that is right (Job 42:7).

In the concluding scenes of the book, God revealed His majesty and power. That revelation brought Job a sense of great humiliation and self abasement—he acknowledged God's omnipotence. We also can place complete confidence in the Lord, even in the most difficult experience.

## Satan Attacks Job

**Lesson Scope:** [Job 1 and 2](#)

### Lesson Focus

Job was a native of the land of Uz. He was a man of faith and integrity who had prospered greatly under God's blessing. Suddenly and inexplicably, he experienced great trouble. His possessions were stolen or destroyed, his children perished, and his health failed. "In all this did not Job sin with his lips" (Job 2:10). The rapidity with which this happened likely suggested to Job that it was no ordinary misfortune. And as he sat in ashes, scraping his boils with a potsherd, he likely pondered the meaning of these events. The character of Job has been a comfort and an inspiration to many when facing disaster or suffering.

The first two chapters of Job present an insight into the conflict between God and Satan. We also understand how men are affected by this conflict. Though our human perspective limits our understanding of this conflict, we can experience victory through such times in our lives by unwavering faithfulness.

Satan uses various methods and great effort to turn men against God. God, however, sovereignly limits the devil's attacks.

This lesson presents a unique glimpse behind the scenes into the conflict between the forces of good and evil. In studying this aspect of the lesson, keep close to what has been revealed in the Word. Speculation will not be profitable.

We see the importance of responding with positive attitudes toward difficulty and trial. Regardless what we face, our faith in God must not be shaken. God has given us many promises for such experiences and it would be valuable to consider some of these.

**Lesson Aim:** To discover truths related to the conflict between Satan and God for men's souls.

**Theme Verse:** [1 Corinthians 10:13](#). There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation

also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

### Lesson Text

#### "Hast Thou Considered ... Job?"

**Job 1:1-2** <sup>1</sup>There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. <sup>2</sup>And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

**Job 1:6-8** <sup>6</sup>Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. <sup>7</sup> And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. <sup>8</sup>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?

#### "He ... Is in Thy Power"

**Job 1:9-12** <sup>9</sup>Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? <sup>10</sup>Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. <sup>11</sup>But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. <sup>12</sup>And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

**Job 2:1-10** <sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. <sup>5</sup>But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. <sup>6</sup>And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he *is* in thine hand; but

save his life. <sup>7</sup> 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.

### **"In All This Did Not Job Sin"**

**Job 1:20-22** <sup>20</sup>Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, <sup>21</sup>And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. <sup>22</sup>In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

**Job 2:8-10** <sup>8</sup>And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. <sup>9</sup>Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. <sup>10</sup>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.

### **Questions for Study**

#### **"Hast Thou Considered ... Job"**

1. What do we learn from this passage about Satan's abilities and limitations?
2. What challenges did God place before Satan concerning Job?

#### **"He ... Is in Thy Power"**

3. Describe the hedge that the Lord places around His saints. What is Satan's concept of that hedge?
4. What are some possible reasons God allowed Satan to go as far as He did?
5. How might Satan use even close family ties to destroy us?

#### **"In All This Did Not Job Sin"**

6. How could Job retain his integrity in such dire circumstances?
7. What attitudes are necessary to remain faithful in trial and adversity?
8. What are some helps to prepare us for times when trial comes?

### **Analyzing the Passage**

Bible scholars do not agree about the location of Uz. It appears to have been east of the Jordan River and west of the Euphrates River in extreme northern Arabia. On a modern-day map, Uz would likely be in eastern Jordan, near where Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq meet. Lamentations 4:21 suggests a location near Edom, which was located immedi-

ately east of the Dead Sea in present-day Jordan.

Eschewed and escheweth (Job 1:1, 8) mean "to turn way from" or "avoid." Perfect and upright (Job 1:1) means "pious and straight." Integrity (Job 2:3) is innocence. Job's trust and faith in the Lord were like a child's trust in his father. It was complete, unquestioning, and obedient.

The word evil as used in Job 2:10 indicates calamity, distress, injury, and sorrow. This use fits Job's experience without compromising the divine qualities of God.

God's words to Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" were repeated twice (Job 1:8; 2:3). Because of Job's faithfulness, God could challenge Satan in this way.

The rending of the mantle, shaving of the head (Job 1:20), and sitting in sackcloth (Job 16:15) and ashes (Job 2:8) were all common expressions of sorrow in Old Testament times.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **"Hast Thou Considered ... Job"**

1. Satan is actively seeking those whom he can deceive or overthrow (Job 1:7). He is busy throughout the earth, seeking to deceive the very elect, if possible (Matthew 24:24). He does not care what methods he uses. May we be diligent in resisting him by the power of God. In ourselves, we are no match for Satan, but we can overcome him by the power of God (1 John 4:4).
2. The righteous are the focus of the conflict between God and Satan (Job 1:8). Satan's motives have not changed. Desiring to overpower God, yet unable to reach Him, he focused on turning men against God. The greatest proof of God's superior power to Satan is the keeping of His people. And we have a part in that.
3. Satan brings false accusations against the saints (Job 1:9-11). Satan accused God of unduly protecting Job. He does not acknowledge or understand God's keeping power of the saint who walks with Him.
4. Satan uses men to further his purposes (Job 2:9-10). We should never underestimate the power of fellow humans to entice us into sin. Satan's tactics of influencing the godly through other people are often very effective. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Proverbs 1:10). Satan also uses the words and actions of others as a means of temptation, even when they were not intended to be so.

