

Job's Introduction



Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? (Part 6)
by Derek Prince

Most of you know, some of you don't, that we're going to be dealing with the book of Job. I have to assume that you are in some measure familiar with the story of Job, otherwise you're going to find it difficult to keep up. I have warned the people that I could warn that we're going to deal with Job and I suggested they read the book through. I'm sure some of you have found that a bit tough but you're probably cutting your teeth.

Very simply, the outline of the book is there was a man of outstanding righteousness. He was the most righteous man on earth in his day and his name was Job. He was also very wealthy, very prosperous. That encourages me to know it is possible to be righteous and rich, a lot of people think it isn't. But, Job was.

And then there was a dialogue in heaven between God and Satan. We'll read a little part about it later. God pointed Job out to Satan and said, "Have you considered my servant Job? A perfect and an upright man, there is no one like him in the earth." And Satan was very cynical, he said, "No wonder, you do everything for him. You protect him, you provide for him, he prospers. You just take away everything he has and see how he'll react." And amazingly God said, "Okay, you can take away everything he has but don't take his life." And a series of absolutely unnatural disasters hit Job and his family. All his children, seven sons and three daughters, were killed in a single accident and all his wealth was taken from him, fire fell from heaven and consumed his camels. I mean, it was an amazing series of disasters. Behind that was who? Satan, that's right. We'll go into that in a little bit.

So Job has this series of disasters and Satan turns up again in heaven and God says to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? You moved me to smite him without cause, for no reason, and he hasn't turned against me. He's submitted himself to me." Satan, that old cynic, said, "Well, no wonder. If you just touch his body, he'll give anything for the sake of health. If you just touch his body and see what happens to him." So the Lord said to Satan, "You can touch him but don't take his life."

And Satan went out and the Bible says "he smote Job with boils from head to foot." So that's another indication of what Satan can do. Some people don't like this truth but it's there.

So there is Job sitting on the ash heap, having lost everything, with a pot chard scraping the pus off his boils, and his three "friends"—and I think sometimes what people say, "With friends like that you don't need enemies." They turn up and they're going to "comfort" him. For seven days they just sit around, nobody says anything. And then they start in on Job and we'll go through the outline of what they say and the outline of Job's response.

Let me just for a moment go back and go to chapter 42, verses 7 and 8, which is the door that God opened for me to try to find the meaning of this book. I want to tell you very clearly that there are lots of things in Job I still don't understand but I think it gave me a way to begin to unravel some of the mystery. So, here at the end of the book Job has said his peace, his three friends have said their peace, a young man named Elihu has said his peace. Then God moved in and spoke directly to Job for three or four chapters. We'll see how Job responded a little later.

Now, this is what I want to come to:

> "It was so after the Lord had spoken these words to Job that the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite [he was number one of the three friends], 'My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends [that's Bildad and Zophar], for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.'"

You three men have said the wrong thing, Job has said the right thing. And in the next verse it's repeated:

> "Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has."

Now, the question that came to me is so what did the friends say that God didn't accept and why did God accept what Job said? Because, Job said a lot of negative things about God. He actually said God has taken away my justice, He's not treating me right—and God didn't complain. He said Job has said the right thing.

But of these other friends who came out with a long list of religious platitudes, He said, "They have not spoken of me what is right."

So, this is the way I approached the book, to find out why God took exception to the words of the friends and why God accepted the words of Job. Because, the normal religious person such as you or me would have reacted in the opposite. We would have said what the friends said was right and what Job said was awful. God didn't react that way so that's how we're going to look at it.

The first thing I want to deal with, which is kind of incidental in a way but very important, is what does the book of Job reveal about Satan? And it reveals a lot of things that are important for us to know. Number one, it reveals that Satan can take his place amongst the angels of God. This is stated twice in chapter 1, verse 6 and in chapter 2, verse 1. We'll turn there, chapter 1, verse 6:

> "Now there was a day when the sons of God [that's the angels, I can't take time to go into that but I can show it to you from the text] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'"

So if you want to know what Satan is doing, he's going to and fro in the earth and walking back and forth on it and making all the trouble he can for everybody. 1 Peter says:

> "Our adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

You need to know that. Satan has been turned loose. But, he came into the presence of God with the angels.

