



## **"REASONS TO REJOICE"**

**"Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16**

### **JOB: LESSON 2**

In our lesson this week, we will meet up with the enemy of our souls, satan himself. On one hand, it bothers me to give him even an ounce of our valuable time. But on the other hand, it's important that we understand who our enemy really is, as well as the extent of his power. As the drama unfolds, be reminded that "Greater is He that is in you than he who is in the world." (1 John 4:4) Don't allow this chapter to frighten you, but rather, let it encourage you that God is sovereign over all, especially satan himself. When we don't understand everything that's happening in our lives or the world around us, you can trust that the God of the universe is still sitting on the throne. He rules and reigns today, tomorrow, and forever!

As we continue our study, remember that we can look at a chapter through different perspectives. The encounter is between God and satan in these first two chapters, while Job seems to be mysteriously kept out of the loop. Actually, it's kind of strange but through the whole book, satan is only mentioned in these first two chapters. Mike Mason wrote, "Job seems to be kept entirely in the dark as to the very existence of his spiritual foe. Nowhere in the long and exhaustive dialogue between Job and his friends is the idea of a personal, supernatural evil so much as broached as a possibility." The chapter reveals that the real struggle is between God and satan, not Job and God. It seems to be a "celestial battle" that's being fought on earth.

It's important to note that the book of Job not only looks at the problem of suffering, but the doctrine of human freedom. The trials of Job stemmed from a debate in Heaven over the question, "Are human beings truly free"? In these first two chapters, Yancey states, "Satan reveals himself as the first great behaviorist. He claimed that faith is merely a product of environment and circumstances. Job was conditioned to love God. Take away any positive rewards, satan challenged, and watch Job's faith crumble. Satan's accusations that Job loved God only because 'You have put a

hedge around him,' stands as an attack on God's character. It implies that God is not worthy of love in Himself; faithful people like Job follow Him only because they are 'bribed' to do so. Job had to endure undeserved suffering in order to demonstrate that God is ultimately interested in freely given love."

I'm not sure if this confuses you or helps you, but either way, let's get going and jump into our text, shall we? And don't allow yourself to get frustrated if our text raises a million questions in your mind. It should.

### **First Day**

1. Let's begin today by reading Job 1:1-22. Then go back and focus on verses 6-12. Write down the facts you find. What's happening? What new "characters" are introduced? Who is "dialoguing"? Where is the story happening?
  
2. Are there any repeated thoughts, words, or phrases?
  
3. What is the main point of this section? What would you title it?

Satan's name comes from the Hebrew verb *satan*, meaning "to be or act as an adversary, to oppose." In Greek, his name is translated *diabolos*, meaning "the accuser."

4. How is satan described in the following verses?
  - a. Isaiah 14:12
  - b. 1 Peter 5:8
  - c. John 8:44
  - d. 2 Corinthians 4:4
  - e. Matthew 12:25-27
  - f. Ephesians 6:12
  - g. John 14:30

5. What do these verses also tell us about him?

- a. 2 Corinthians 11:3
- b. Ephesians 2:2
- c. 1 Timothy 3:6
- d. Luke 22:31
- e. 2 Corinthians 11:14,15

6. How do these verses give you hope?

- a. James 4:7
- b. Romans 8:35-39

Satan is not the little creature with horns and a pitchfork as he is so often portrayed. Swindoll writes, "Actually, Lucifer once served as the most attractive, brilliant, powerful archangel ever. His name literally means 'star of the morning.' But when he tried to usurp God's power, the Lord cast him down from Heaven with the other rebellious angels, and Lucifer became known as satan. We sometimes forget that satan has not lost his ability to tempt. He hasn't lost his beauty, his brilliance, or his power. He continually seeks to destroy us through his evil workings behind the scenes. Satan and his demons may be invisible most of the time, but they're real. They have personalities and wills, and they're absolutely committed to trying to destroy God's people and ruin God's plan." (Isaiah 14:12-20; Ezekiel 28:14-19; Revelation 12:7-9; Genesis 3:1-7.)

