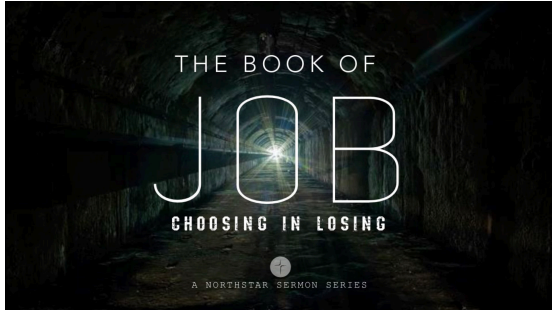


Job 1-2: The Tests

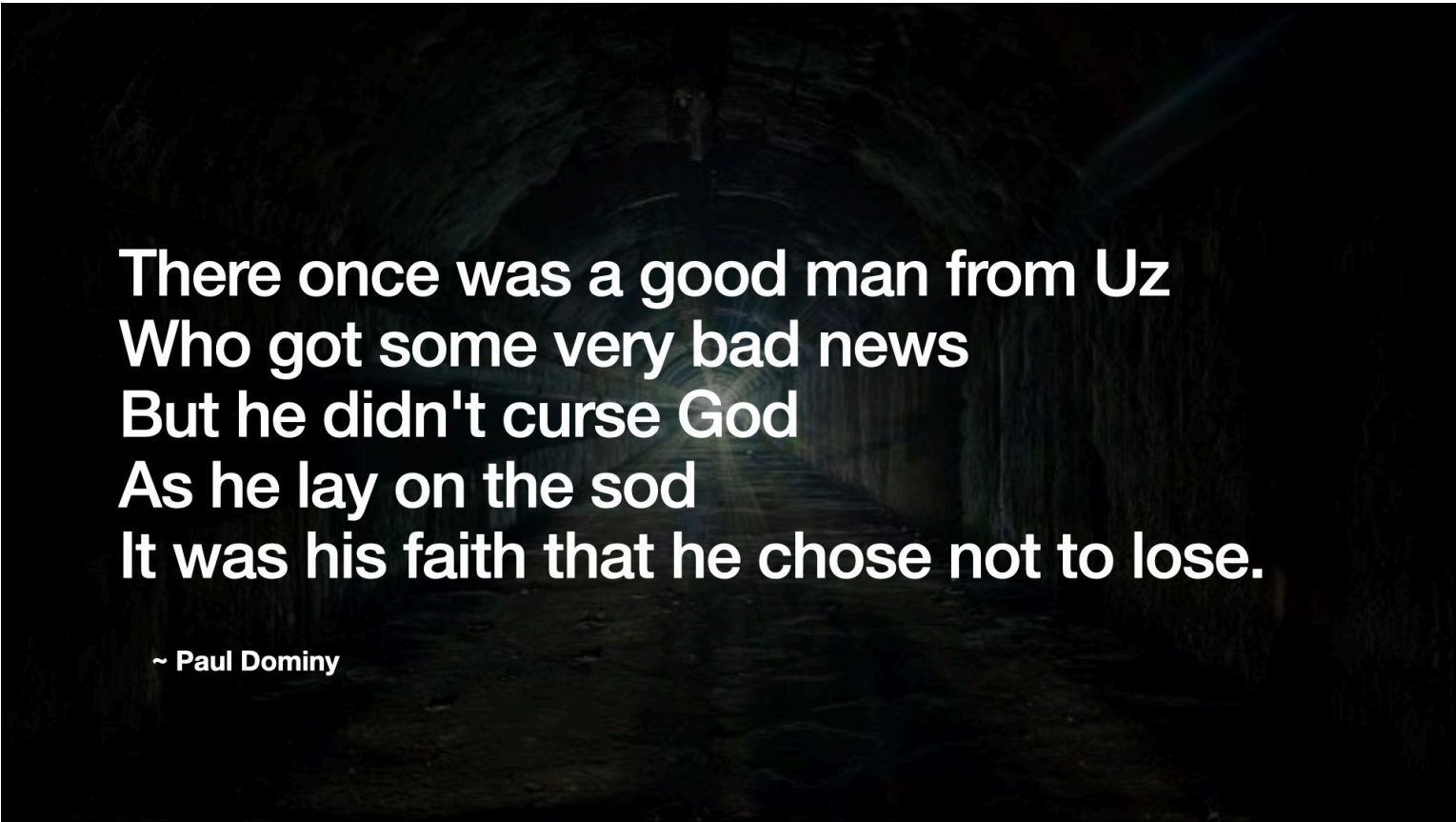
Northstar Church • February 16, 2025

Jeff Noble



From Paul Dominy:

