

Does Job Fear God for No Reason

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[0 : 00] be part of the basis of the argument of what we're going to look at. And so just a couple of things to remember that we looked at last time. I want us to see that Job is a man of great character. He's the greatest man of the East. He's blameless and he's upright.

He's one who feared God and turned away from evil. He's spoken of in several places in scripture as one of the most righteous men that ever walked the earth. And so that's important as we look forward to because he's going to be accused of secret sin and that is not going to be the case. And God makes sure for people to see that as we go through and he wants us to know to begin with. Job is also a man who took great pains to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with his God. And so he had this relationship that he took great pains to make sure was right.

And it also in the first five verses, we talked about how God blessed Job abundantly. He had more than anybody of the time and he was the greatest of the East, as it mentioned.

And we talked about the connection to practical wisdom that's talked about in the book of Proverbs and how God blesses righteousness and he chastises unrighteousness. And as a picture of God's pleasure with Job, he is blessed with the greatest amount of the East. And so there is this following of practical wisdom. But we also pointed out that this book is going to do a lot to point out that even though practical wisdom is true, it's not always what God does. And we can't judge people simply based on this practical wisdom, this rule of reciprocity kind of thing. We can't judge people on that, in that way. So God has taken great pains to say, this is a righteous man. This is my servant.

This is the one I take delight in. And so we need to keep that in mind as we go forward. I'm going to give you just a quick preview of where we're going. We're going to look at this picture. I actually put in the bullet and had Jen put in the bullet in verses 6 to 12.

[2 : 36] I had to revise this. We're going to go to 6 to 22. We may come back and cover bits of that as we look at the next one, but we've got to finish the story. So we'll look at that and it'll only take two hours. So where we're going, we're going to see the scene in heaven, a normal day.

And then we're going to talk about a conversation about Job's motives. And then we're going to talk about the Satan, how the Satan, and I'll explain that term in a minute, the Satan leaves to prepare a test, prepares to test Job's motives.

Then we're going to look at that first testing of Job. And we're going to look at how Job did. And then we're going to look at some application.

So let's look at Job chapter 6. I'm going to read verses 6 to 22. Follow along, please, as I read. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.

And the Lord said to Satan, From where have you come? Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro on the earth and from walking up and down on it.

[3 : 58] And the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil?

Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has on every side?

You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.

And the Lord said to Satan, Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

Now there was a day when the sons and daughters were eating, when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. And there came a messenger to Job and said, The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them.

[5 : 03] And the Sabaeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword. And I alone have escaped to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, The fire of God fell from heaven, burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them.

And I alone have escaped to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, The Chaldeans have formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword.

And I alone have escaped to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house.

And behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house. And it fell upon the young people and they are dead. And I alone have escaped to tell you.

Then Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head, and fell on the ground and worshipped. And he said, Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return.

[6 : 18] The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. And all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Let's pray together. Father, just reading this passage is moving. We imagine ourselves in this passage and are in wonder at what this man lost.

And wonder, could we do it? And I pray that you would be with us, that we would see the real amazement here.

I pray that you would be with us. That you would help me to be clear both in thought and speech and actually in voice this morning also. I pray that our hearts would be tender before you.

And we would be quick, even as your word is spoken in different phrases, to turn and praise and worship you. We would be quick to see points at which we need to repent and to repent.

[7 : 27] Help us be quick to react in right ways and to understand the proper things. I pray that you would be with us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. We're going to start out with the scene in heaven, a normal day. Let me say that again so you heard.

The scene in heaven, a normal day. Verses 6 and 7. From things that we see in other places in Scripture do not appear to be an unusual thing.

It says in verses 6 and 7, Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. And Satan also came among them.

And the Lord said to Satan, From where have you come? Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth and from walking up and down in it. The scene here is the situation where God is taking counsel in heaven.

[8 : 29] Now by saying that, I'm not saying that God is up in heaven and he needs people to come and give him wisdom. And to help him to make decisions. That's not the case that's here. We're seeing a situation where God is ruling in heaven.

He's in control of everything. And the beings that he has created are coming to him. And we'll define those beings in just a second. Those beings that he has created are coming to him, Giving account and receiving instructions.

He's taking counsel. He is that supreme king who sits on his throne. Who takes, and he knows all that's going on. But these people are to come and give him account.