Satan's powers are no match for the Almighty God. (Which is probably why God is called "Almighty" 31 times in this book!) Let's end with some eloquent words, spoken by Martin Luther:

**"And though this world with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo! His doom is sure;  
One little word shall fell him."**

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21

### Second Day

**Work on your memory verse. What a great reminder it is to us!**

As we continue reading, remember that we seem to be reading chapters one and two from God's perspective, while the rest we read from Job's perspective and the human dilemma he faces. One scholar wrote that "No one knows quite what to make of the first two chapters. Even Biblical scholars tend to view the prologue with embarrassment, or discount it as the addition of a later editor. The prologue shows God and satan involved in something resembling a wager. You can almost see blush marks on the commentary pages. Here we get a peek into the keyhole of eternity, which is normally hidden from us." When we experience pain and suffering, questions can easily torment us. Why me? What's going on? Does God care? These questions eventually come out of Job as well. Yancey wrote, "Chapters one and two prove that, regardless of what Job thinks, God is not on trial in this book. Job is on trial. The point of the book is not suffering: Where is God when it hurts? The prologue dealt with that issue. The point is faith: Where is Job when it hurts? How is he responding? To understand the book of Job, I must begin there."

1. Read Job 1:1-22, focusing on verses 6-12 again. From this section, how can we tell that satan's powers are limited?
  
2. What does the fact that satan is "wandering" say about him?
  
3. What does satan accuse God of?

4. What accusation does he make against Job?
  
5. It seems like satan wasn't even thinking about Job until God kind of "threw him under the bus," but almost as a boast. Why do you think God did this? And why do you think God accepted satan's "wager" and allowed him to test Job, knowing how painful it would be for Job?
  
6. I read this question and I loved it. "Is it possible to love God for God's sake, and not merely for the benefit of being faithful, even when there are benefits? And what if these benefits are all removed and one is left with no benefit but God alone?" Write your thoughts ...
  
7. Do you think you love God because of the "benefits" or do you truly love Him for His sake alone?
  
8. What do you think satan's ultimate goal is for people's lives?
  
9. How can you guard yourself against his attacks?
  
10. Did Job "deserve" what was about to happen? Was he being "punished"?
  
11. Do you think we're always going to understand why we're experiencing trials?

We'll end here for now. I pray that we will be encouraged and challenged by Job's initial response to his trials. May we, too, truly believe that all things will work together for good to those who love God; to those who are called according to His purpose!" (Romans 8:28)

### Third Day

**Spend some time meditating on your verse, asking the Lord to make it a truth in your life.**

As we begin to read on, please remember that God's omnipotence is never in question in this fight. (The word "omnipotence" means that God has "unlimited power" and can do anything He wants.) Mason writes, "Like it or not, even satan is compelled to bow before the throne of God. But what is being disputed in dubious battle on earth is God's moral *right* to omnipotence, His mandate to rule. It is a question of honor that is at stake, and therefore, the theater of conflict must be one that is appropriate to the display of purely moral qualities. Who will win the prize of humanity's allegiance and praise? Will it be the Lord or the devil? To whom, in the crunch, will man entrust his soul?" Wow ...

1. Read Job 1:1-22. Go back and reread verses 13-22. We now read about the "first assault" of satan. Describe the progression of tragedies.

Job's whole world collapsed all at once. He barely had time to catch his breath before another wave of tragedy slapped him in the face.

2. How do you think Job felt when he heard the messenger's report?
3. Have you ever experienced a "wave" of trials? Although they probably weren't the magnitude of Job's, they were trials none the less. Can you remember how you felt?

Job first lost his property and financial stability. Before he had time to panic, a parent's worst nightmare came to pass. Job lost all of his children.

4. Someone once said, "It's the timing of the devil's attacks, as much as the magnitude of them, that can crush us." What do you think that means? Do you agree?

5. Whatever "trial" you're facing, are you allowing it to spoil your relationship with the Lord? How are you responding to it?

6. According to verses 20-22, how did Job respond?

Job responded in a normal way for that day, tearing his robe and shaving his head as an outward sign of grief. But what he does next is remarkable.

7. How does Job's response differ from our usual response? What makes it so amazing?

Wiersbe said, "First, Job *looked back* to his birth. Everything Job owned was given to him by God, and the same God who gave it had the right to take it away. Job simply acknowledged that he was a steward. Then he *looked ahead* to his death. Finally, Job **looked up** and uttered a magnificent statement of faith. Instead of cursing God, as satan said Job would do, Job blessed the Lord."

8. What is the key word in verse 20 that explains the attitude of Job's heart?

Job was a broken man, yet he did not blame God. I love what Swindoll said about this verse: "Job chose to follow adversity with adoration and woe with worship."

9. Tomorrow we'll continue with more thoughts on worship, but for now, can you ask God to help you follow "adversity with adoration and woe with worship" in the trial you're facing?

#### Fourth Day

##### **What's your verse?**

1. Read Job 1:1-22, focusing on verses 20-22 again. What truth is Job acknowledging about God in these verses?

Mike Mason wrote, "Worship does not come naturally or spontaneously to a person, but it's a practiced response, a fruit of long faith and discipline. Job never could have reacted as he did unless he had been practicing for this moment all his life."

