

JOB

Chapter 2

Satan Attacks Job's Health

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. 2 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 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? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason." 4 Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. 5 But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." 6 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life." 7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes. 9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die." 10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

2:1–3 Except for the final sentence, this passage is almost identical to 1:6–8. He who accused Job of having a deceitful motive is now shown to have a deceitful motive himself: to discredit the Lord through Job. (CSB)

Almost identical passage to 1:6–8. Satan, who earlier accused Job of having ulterior motives, now is seen as having an ulterior motive himself—to discredit the Lord through Job. (TLSB)

In spite of the severe afflictions he had brought upon Job, Satan had not succeeded in making Job curse God or renounce his faith in him. But Satan was not about to give up. Again (some commentators suggest it might have been a year later but no one really knows) he appeared before the Lord. (PBC)

2:3 *integrity*. From same root as "blameless." Used in 2:9; 27:5; 31:6; elsewhere in the OT only in Pr 11:3. (TLSB)

you incited me. God cannot be stirred up to do things against his will. Though it is not always clear how, everything that happens is part of his divine purpose (see 38:2). (CSB)

Used in a derogatory sense here and in 36:18; 1Sm 26:19; 2Sm 24:1. (TLSB)

to destroy him – The word "ruin" literally means "swallow" or "devour." (PBC)

2:4 *Skin for skin!* No doubt a proverb—perhaps originally an expression of willingness to barter one animal skin for another of equal value. (CSB)

Proverbial saying that could mean a person would exchange anything he or she has for something else of similar or better value. (TLSB)

This is brazen disrespect. When he makes this statement Satan is living up to his title as “the slanderer.” Earlier God had called Job a righteous and devout man. Job demonstrated true, unselfish fatherly love and concern for his children and would probably have been willing to give his life for any one of them. And yet Satan dared to accuse this man of being selfish and self-centered. (PBC)

2:5 *touch his bone and flesh.* Together, means “his body.” Bones were considered the seat of illness (Lm 1:13); thus Satan has in mind a debilitating disease. (TLSB)

2:6 *in your hand.* Cf 1:12. Greg: “The safeguard of protection goes along with the permission to smite.... And so with the very justice of the permission there is mixed a certain measure of pity, that in one and the same contest, both His lowly servant might rise by oppression, and the towering enemy be brought down by the permission” (ALF 18:133). (TLSB)

spare his life. Satan is still limited by God. Should Job die, neither God nor Job could be vindicated. (CSB)

As Christians we must always be aware of Satan’s great power, so great that we are no match for him. We can, however, find our true comfort and strength in knowing that Jesus Christ is even more powerful and has conquered the evil one. Trusting in Jesus, we need not fear the devil. (PBC)

2:7 The precise nature of Job’s sickness is uncertain, but its symptoms were painful festering sores over the whole body (7:5), nightmares (7:14), scabs that peeled and became black (30:28, 30), disfigurement and revolting appearance (2:12; 19:19), bad breath (19:17), excessive thinness (17:7; 19:20), fever (30:30) and pain day and night (30:17). (CSB)

sores. The Hebrew for this word is translated “boils” in Ex 9:9; Lev 13:18; 2Ki 20:7. (CSB)

Singular noun in Hbr. A nontechnical term for a grievous inflammation, a boil. Some associate this description with leprosy, though the exact disease is unknown. The disease is characterized with infections, darkened and peeling skin (30:28, 30), and broken and festering skin (7:5). Other symptoms could include emaciation (19:20), fever (30:30b), fits of depression (7:16; 30:15–17), weeping (16:16a), sleeplessness (7:4), nightmares (7:14), putrid breath (19:17), failing vision (16:16b), rotting teeth (19:20), and haggard looks (2:12). Such torturing disfigurement points to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, whose “appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance.... He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him” (Is 52:14; 53:2). This is the last time Satan is heard or seen in Jb. (TLSB)

2:8 *piece of broken pottery.* Broken pottery had many uses; here a potsherd is used for scraping or scratching the sores.(TLSB)

ashes. Symbolic of mourning (see 42:6; Est 4:3; cf. Jnh 3:6, which speaks of sitting in dust). (CSB)

Custom associated with grief (2Sm 13:19; Esther 4:1 3; Dn 9:3; Jnh 3:6). (TLSB)

These words also strongly imply that Job had left his stately home and had gone to a desolate place where people burned rubbish. (PBC)