And then they're to take what he says. And they're to take his instructions and go out and follow those things. He's taking counsel in heaven. And it mentions that there was a day that the sons of God came to present themselves.

And this is how we understand it. And we'll mention a couple of scriptures. But this is part, I guess, what goes on in heaven. That these sons of God come.

[9 : 34] And what are these sons of God? And I'm not going to take a lot of time on this. Except to hopefully clear up something that I struggled with when I was in college. And that is defining the term sons of God.

Now, it does primarily refer to angels. And I believe that is exactly what's here. I want to point out, though, that if you are astute, you're thinking, Oh, you know, I remember that term sons of God from Genesis chapter 6 and verse 2.

And it says there that the sons of God saw the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. I want to point out that I don't believe that at that point in Genesis, the

sons of God, because it can refer to different things.

I don't believe the context is bearing out that angels cohabitated with men. Because Jesus says the angels in heaven neither marry nor are given in marriage. So that's not the same.

People will say all kinds of things based on that Genesis 6. And as a pastoral thought, I'm just saying don't go that direction. But we are talking about the angels here.

[10:40] They come. They report what's going on. They get their instructions. And they go and do what they're called to do. We have several references in scriptures that show that spiritual beings gather around God to do that, to give account and to receive responsibilities.

Hebrews 1.14 says, Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? And so that's the job of the angels.

They come, find out what they're to do, report back what they've done, and they get their next account. And that's what's going on here in heaven. And it says there in the end of verse 6 that Satan also came among them.

And there's been some argument. Was he a party crasher? No, I don't think that that's the case. He wasn't a party crasher. It is normal for him to be here.

And so it says that Satan comes. Now, our Bible says Satan. And you've heard me, if you were here last time I spoke on Job, you will know that I use the term the Satan, because it is what the writer of the book of Job actually says.

[12:01] Now, I've decided that I don't think I'm going to keep using that term through the whole thing. But there's a reason, I believe, that God was using that term, the Satan.

The word Satan here in the Hebrew is preceded with a definite article, indicating that the word Satan was a title rather than a proper name.

So the writer of the book of Job is then referring to this one as the Satan. This is the one who is the Satan.

Now, what is he meaning then? The word Satan means accuser. In fact, this word Satan or the Satan is used of the angel of the Lord in Genesis.

And so it isn't necessarily his name. It is a title. It is the accuser. In Genesis, it's used of the angel of the Lord to accuse those who rightly have done wrong of their wrong.

[13:02] So it's not that God is all of a sudden taking up Satan's responsibility. So Satan is there, or the Satan is there as the accuser.

Is the prince of darkness Lucifer the one that is referred to here? I'm going to say a qualified, not necessarily. But if it isn't Lucifer, it is the one who does the same job as Lucifer.

I think it is. It doesn't matter whether it is or isn't. It's that one who comes to accuse. This one who comes to accuse is named in the New Testament Satan and is referred back to as a name rather than just a title.

And the reference is back to Job. So it probably is who we would say the prince of the angels of darkness that's actually there.

I think God turns to him on purpose because of the job that he has. Is it unusual that the accuser comes to the council?

[14:08] No. I want us to just two verses I'll read out. On Zechariah 3, 1, it says, Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

This is a scene in heaven where this high priest is, as a figure, standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan is there to accuse. It seems it is a normal occurrence.

In Luke chapter 22, verses 31 and 32, the Lord says to Peter, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you that he might sift you like wheat.

But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers. So it seems that throughout scripture there is this normal occurrence of the accuser being before God.

God doesn't keep him from being there. God allows him there. And I think a good term to use is what Luther used. And I'm not going to get it exactly right. I looked for the exact quote and it's a couple of different ways.

[15:11] And Luther said the devil is God's devil. In other words, the devil is used by God for his purpose. Now, God doesn't commit sin.

He's not the author of sin. God is holy and righteous and pure. He doesn't commit sin. But God does interact with the devil and the devil carries out his bidding.

And so it is not wrong for the devil to be there in the court of heaven. We see next that God addresses the accuser. And he says, where have you been?

And the accuser comes back and says, from going to and fro in the earth and from walking up and down in it. And I think by looking at his response, God's reaction, which doesn't really go into much of anything, and the other scriptures, it appears that the accuser has been out quickly going about looking for people to accuse.

I think we can tie that to 1 Peter 5.8. Be sober minded. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. Where have you been?