2. What are your thoughts on the above quote?

To respond in worship and with patient endurance, we have to prepare ourselves beforehand. We should be practicing spiritual disciplines now and when tragedy hits, we will hopefully respond better to the trials that come our way. Spiritual maturity only comes through the building of our faith and increasing our knowledge through the study and practice of God's Word.

3. Are you practicing "spiritual disciplines"? Are you diligently studying God's Word, spending time in prayer, and worshipping the Lord?

4. Do you think someone can worship while they're filled with grief?

"Was Job, in the midst of his grief and turmoil, somehow at peace? Was he filled with a strange spiritual joy? No, not at all. He was as broken and cast down as a man can be. Can true worship really transpire when the heart is broken and the mind shocked and dulled with horror? Is there any place in worship for bitter tears and ailing? Can groaning be a part of worship too?"

5. Is a trial you're facing breaking your heart? Are you unable to do anything but weep and groan? Are you truly worshipping in your grief?

6. If everything we have belongs to the Lord, and He can take it away at any time, how, then, are we to handle our "stuff"? Can you think of any verses that would give us some insight on this?

Corrie ten Boom said, "I've learned that we must hold everything loosely, because when I grip it tightly, it hurts when the Father pries my fingers loose and takes it from me."

7. Is there anything that the Father is trying to "pry" loose from your fingers but you're still holding tight? Maybe a person or a "thing"?
  
8. If we entrust whatever "it" is to the Lord, what can we be assured of?
  
9. I want to end with another quote on worship: "Real worship has less to do with *offering sacrifices* than with *being a sacrifice* ourselves."  
(Romans 12:1) Are you offering "real worship" to our Lord?

**See you tomorrow, ladies!**

### Fifth Day

**Write out your verse from memory.**

1. Read Job chapter one again. Remember that satan claimed that Job would only be loyal to God because He had "put a hedge around him." Satan goes on to say that when times get tough, such people will abandon God. Do you think there is any truth to satan's claims?

2. In the book of Job, we get a glimpse of what's going on "behind the scenes." I think it's pretty common for us to long for that during our times of trouble. Why doesn't God always allow us to sneak a peak "behind the curtain" when we are experiencing things we don't understand?
  
3. Sometimes true worship is only experienced "through" our pain. Have you ever discovered that? What does that mean?
  
4. Is it a new thought to you that satan can go "to and fro" on the earth? What thoughts do you have on that?
  
5. Do you ever struggle with thinking that every trial you experience is some form of "punishment" from God? On the other hand, are we ever "disciplined" for our actions?
  
6. Can you think of someone in your life that could be considered a modern day Job? How can you encourage them this week?
  
7. What specifically spoke to your heart this week from Job 1?
  
8. Are there any changes you should make as a result of what He' shown you? Maybe in your actions, attitudes, or simply perspective?

I thought it was really important to include this paragraph from Charles Swindoll regarding the subject of theodicy, which is the relationship of divine justice to human suffering. This is very important to understand. Sorry I keep quoting everyone, but they say everything so much better than I would! ☺

"The term *Theodicy* represents the combination of two Greek words: *theos*, meaning 'God,' and *dike*, meaning justice. The suffering of mankind represents one of life's greatest and most difficult mysteries. In order to gain a godly perspective on our suffering, we must not only acknowledge God's sovereignty, we also need to understand the difference between God's *active will* and His *permissive will*.

God often chooses to step into time, working miracles, saving lives, and dramatically answering our prayers. When He does so, He demonstrates His active will. He actively reaches into our lives to change our circumstances. In this way, He demonstrates His love, goodness, and mercy towards us.

But God is also just. When sin entered the world through Adam, suffering was part of the curse that he brought on mankind. God allowed this to happen as a result of man's willful disobedience. In so doing, He demonstrated His *permissive will*.

How does this apply to Job's situation? It means that God *allowed* Job's suffering at the hand of satan, but He did not cause the suffering. The Lord loved Job intimately and He allowed trials in Job's life that would help him grow and mature spiritually. Remember, God knows the future! He knew that Job had faith strong enough to pass every test that satan would send his way.

Have you ever noticed that the word *justice* appears many times in the Bible, but the word *fairness* never appears? While life may not be fair sometimes, Scripture tells us that *God is always just*. When you face difficult struggles, keep in mind that God isn't punishing you or turning His back on you. In fact, He'll use your trials to draw you into closer fellowship with Himself."

I'm not sure if I like the terms "active" and "permissive" because even permissive is active, but I'm not sure how else to explain it. Any thoughts?

Have fun thinking! ☺