2:9 wife. Only time we hear from her. Mentioned by Job in his complaint (19:17) and oath (31:10). Though she is not physically afflicted, she also suffers the loss of children and wealth. (TLSB)

hold fast your integrity? Echo of 2:3 and Yahweh's words there. Words are used here in derision, as a temptation aiding Satan. (TLSB)

Curse God. The Hebrew for this expression here and in 1:5 employs a euphemism (lit. "Bless God"). Satan is using Job's wife to tempt Job as he used Eve to tempt Adam. (CSB)

and die. Since nothing but death is left for Job, his wife wants him to provoke God to administer the final stroke due to all who curse him (Lev 24:10–16). (CSB)

2:10 speak as one of the foolish women – The Hebrew word for foolish denotes moral deficiency. Her words were serious, not merely silly or stupid. (PBC)

Shall we receive good from God, and not trouble? A key theme of the book: Trouble and suffering are not merely punishment for sin; for God's people they may serve as a trial (as here) or as a discipline that culminates in spiritual gain (see 5:17; Dt 8:5; 2Sa 7:14; Ps 94:12; Pr 3:11–12; 1Co 11:32; Heb 12:5–11). (CSB)

2:1–10 Job demonstrates great reserve, but also a sense of fatalism. He feels there is nothing he can do. Though he certainly cannot aid himself, he can pray for the Lord's deliverance. This is the Lord's promise and great comfort in the face of all adversity: We can call on the Lord Almighty in prayer; He has promised to answer. • Lord, lead us to call upon Your name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks. Amen. (TLSB)

Job's Three Friends

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. 12 And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. 13 And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

2:11 three friends. Older than Job (see 15:10). (CSB)

Eliphaz. An Edomite name (see Ge 36:11). (CSB)

Edomite name that means "God is fine gold"; also the name of one of Esau's sons and a ruler of his people (Gn 36:4, 6–12, 15–16). (TLSB)

Temanite. Teman was a son of Eliphaz (Gn 36:11, 15, 42) and also the name of a large Edomite area, southeast of the Salt Sea, famous for its wisdom (Jer 49:7). The Edomites were descendants of Esau (aka Edom; Gn 25:30), brother of Jacob (aka Israel; Gn 32:28), father of the Israelites. Edom led many invasions against Israel (1Sm 14:47; Ezk 25:14), for which the prophet Obadiah announced God's judgment against them (Ob 1–14). (TLSB)

Shuhite. Bildad may have been a descendant of Shuah, the youngest son of Abraham and Keturah (Ge 25:2). (CSB)

Possible descendant of Shuah, Abraham's son by his concubine Keturah and founder of a desert tribe related to the nomadic Midianites (Gn 25:2; 1Ch 1:32). (TLSB)

Zophar – It is difficult to find any clues to Zophar's ancestry or home. Most likely all three friends lived somewhere in the middle east since they came together by agreement. (PBC)

Name is unique to Jb, as is the location. These friends presumably traveled some distance to visit Job. Little is known about them. (TLSB)

Naamathite. Apart from 11:1; 20:1; 42:9, this word does not occur elsewhere in the Bible. (CSB)

2:12 *could hardly recognize him*. Cf. Isa 52:14; 53:3. (CSB)

Likely a result of Job's disease. (TLSB)

When they came to him they could hardly recognize him from a distance. He was not in his usual position of managing and supervising his vast estate. (PBC)

tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. Visible signs of mourning. (CSB)

tore their robes. In grief, just as Job had done (1:20). *sprinkled dust on their heads*. Flinging dust into the air so that it fell on the head was another sign of grief. (TLSB)

2:13 *sat with him on the ground*. See Eze 3:15; a commendable expression of sympathy. (CSB)

Another gesture of grief. (TLSB)

seven. See Ge 50:10; 1Sa 31:13; the number of completeness. (CSB)

Normal period of mourning. (TLSB)

No one spoke a word to him. Their mere presence was of more comfort to him than their words of advice would prove to be (see 16:2–3). (CSB)

2:11–13 An important subtheme is Job's friendships. Job's friends display genuine, appropriate sorrow and care. When friends and family mourn and suffer, abide with them. Share their grief, and look for opportunities to comfort them. Pray to the "God of all comfort" on their behalf, for "through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too" (2Co 1:3, 5). • Shelter me, O Lord, with the blessed wounds of Jesus, who is the friend of sinners. Amen. (TLSB)