

Having begun a study of the book of Job, we come this morning to the second chapter. But before I do so, let me remind you what I said in introducing the book (2wks ago). (1) We must remember the genre of Job. The book of Job is poetry. This is evident in these 2 opening chapters which contain 2 nearly identical scenes (it's as if the LORD pulls the curtain back and allows us to see how the universe is governed). This is poetical imagery. It shows how heaven relates to earth. It divides creation into humanity (good and bad) and angels (good and bad).

(2) We must remember the contents of Job. I've suggested a threefold division of the book: the dilemma of Job (1-3), the discourses of Job (4-41), the deliverance of Job (42). After describing his dilemma, the largest section of the book contains various discourses between Job and his three friends, Job and his fourth friend (Elihu), and Job and his God.

(3) We must remember the purposes of Job. There are two related themes in the book of Job, from which I've suggested a threefold purpose: to illustrate the reality of suffering (that all Christians suffer); to show our proper response to suffering (worship and trust God); to reveal God's relationship to suffering (to make known His sovereign majesty). Thus, the focus of Job isn't Satan and it isn't even Job, it's God.

This second chapter contains three things: Job's trials (vv1-8), Job's wife (vv9-10), and Job's friends (vv11-13).

- I. Job's Trials (vv1-8)
- II. Job's Wife (vv9-10)
- III. Job's Friends (vv11-13)

I. Job's Trials (vv1-8)

1. It important to remember 2:1-8 continue Job's trials—these began back in 1:13-19—there Job lost his possessions and children, here he loses his health (note three things about these continued trails – there timing, source, and nature).
2. (1) The timing of his trials (vv1-3) v1—"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."
3. We are not told how many days transpired from the previous day (as recounted in the previous chapter).
4. It most likely happened on the very next day—on one day Job lost his possessions and people, on the next, his health.
5. Verses 2-3 are almost identical to the previous day (1:7-8)—again, the LORD initiates this entire thing.
6. V3—"Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"
7. Even though Satan had levelled his guns against him, he continues to trust God and not sin against Him.
8. V3b—"And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause."
9. God accuses Satan of "inciting" Him against Job—to "incite" is to persuade or provoke—Satan encouraged God to "destroy Job without cause."
10. We must understand this statement as a description of Satan and not God—Satan tried to incite God against Job.

11. Obviously, Satan failed, and that for a number of reasons: first, nobody can move God to do anything (God isn't move from without or within); second, God can never turn against His people to destroy them without cause.
12. But again, this underscores the evil character of Satan, who would attempt to entice God to act against His people.
13. (2) The source of his trials (vv4-6), v4—"So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to You face!' And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life.'"
14. If you remember, on the previous day (as recounted in the previous chapter), Satan accused Job of serving God for the blessings.
15. Thus, God gave a limited power to Satan over Job, to remove from him his possessions and 10 children.
16. And yet, he told Satan in 1:12—"only do not lay a hand on his person (you can touch his possessions not person)."
17. Here, in chapter 2, on the following day, Satan reappears before God (with the angels) in an act of submission.
18. Because Job passed the test, on the previous day, and did not sin or charge God with wrong, Satan takes it further.
19. V4—"So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life.'"
20. A man would give everything he owned to prolong his life—our person is more important than our possessions.
21. The phrase "skin for skin" has been debated—it likely refers to a tradeoff by Job as if he was willing to trade his possessions for his person.
22. It's best explained by the following phrase—"Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life"—skin for skin.
23. Remember, this is a slanderous accusation by Satan concerning Job—Job prefers himself above all else.
24. Steve Lawson—"Cunningly, Satan reasons with God that Job in his selfishness would sacrifice the lives of his children, servants, and livestock in order to protect his own life."
25. (3) The nature of his trials (vv7-8), v7—"So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head."
26. This does not mean all sickness comes from Satan—remember what I said last week about fire and wind.
27. Ultimately speaking, God Himself controls fire and the wind, and He also controls health and sickness.
28. Again, Job's suffering is intensified to underscore his response, and render him an example for all sufferers.
29. His entire body was covered with "painful boils"—some have suggested he had a severe case of leprosy.
30. But either way, he had a severe skin disease that resulted in painful boils or sores that covered his body.
31. V8—"And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes."
32. Job used a piece of broken pottery to relieve himself (either from the sores themselves or the itching).
33. We are told he "sat in the midst of the ashes" which was due to another social custom to illustrate grief.