*There once was a good man from Uz
Who got some very bad news
But he didn't curse God
As he lay on the sod
It was his faith that he chose not to lose.*



There once was a good man from Uz
Who got some very bad news
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It was his faith that he chose not to lose.

~ Paul Dominy

Schedule for Series/Outline of Book

- Feb 16 - Job 1-2
- Feb 23 - Job 3 - Job's Outcry
- **First Round of Speeches**
- Mar 2 - Job 4-7 - Eliphaz and Job
- Mar 9 - Job 8-10 - Bildad and Job
- Mar 16 - Job 11-14 - Zophar and Job
- **Second Round of Speeches**
- Mar 23 - Job 15-21 - Summary of Nuggets, Arguments and Progress of Discussion
- **Third Round of Speeches**
- March 30 - Job 22-26
- Apr 6 - Job 27 - Job's Conclusions to the Three
- Apr 13 - Palm Sunday
- Apr 18 - Good Friday
- Apr 20 - Easter
- Apr 27 - Job 28 - Interlude, Wisdom Chapter by Job
- May 4 - Job 29-31 - Job's Closing Arguments
- May 11 - Job 32-37 - Elihu's Case

- May 18 - Job 38-41 - God Responds
- May 25 - Job 42 - The Conclusion, God's Pronouncements, Job's Blessing

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- Apr 20 - **EASTER**

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Last week - an introduction and overview.

When we suffer...

- What we believe about God comes to the forefront.
- Our shallow theologies are exposed.
- Our helplessness and utter lack of control disorients us.
- Where we turn, or who/what we turn to for comfort and help will define our experience.
- Whether we or others receive good from our suffering will be dependent on what we do in our suffering.

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An Outline

1. Job and Fam, 1:1-3
2. Job as Spiritual Leader of His Family, 1:4-5
3. The Heavenly Council & Satan's Accusation, 1:6-12
4. Satan's First Accusation and Terror Attack, 1:13-19
5. Job's Response and Refutation of Satan, 1:20-22
6. Satan's Second Accusation and Terror Attack, 2:1-7
7. Job's Response, Job's Wife's Response, Satan's Refutation, 2:8-10
8. The Friends and Sitting in Silence, 2:11-13