And then in chapter 2, verse 1 it says:

> "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]."

Now, a little comment on that which I'll offer you is in 2 Corinthians 11:14. Speaking about false apostles Paul says in verse 13:

> "Certain kinds of people are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ."

That's important to know, it's still happening today. And, no wonder. For Satan himself transformed himself into an angel

of light. Now this is my opinion. My opinion is that Satan came amongst the other angels looking just like them and I think very probably the other angels didn't identify him. After all, there are a hundred million angels at least because it says ten thousand times ten thousand which is a hundred million. That's not the ultimate figure. But amongst these hundred million here was this beautiful, shining figure. It doesn't seem that the other angels discerned anything about him. God said, "What are you doing here, Satan? How did you get in amongst this crowd?"

So, that's one important thing to remember. I don't know whether it's still true today, I don't know of any scriptural reason why it's changed. To some extent, Satan still has access to God. Revelation 12:10 says he accuses us, the people of God, before the throne of God day and night. So, he has to have some kind of access to do that. One of the important things we're not going to deal with is how to handle Satan's accusations. Let me give you the answer but I'm not going to go into it. It's Revelation 12:11:

> "They [the believers on earth] overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

It takes a certain kind of person to overcome Satan. Only committed people, those who do not love their lives to the death. My definition of that is people for whom to do the will of God is more important than to stay alive. If you have to have the choice, you'll do the will of God and die for it rather than compromise and stay alive. Satan has no trouble with uncommitted Christians. The only kind of Christians that can trouble him are committed Christians, those who do not love their live to the death.

Lenin, I don't usually quote him, but he once said in the days when people listened to him, "Communists are dead men on furlough." In other words, he meant when you become a member of the Communist party, that's your death sentence. You're going to die, maybe in a jail, maybe on a gallows, maybe at a roadblock, you're going to die. Until you die you're a dead man on furlough. I believe that, in a certain sense, should be true of Christians. Christians are dead men on furlough. We haven't died yet but we can anticipate a sentence of death.

I personally believe that in the next few years this is going to become very relevant here in the United States. So, you better gird up the loins of your mind and be ready. I hope that this study will help you to be ready.

That's point number one, Satan has some kind of access to the presence of God. He can disguise himself as an angel of light. There have been a number of examples in recent decades of people being deceived by beings who appeared as angels of light but were actually messengers of error.

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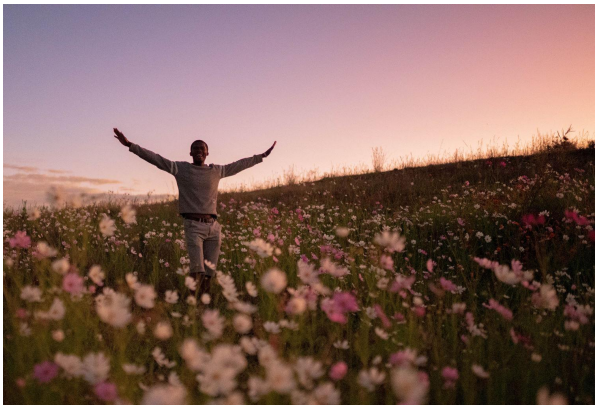

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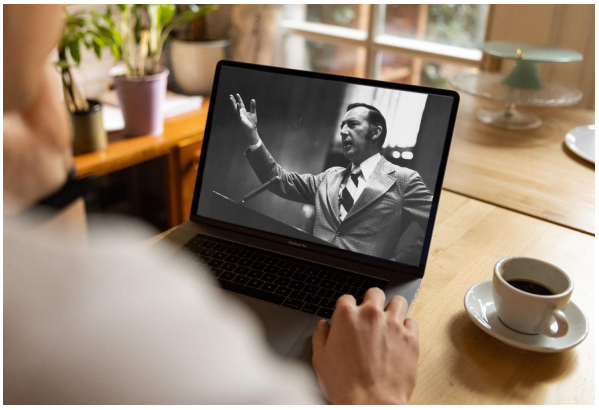

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