34. Not only was it common to tear your outer garment and shave your head, but to pour dust and ashes on your head.
35. This underscores our humanity—the fact that we are but dust—frail and weak creatures—easily sickened.
36. I think most of have seen how easily our bodies can be laid low—strong bodies made weak and needy.
37. John Calvin—"There Job is, cast from the company of men, he who had previously been honored by all. He is like a rotting carcass soaking in his own stench, so to speak, suffering the worst kind of pain, for such sores are very inflamed and torment him to the ultimate. So we now see that this last evil was much worse than all the afflictions which had already befallen him."

II. Job's Wife (vv9-10)

1. Job's wife proves to be an interesting character—she's introduced to us here never to be seen again (in the rest of the book).
2. (1) Her response to him, v9—"Then his wife said to him, 'Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!'"
3. It's important to understand, Job's wife was nothing more than the mouthpiece for Satan—she was his weapon.
4. Both in 1:11 and 2:5, Satan claimed that Job would curse God to His face if He touched his possessions or person.
5. There's a sense in which, Job's wife is encouraging Job to respond in the very way Satan said he would.
6. She was a pawn of Satan's hand—he was using her as a means to achieve his purposes; to prove his point.
7. But it's also important to realize, and this is something few people remember, Job's wife lost everything too.
8. We have to remember, she too was a very wealthy person, who lived in a large house with many servants.
9. All of that was taken away in a single day—she went from living in the great mansion to being homeless (it's not easy going from rich to poor).
10. Furthermore, remember she too lost all of her children—her 7 sons and 3 daughters perished in one day.
11. In fact, there's a sense in which Job and his wife provide us with a contrast—one revealed by suffering.
12. Perhaps I can say, suffering is the great revealer—it reveals our true character and what we truly believe.
13. 1Peter 1:6-7—"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
14. In other words, these Christians needed trials for the purpose of determining the quality of their faith.
15. Two professing Christians endure the same or similar trials, and yet, they respond in very opposite ways.
16. One person is made better for it, while the other person grows bitter at God and eventually forsakes Him.
17. Well clearly, Job is the first (who is better for his suffering), and his wife is the second (who grows bitter because of her suffering).

18. (2) His response to her, v10—"But he said to her, 'You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?'"
19. Job speaks freely and plainly to his wife—he says she speaks as a foolish woman (and not a wise woman).
20. This is to say—she was not speaking as a truly religious person—she was not acting as a wise woman.
21. V10—"Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity"—both came from God.
22. Ecc.7:14—"In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other."
23. V10—"In all this Job did not sin with his lips"—that is, he did not curse God or change God with wrong.
24. Keep in mind what I said last week—1:22 and 2:10 are merely summary statements of Job's initial response (we still have 40 chapters to go).

III. Job's Friends (vv11-13)

1. Notice four things about Job's friends: (1) Their identity—from v11 we learn of three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.
2. Each are named after their place of residence—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite."
3. From this we learn: first, Job was a well-known throughout the land (he had friends from surrounding regions); second, his suffering was well-known throughout the land (the LORD was using Job to teach all of His people a lesson); third, Job's sufferings lasted a while (as it must have taken some time for news to reach his three friends, and then for these men to travel to Uz).
4. (2) Their purpose, v11—"For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him."
5. They agreed to come to Job and sympathize with him—this was their collective purpose or intention.
6. (3) Their sorrow, v12—"And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven."
7. Here we see the extent of Job's physical afflictions—he was so deformed by the boils they couldn't recognize him.
8. Their sorrow was manifest in two ways: first, they lifted their voices and wept; second, they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their head toward heaven.
9. These were outward signs of inward turmoil—they were deeply moved with compassion when they saw Job.
10. The last phrase "toward heaven" means their remorse was directed towards God (their heads were lifted towards heaven).
11. (4) Their silence, v13—"So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great."
12. Francis Andersen—"There was nothing to be said. These wise men are horrified and speechless. They were true friends, bringing to Job's lonely ash-heap the compassion of a silent presence."
13. And so, we end chapter 2 with the impression these were wise and loving friends, a notion that will be greatly challenged beginning with chapter 4.
14. As Steven Lawson said—"As the rest of the book shows, their silence was the wisest thing they did."

