

## 2:11

**Now** what masterful writing: “after Satan, and the children, and the calamity, and Satan, and the sickness, and his wife...” **when Job's three friends** in Scripture, sometimes this word is used for “counselor” or “buddy” or “legal counsel.” But if you’re taking time to come and see this guy and sit with him in these awful conditions, you’re probably his friend in the truest of senses. Then, if Job really was the second king of Edom, he was rich and royal.

In 1 Samuel 25 we hear about a man named “Nabal,” and his riches are described as being about 1/10 as much as Job. So what kind of friends do royal people have anyway? Cling-ons, parasites, leeches. The going is good when the health is good and the wine is flowing like water and all the delicacies are yours. It’s easy to find friends in such conditions. Since Job is “greatest in all the land [of Edom],” you would expect that his friends are quite important as well. It’s not like the servants came or the kids’ friend came...no, Job had three friends.

**heard of all this evil** Obviously “evil” doesn’t always been “something sinful” as there is none recorded. Maybe there is sin in the passage, but if so, it is probably that of Satan. Maybe you could say the wife sinned, but that would be hard to prove. A distraught woman who just lost ten children will speak out in grief a time or two to be sure and say something like, “Job, look at you...end it for yourself. Curse God and die.” Probably, just yet, there is no sin in these friends either.

**that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite,** Genesis 25 tell us this is a descendant of Ishmael, who is a son of Abraham (in his 87<sup>th</sup> year). **Bildad the Shuhite,** Genesis 25 tells us this man was probably a descendant of Shua from Abraham’s 2<sup>nd</sup> wife. He is, therefore, another descendant of Abraham. **and Zophar the Naamathite.** Joshua 20 seems to indicate that this man is a descendant of folks who lived on the coast of Edom. Edom, of course, is another name for “Esau”, the grandson of Abraham. Probably, all three of these were descendants of Abraham. Job, also, if he was living in the land of his ancestor, was living in the land of Esau, and was also a descendant of Abraham.

**They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him.** How we get agitated when people are sad around us!

## 2:12

**And when they saw him from a distance,** They probably came from quite a distance, especially since they were royalty. It’s hard to imagine them sharing property lines like neighbors as we think of them today. It may have taken a few days to get to Job...all the while, Job is sitting in the city dump (perhaps) seeking relief with broken potter. **they did not recognize him.** If you consider Job’s condition from verse 7, this will make sense to you. We know he had darkish skin and a bald head and he as covered in ashes. Of course, he was grief stricken and this may have obscured his identity. Perhaps he did this also because he was diseased. Then, he was wearing torn clothes. He once had a healthy head of hair and pristine skin. He had clothes that looked like he was rich, and now “look at him. We can smell him from here. He looks horrible!”

**And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven.** These were ways to show grief. Nehemiah had a different approach: he plucked the beards from the faces of his enemies. **Toward heaven** is certainly a play on words. The last time we “heard from Heaven” it didn’t go well (in the last chapter).

## 2:13

**And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights,** in Samuel and Ezekiel we find people sitting silently with others in their grief. **and no one spoke a word to him,** They didn’t have anything profound to add to his grief. Maybe they were without words. Especially when we see the reason for their silence in the next phrase.

By the way, Isaiah 52:12-53:4 tells us this is quite Christological. We stare at the suffering Jesus and our mouths are shut. So marred, He is, and our mouths are shut. Jesus, in Isaiah 53:4 is considered as one “smitten of God,” and the reader will soon find that Job is seen the very same way.

**for they saw that his suffering was very great.** Maybe they knew they had to earn the license to speak into this friend's life? There are plenty of bad things to say about these three friends, but it took a special trio of friends to sit with Job in the trash heap. Sometimes the best things we can do is save the best "sayings" to "help people" with the "verse of the day," and save it. Probably everybody has Romans 8:28 memorized, but it seems good to just **sit with him on the ground** and be with him. This was not convenient. I doubt very seriously that these men were used to this. Friends of a rich man are usually rich and they would have been better off saying "we'll be praying for you. Let us know when things pick up!"

These are not like Luke's parable of the Good Samaritan. A priest and a Levite were on their way to ministry and did not have time to help the man in the ditch. Both were on their way to the temple; on their way to fulfill their callings. They had "no time" to sit in the ditch with a man who was hurting. They have to do important things like tend to the temple vestments.

These friends of Job, though, had put some time into their friendship. You just can't empathize without spending time with someone. It's very hard to act like you care. Somehow these friends spent time enough with Job before the calamity that they earned the proximity with Job in the calamity. They worked on friendship.

Jesus, in Matthew 11:19, is called the "Friend of Sinners." Here, Job is in a trash-heap because of sin—maybe not his sin—but sin nonetheless. Job's friends are a great picture of Christ, dwelling with people in a world full of the effects of sin.

Job, on the other hand, is a picture of Jesus as well—suffering for sin that was not His own. Job is suffering because of an adversary who is quite sinful. We see Christ, ultimately, in the place of Job. Who is it, really, big picture—in the trash heap? "Afflicted" (Isaiah 53:3-4) because of God's hand (Isaiah 53:10). Job gave the credit for this to God: "The Lord gives/takes away." Mysteriously, God gave the approval for what occurred to both Job and to Jesus. Luke 24:44 gives us this license to find Christ in the book of a prophet named Job (James 5:10-11).