[16:29] And kind of referencin in that is the idea of what you've been doing. Looking for someone to accuse. Why? Because he's the accuser. That's why he's there. And so I think this phrase helps to show us what the accuser does.

As we go into verses 8 through 12a, we're going to be looking at the conversation about Job's motives. God brings Job to the accuser's attention.

I want to say that again. God brings Job to the accuser's attention. He says, have you considered my servant Job?

This is not the accuser walking up and saying, have you heard what I've seen? God does it. The whole trial that this book encompasses in the book of Job was instigated by God.

And I want that to shift your thinking. For those who would say, my situation is out of control. Job's wasn't. God started it.

[17:54] Our situations are the same way. Never is our situation out of control. God initiates these things.

And I say that carefully. We'll qualify it more as we go on. But don't ever, Christian, feel like you fall prey to the wiles of the devil without any kind of protection.

Without any kind of restriction. You never fall prey to the wiles of the devil without God being in absolute, total, complete control.

So we can rest in that. But God brings Job to the accuser's attention. He says, have you considered my servant Job? But I want us to start thinking in a different light.

God is bringing Job to the accuser's attention so that... Now there are a lot of things that are side issues that will deal through the whole book of Job.

[18:59] But the main issue here is God is bringing Job to the accuser's attention so that God might get glory.

He is an amazing God. He doesn't need to prove it to anybody. But in grace and mercy, he does prove it to us.

And he uses the situations around us. He does prove it to the counsel in heaven. And he uses us. And the situations of our lives sometimes are simply for the sake of bringing God glory.

Now he never works on that alone. He's always working for our benefit. He's always working all things together for good. He's always doing great things. But utmost, foremost, the most important thing going on in all the trials of this world today is God's glory.

And so when Satan is there, God says, have you considered my servant Job? It is so that God may get glory. Now the accuser answers God's question by a question.

[20:12] He questions Job's motives for serving God. Notice the accuser doesn't come accusing Job. He's there.

And God says, where you been? And that would have been a perfect opportunity for him to say, I've been down watching Job. Have you seen what he did? I mean, last week he cussed out this person or yesterday he got mad at his wife and threw a book.

None of that. The accuser does not come accusing Job. Because Job is an upright and blameless man and God has made sure for us to see that. The accuser claims that Job only serves God because God blesses him.

You put a hedge around him. You have blessed him abundantly. Who wouldn't serve God if nothing went wrong? Who wouldn't serve God if you ended up being the richest man in the east?

The greatest man in the east? The one who sat in judgment in the gate and everyone came to and everyone held in high regard. People came along and they didn't even look at Job because he was a great man.

[21 : 25] He was a man of great honor. Who wouldn't serve God for that? And so the accuser challenges God claiming that if you take away that protection and blessing because I think I know his real motives Satan would say.

I think he just serves you because you give him and you bless him and you protect him. But if you take that away we'll really see we'll see he won't fear you he won't serve you.

In fact, you take it away you strike him hard enough you strike him deep enough he'll curse you to his face. And God's reaction is not oh no you don't.

But rather God's reaction is all right we'll see. God knows God doesn't need Job to go through the test so that he knows Job's heart.

God knows Job's heart. God allows Job to go through the test so that Satan knows Job's heart.

[22 : 44] Not the heart that Job conjured himself but the heart God gave him. The heart that God is upholding him into. God allows Satan to test him so that Satan knows Job's heart.

So that all of the angels in counsel before God know Job's heart. So eventually the three friends yeah four friends friends know God's heart or Job's heart.

And today we know Job's heart. God's heart. And it's not just that we need to know that Job is an upright and righteous man and he'll keep serving.

It is such that in the end God is glorified for being able to work in such a man that it doesn't matter if he has possessions and lands and children and other things that we'll talk about next time.

But God sets the limits. God says okay you can test him. You can take his protection and his blessings. You can take his possessions.

[24 : 01] I said it the right way first time. His protection and his blessings. Because it really involved some pretty dear things.

But he said to Satan you can't afflict him personally. Can't touch his body. Now was it that Job needed time to grow into I don't know.

I think it was God was separating the trial out so as to get the most glory. You can't afflict him personally. God knows what Job will do when afflicted but testing is the only way the sons of God and the accuser will know that Job fears God and serves him just because he's God not because of his blessings.