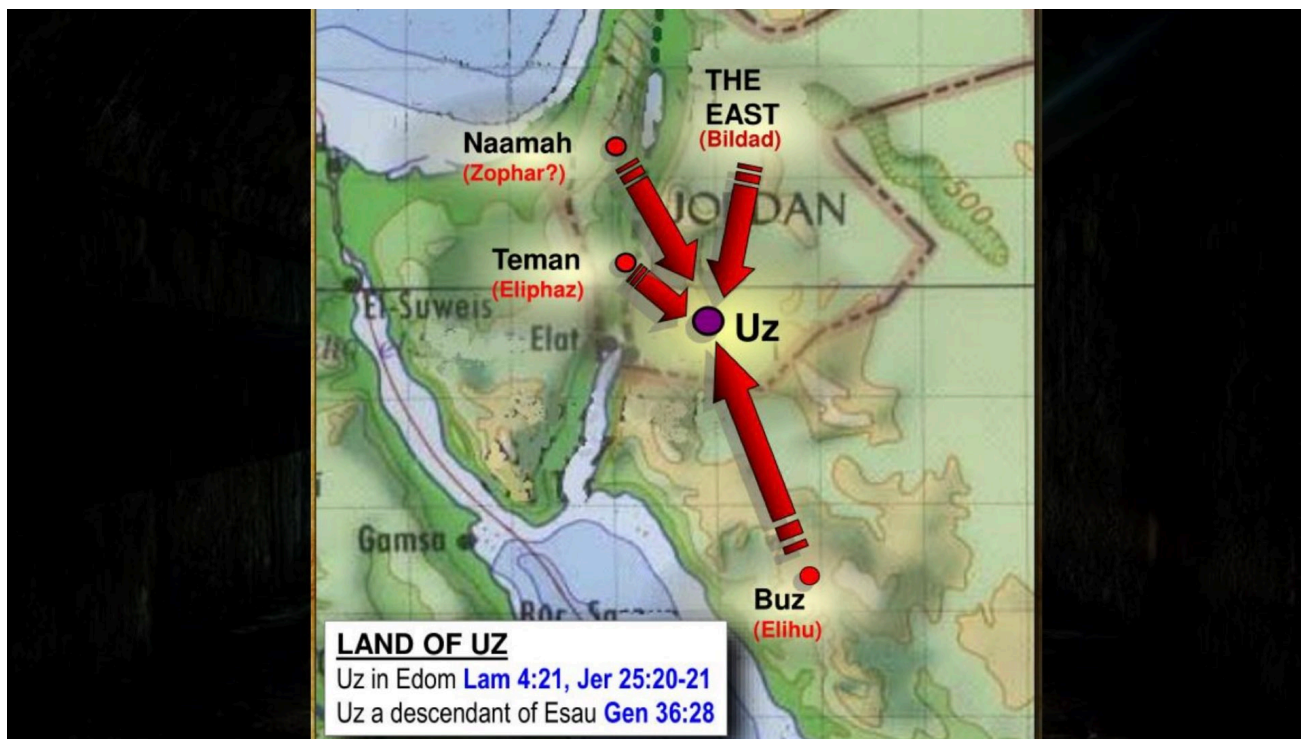
Outline of Chapters 1-2

- A. Job and Fam, 1:1-3
- B. Job as Spiritual Leader of His Family, 1:4-5
- C. The Heavenly Council & Satan's Accusation, 1:6-12
- D. Satan's First Accusation and Terror Attack, 1:13-19
- E. Job's Response and Refutation of Satan, 1:20-22
- F. Satan's Second Accusation and Terror Attack, 2:1-7
- G. Job's Response, Job's Wife's Response, Satan's Refutation, 2:8-10
- H. The Friends and Sitting in Silence, 2:11-13

Job and Fam, 1:1-3

There was a man in the country of Uz named Job. He was a man of complete integrity, who feared God and turned away from evil. He had seven sons and three daughters. His estate included seven thousand sheep and goats, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large number of servants. Job was the greatest man among all the people of the east. (Job 1:1-3)

We established last week that Job was a real person and where the land of Uz most likely was. Everything across the Jordan was "Qedem" or "the East" to the Jews. It was *"the edge of civilization, surrounded by an atmosphere of romance..."* (Anderson, 81). Think of it like early America's Wild West. It was there that men went to test their mettle, settle and many times, make their fortune.



Job's Character

- **"Complete integrity"** - "blameless and upright" (ESV) - not sinless, but whole of heart - not a hypocrite; faithful loyalty to what is good and right
- **"Feared God"** - awe and reverence that seeks to place God first in all of life; results in faithful obedience undergirded by love and respect

- "Turned away from evil" - made daily decisions to live rightly, to avoid wrong

Job's Character

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- "Feared God"
- "Turned away from evil"

Job as Spiritual Leader of His Family, 1:4-5

His sons used to take turns having banquets at their homes. They would send an invitation to their three sisters to eat and drink with them. Whenever a round of banqueting was over, Job would send for his children and purify them, rising early in the morning to offer burnt offerings for all of them. For Job thought, "Perhaps my children have sinned, having cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular practice. (Job 1:4-5)

We cannot overestimate the significance of a father who cared deeply for the spiritual well-being of his children. He was intentional. He was regular. He was personally burdened and concerned for his children's spiritual health. **"Rising early in the morning... regular practice"** - Here's a lesson: Have a regular, daily quiet time (like Job) and endure suffering well.