15. Obs.1— The nature and necessity of integrity—twice in this passage mention is made of Job's integrity (v3, v9).
16. But these aren't the only times the word is found in Job—Job uses it twice more of himself (27:5; 31:6).
17. Job 27:5—"Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me" 31:6—"Let me weighed on honest scales, that God may know my integrity."
18. It becomes rather evident that integrity was important to Job, and that he refused to let it go or depart from it.
19. Job 2:3—"And still he holds fast to his integrity" v9—"Do you still hold fast to your integrity"—to hold fast means to "cling to."
20. The imagery is this—it's as if Job's integrity was a treasure that he valued, and thus, refused to let go.
21. But the concept of "holding fast" brings with it the idea of opposition—someone trying to take it from you.
22. Job held on to his integrity even though everyone and everything around him, sought to rip it from him.
23. Thus, the all-important question becomes, what is integrity? The word fundamentally means honesty or veracity.
24. It refers to actions that harmonize with our hearts regardless to circumstances—we remain what we are regardless of opposition.
25. A person with integrity refuses to act differently in front of different crowds and different circumstances.
26. What he is in his heart he is in his life—what he is in private he is in public—he has one face not two.
27. Thus, in summary, Job's integrity, he was able to love God in every circumstance—he was what he was regardless of setting.
28. He loved God when rich and he loved God when poor, and he loved God when healthy and he loved God when sick.
29. He is what he is regardless of his situation—this is integrity—it's being true to who we are regardless of circumstances.
30. Now, here I want to answer the obvious questions, how and why—how and why did Job cling to his integrity?
31. (a) How did Job cling to his integrity? I suggest the answer is found in his response to his wife, v10—"Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?"
32. (b) Why did Job cling to his integrity? Simply, there are times when our integrity is all that we have.
33. Prov.28:6—"Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one perverse in his ways, though he be rich."
34. Far better to be poor (just as Job was) and cling to your integrity, then to be rich and have no integrity.
35. Put another way, though Job was poor (in one sense) he remained rich (in another sense)—integrity is better than riches.
36. Obs.2—The reality of family opposition—I really believe most of us overlook the severity of this affliction.
37. We hear about Job losing his possessions and children, and now how he's afflicted with painful boils.
38. But what is all that in comparison to the betrayal of his wife! This was an affliction that trumped the others.

39. We are not told what kind of marriage Job had with his wife, but we are told about his own personal piety.
40. Because Job was a blameless and upright man, one who feared God and shunned evil, he loved his wife.
41. Regardless how his wife treated him, one thing is for certain, Job dwelt with her with knowledge and love.
42. I've said it many times, one of the primary purposes for marriage is companionship—walking hand-in-hand together through life.
43. With all of its ups and downs—with its good and bad—times of prosperity and adversity—sickness and health.
44. I can hardly imagine, having been married for 22 years, going through the ups and downs of life alone.
45. And while, I'm not able to understand the pain and anguish experienced by Job and his wife, we've had some turbulence.
46. And number one thing that got me through those times, humanly speaking, was the support of my wife.
47. Whenever we've gone through a hardship, we've always said—"It's you and me. Together we can endure anything."
48. One commentator suggested, this may have been the reason Job's wife didn't die along with his children.
49. It was a part of Job's affliction to have someone as close to him as his wife, turn on him in his time of need.
50. Because there's no closer human relationship than marriage, there's no greater pain when a spouse leaves you.
51. While there's no way I can be dogmatic about this, but I suggest Job's wife was one of his greatest afflictions.
52. Joseph Caryl (424 sermons over 24yrs)—"This appears to be the reason Job's wife was spared, that she might be a further instrument of her husbands affliction. Satan meant to make use of her for his own purpose, to drive on the main design; and whereas she should have been a help to her husband, Satan employs her against her husband; she was the strongest and fittest weapon, with which Satan did assault; the choicest arrow in his quiver, by which he wounded the soul and spirit of Job."
53. Obs.3—The need for friendly comfort—this is in part, why the church is absolutely essential for Christians.
54. Rom.12:15—"Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep"—the church is a place where people come when we are in need, to mourn with us and comfort us.
55. Let me close by saying, Christ is the best friend who not only sympathizes with us, but suffered for us (Christ alone can fully mourn with us and truly comfort us).
56. (a) He was altered in appearance—our Savior's appearance was altered not by sickness but by physical abuse.
57. Isa.52:14—"His appearance was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men."
58. (b) He was covered by painful sores—again I don't mean literal sores (boils), but the painful sores of sin.
59. Isa.1:6—"From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up or soothed with ointment."
60. (c) He was left destitute of comfort—just as Job's wife and friends would prove poor comforters, our Savior said—"I looked for comforters, but I found none."
61. (d) He was hated without cause—just as Satan hated Job without cause, so our Savior said—"Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of My head."