God has so worked in Job that Job is now a man convinced that God is a God worth serving because he's this great God of the universe because he is the one all sufficient in himself.

It's even almost hard for us to think this way because and I'm not knocking this we tend to have to even rely on the goodness of God in his redemption of us to say that God is a good God that he's a great God and it's good for us to reflect there but God is so much greater God even than that.

[25 : 39] God is a God so great in his glory that even if man is never redeemed he's a great God and worthy of our worship whether he gives us anything or not and so God knows what Job will do that he will still glorify God because God is God not because God blesses him.

The open display of Job's reaction to testing is the only way God will be glorified for the work he has done to a man able to serve God for who he is and not what he gives.

I'll read part of that again. The open display of Job's reaction to testing is the only way God will be glorified for the work he has done to make a man like Job.

And I really want you to think about this. I don't want you to just think about verses 13 to 22 when I think about the open display of his reaction.

I want you to think of the poems that we'll cover in coming weeks and months where God or Job puts into poetic language how badly his heart hurts.

[27 : 06] How badly he feels like he's been done a wrong. Now he's not turning against God. He doesn't sin with his lips against God. We're going to have to get into this poetry.

We're going to have to see months of agony. We're going to have to see a life whereby he wishes he had never been born. A life so bad that he wishes he had never existed or he had died the minute he was conceived or died the minute he was born or he died in his mother.

We're going to have to see struggle that brings a man to that point until we begin to be able to see a God that is so worthy of worship that it doesn't matter whether he provides and again I'm not making light of this it doesn't matter whether he provides redemption it doesn't matter whether he provides good things it doesn't matter whether he provides a nice earth for him our God is so glorious that he just should be worshipped our word our Lord is worthy of all glory and so down at the end of verse 12 Satan leaves to prepare a test it says Satan went out from the presence of the

Lord and I thought about this and I'm going to make these statements the accuser went to arrange his assault for maximum effect Satan thinks he's getting the best leverage against Job God is allowing Satan to work his wiles so as to shine the greatest glory so the accuser goes to arrange his assault for maximum effect he picks the time when all the children will be gathered in the oldest son's house he moves the Sabaeans into place to take the oxen and donkeys and kill the servants on the same day the children are in the house the accuser arranges for the fire of God is this God doing this somehow God allows gives Satan the ability to produce to produce this lightning you remember as pastors been speaking through the book of Exodus the magicians were enabled to throw their rods down and they turned to snakes and they were able to turn water into blood God how did that happen God allowed it somehow we don't know but the accuser arranged to the fire of God to fall to kill the sheep and the servants on the same day the children were assembled and the accuser arranged for the Chaldeans to be into place to take the camels and kill the servants on that same day when the children were assembled and the accuser arranged for a great wind to blow down the oldest son's house and crush all ten children on the same day that the children were assembled in that house talk about effect how badly can a man be beaten how badly can a man suffer how great can a man glorify God but I want you to note none of this took place without the permission of the Lord he said okay you can do it remember

[31 : 01] God's all knowing he knew Satan's plan he knew how he would carry it out but he knew his servant he upheld his servant and so the first testing of Job is performed all that Job had except for his wife was taken from Job in one day and all I'm going to do is read this again it speaks for itself now there was a day when the sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house and there came a messenger to Job and said the oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword and I alone have escaped to tell you while he was yet speaking there came another and said the fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them and I alone have escaped to tell you while he was yet speaking there came another and said the Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword and I alone have escaped to tell you and while he was yet speaking there came another and said your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house and behold a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house and it fell down upon the young people and they are dead and I alone escaped to tell you who who of us would ever stand up under such a trial

God knew that Job would and we all know it wasn't in his own strength who could stand this was Job hurt oh your and my wildest imagination cannot feel the pain he felt none of us have suffered like Job has suffered some have suffered awfully none of us have suffered like Job suffered how did he do Jen then Jen then Job sorry Jen not Jen then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head fell on the ground and worship he humbled himself grieved his loss and fell on the ground and worshiped his response was naked

I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return he's saying by that statement probably much more than I'm going to mention God has done me no wrong I did not deserve what I have gotten God was good to give it to me he has every right to take it away I can't take anything in this life with me anyway I've preached through Job in the past and I've made much of the children and all this God dealt with the children on their own and you know it wasn't unfair God's good but the whole purpose is to get the get Job to this point an unbelievably low point in his life where his cry to God to the accuser to the court held in heaven to anyone who would listen around and to us today to get those people to hear the Lord gave and the