### **"He ... Is in Thy Power"**

5. God fortifies His saints against the fury of the adversary (Job 1:10). God is not unjust in protecting His saints. He ever desires their complete day-by-day victory (2 Peter 2:9). God never allows any temptation His servants cannot overcome.

6. God in His omnipotence restrains Satan's attempts to harm the faithful (Job 1:12). Satan is not omnipotent. Therefore, God has control of everything that Satan would use to cause the righteous to fall. Revelation 12 details God's power in helping His people against Satan's efforts to destroy. May we always claim the superior power of God over Satan.

### **"In All This Did Not Job Sin"**

7. Those who faithfully endure temptation aid in the conflict against Satan (Job 1:20-22). We cannot be victorious over Satan's attacks in our own strength. Neither will God give us victory if we fail to resist Satan. Man in total surrender to and full cooperation with God makes an invincible force that never fails to overcome the enemy.

8. The faithful honor God by patiently enduring suffering and by acknowledging God's sovereignty and goodness (Job 1:20-22). When one is experiencing suffering, the temptation often comes to ask "Why?" We should, instead, confirm our conviction that God is good and does all things well. What He allows and superintends in the lives of His people will always work out for good if they respond positively to His workings (Romans 8:28; Hebrews 12:11).

A proper response to suffering gives a powerful testimony. Job's faithfulness finally silenced Satan's accusations. May our faithfulness in suffering be a positive force in the conflict between God and Satan.

9. In the midst of Satan's attacks, the righteous rest in God's sovereignty (Job 2:3, 10). Job did not understand what was behind his suffering, but he knew that God was sovereign and worthy of his trust. When unbelievers face difficulty, many times they become bitter toward God, but difficulty and suffering drive the Christian closer to the Lord. The Christian's faith takes him safely through even the severest of trials (Isaiah 43:2).

### **Important Teachings**

1. Satan is actively seeking those whom he can deceive or overthrow (Job 1:7).

2. The righteous are the focus of the conflict between God and Satan (Job 1:8).
3. Satan brings false accusations against the saints (Job 1:9-11).
4. Satan uses men to further his purposes (Job 2:9-10).
5. God fortifies His saints against the fury of the adversary (Job 1:10).
6. God in His omnipotence restrains Satan's attempts to harm the faithful (Job 1:12).
7. Those who faithfully endure temptation aid in the conflict against Satan (Job 1:20-22).
8. The faithful honor God by patiently enduring suffering and by acknowledging God's sovereignty and goodness (Job 1:20-22).
9. In the midst of Satan's attacks, the righteous rest in God's sovereignty (Job 2:3, 10).

### **Answers to Questions**

1. What do we learn from this passage about Satan's abilities and limitations?

Satan works in the earth, among men, communicating with God at times. Satan does not understand the connection of godly men to God by faith. Satan has some control over men and what happens to men, but only as God allows. Satan assumes that even men of God are earthly-minded.

2. What challenges did God place before Satan concerning Job?

God challenged Satan with Job's perfection, uprightness, fear of God, and avoidance of evil. Furthermore, He challenged Satan that Job still retained his integrity even when he lost all his material blessings and his sons and daughters.

3. Describe the hedge that the Lord places around His saints. What is Satan's concept of that hedge?

The Lord always protects His people from spiritual destruction. He never allows any temptation to come our way that we cannot overcome. Satan's concept of God's hedge around His people includes the material. He believes that God does not allow the material to be taken away from His people, and that because of God's material blessings, His people are faithful to Him.

4. What are some possible reasons God allowed Satan to go as far as He did?

God allowed this to prove that He is stronger than Satan. It left a testi-

mony to other people of God's sustaining power. It hindered Satan's purposes by increasing Job's spiritual strength.

5. How might Satan use even close family ties to destroy us?

Satan might use unfaithful family members to tempt us to do wrong. He might use family members to weaken conviction by suggesting that a less radical position on certain issues will be acceptable to God.

6. How could Job retain his integrity in such dire circumstances?

Job's faithful life prior to his time of testing produced a strong faith in God. His link with God helped him through times of testing. He was convinced that God's actions were right.

7. What attitudes are necessary to remain faithful in trial and adversity?

Humility—we must remember that we do not deserve the blessings God gives us; Submission—we must remember to say, "Thy will be done"; Worship—we must continue to worship God regardless what comes our way; Repentance and self-searching—times of trial should always cause us to look inward.

8. What are some helps to prepare us for times when trial comes?

We must cultivate a thankful attitude. We must realize that what we have is because of God's blessing. We should develop a growing relationship with the Lord. We must be submissive to Christ and all other authority over us (church, civil). We must always be looking by faith beyond this life to where there will be no more trial.

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

The conflict continues between God and His forces and Satan and his forces. Satan desires to overthrow God's people, but he cannot bring their defeat unless they yield to his power. God's power will always deliver His people from the power of Satan as they submit to and utilize that power. It is both humbling and sobering to think that the outcome of so great a conflict lies in our response. May we be faithful as Job was.

### **Research Guide**

1. Read the chapter on "Satan" in *Doctrines of the Bible*.
2. In a topical Bible read the promises of God in the section "Afflictions—Consolation in."