Lord has taken away blessed be the name of the Lord that means that God is good enough to receive your glory my glory no matter what he gives us or whatever he takes away he's that great a God God again if he had never provided redemption he's that great a God if he lets us go through trials that break our heart to the point of Job's heart being broken he is that great a God whereby we would rightly be should be saying the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away blessed be the name of the Lord God has the right to do what he wants with what is his it is not mine I did not deserve it and in all this Job does not sin with his lips or charge God with wrong he is still a blameless and upright man it wouldn't look like it everybody around now is beginning to wonder what did Job do it's not what Job did it's what God did God got great glory from Job and you say oh how could he do that have you read the end of the book of Job even better have you read the end of the

book of Revelation is it worth it a thousand a million times over our God is so great it's worthy of all praise whatever we go through will not compare to the wonders of the glory of God and the wonders even of yeah we can come back to it what we will get but you know the dearest thing the most wonderful thing they will get is not streets of gold not a mansion it's the presence of God he didn't turn from

[37 : 27] God in rebellion he didn't curse God for suddenly allowing his life to be full of hardship and bitterness he didn't say that's not fair in the end Job was shown to be a man who served God for who God was and not for what he had been given so I want to remind you that ultimately what's at stake in this passage is the glory of God ultimately what's at stake in our lives is the glory of God the whole universe needs to see that God is worthy of worship whether or not God gives man good things or not that needs to be something that echoes from our lives from our lips God is good enough to be worshipped great enough to be worshipped no matter what he gives or what he takes away

God already knows but one way for the world to see if a rich man serves God sincerely is for that man to be tested by the removal of his riches God may do that to you and I the opposite actually could take place too you could be poor all your life and be tested by riches some of us have just gotten used to being poor and would have a hard time being rich we need to glorify God that way I'm just summing up some things I want us to remember as we close suffering is not always because of sin we'll see that more as time goes on but it's pretty obvious here this suffering was for the glory of God God allows people to suffer for his own glory the glorification of God is more important than Job's yours or my comfort and that's something we should always be mindful of so what does testing reveal about your fear of God what does testing reveal about your relationship with God what does testing reveal about why you serve

God may we be people who say Lord help me to be a person who serves you because you are worthy regardless of what you give or what you take away Lord work that work in me and help me to be content we'll make more of this as we go through the book of Job but I want to just speak of Christ in this way as we think about Job Job is a picture of Christ to this point probably up until Christ no one had suffered and probably aside from Christ no one has suffered like Job suffered but as we think about this situation Job picturing Christ Christ Christ Christ is the truly blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil Christ is the one who suffered the ultimate loss of riches and position to bring glory to God exalted at the right hand of God all glory all power all majesty he took on flesh and humbled himself became the

God man born in a manger lived a life without a home ministered in affliction and mockery was arrested beaten spat upon mocked and crucified and died who suffered more than Christ and yet he did it for his father's glory now he did it for our redemption but he did it for his father's glory because God is worthy of glory and in thinking about this we'll make more of this maybe later but I'll just mention this because I think it ties us back into Job was there a time in heaven when there was a council gathered and Satan comes and God turns to Satan and says have you considered my servant Jesus a truly sinless and upright man who eschews evil and does righteousness maybe that was the conversation that took place just before just after

Christ's baptism when the spirit drove him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil this one God could say to the accuser there is none like him in all the earth and throughout all time a perfect and sinless man fears God and turns away from evil a beautiful savior only pictured slightly by Job there's a God worth adoring what's here let's pray thank you father for being able to look at this man and lord this man we know never knew to the best of our knowledge what was said in heaven what was done by the devil never knew God said this is my beloved servant have you considered him a perfect and upright man he walked through life with trials loving God and suffering totally oblivious to what was going on

[43 : 33] I pray that since we have this picture into what went on that you would help us to be equipped to see and know God is glorious and to be willing to suffer to hold things in our hands loosely to want to love and serve you no matter what comes what is taken what is given I pray that you would help us be people who glorify God and help us to be looking to Christ as our true and great example of the one who suffered to the glory of God pray that you would be with us in Jesus name amen