**Have a regular, daily quiet time
(like Job) and endure suffering well.**

The Heavenly Council & Satan's Accusation, 1:6-12

One day the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. The LORD asked Satan, "Where have you come from? "

"From roaming through the earth," Satan answered him, "and walking around on it."

Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? No one else on earth is like him, a man of perfect integrity, who fears God and turns away from evil."

Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Haven't you placed a hedge around him, his household, and everything he owns? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he owns, and he will surely curse you to your face."

"Very well," the LORD told Satan, "everything he owns is in your power. However, do not lay a hand on Job himself." So Satan left the LORD's presence. (Job 1:6-12)

The heavenly council. Who are the "**sons of God?**" This is a reference to angelic beings. We don't know when God created the angels. Their creation is not described in Genesis 1-2. However, throughout scripture, their existence is taught, demonstrated and revealed.

When grouped together, they are called "the host of heaven" (1 Kgs 22:19), stars (Job 38:7), 'messengers' (Gen. 32:2; Ps. 103:20), "holy ones" (Job 5:1), 'watchers' (Dan. 4:13, 17, 23), 'gods' (Ps. 97:7), 'spirits' (Zech. 6:5), and of course, 'angels.'

Demons are fallen angels, who joined Satan's rebellion against God which is described in Revelation 12:7-9, Isaiah 14:12, and Ezekiel 28:16.

“sons of God”

- "the host of heaven"
- 'stars'
- 'messengers'
- 'holy ones'
- 'watchers'
- 'gods'
- 'spirits'
- 'angels'

One of the great names of God - "**The Lord of hosts**" implies *God's ultimate authority and rule over these angelic beings*. When they gathered, they were called 'the divine assembly' (Ps. 82:1). There are many instances in Revelation that record the majesty and mystery of the throne room of God, and there are always angelic beings in the description.

“Lord of hosts”

implies God's ultimate authority and rule over these angelic beings

Perhaps more jarring is "**The Satan**." The Hebrew here in chapters 1-2 includes the definite article. His name literally means "accuser" or "adversary." When Satan, the dragon, is defeated in Revelation, we hear:

The salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ
have now come,
because **the accuser of our brothers and sisters,**
who accuses them
before our God day and night,
has been thrown down. (Revelation 12:10)

The book of Job in the Old Testament records and teaches the presence of a powerful, antagonistic spiritual being who hates God and humanity but who is not an equal with God. He must ask permission, and all he does is under God's authority.

Here's the beauty... we should never fear Satan's accusations!

"Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died, but even more, has been raised; **he also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us.**" (Romans 8:34)

If Satan accuses us before God, Jesus intercedes for us!



**If Satan accuses us before God,
Jesus intercedes for us!**

When Satan responded to God's question that he'd been **"roaming the earth"** and **"walking up and down on it,"** it hints at what Peter told us in his first letter.

"Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world." (1 Peter 5:8-9)

The Clear Supremacy of God. It is completely obvious that Satan is *an unwelcome presence*. He's immediately asked by God what he is doing in this gathering. And it's also stunning, in context of the whole book, that *God sets Satan up*. Satan barges in, and God will proceed to demonstrate His glory, compassion and care by showing Satan that nothing that he does to a person who sees God clearly will result in them being ultimately destroyed or God being belittled.



Nothing that Satan does to a person who sees God clearly will result in them being ultimately destroyed or God being belittled.

What Satan does will result in Job's growth, depth, God's glory and OUR edification and instruction - millions upon millions of God's people over so many years are comforted, taught and given perspective in suffering!

"My servant Job" - a special title. Only a select few are given it - **Abraham, Moses and Joshua!** God repeats the affirmation of Job's character.

Satan's accusation

"Does Job fear God for nothing? Haven't you placed a hedge around him... You have blessed..."

In it, Satan both accuses God and Job. He accuses God of getting glory by blessing. He accuses Job of using God for advancement. None of this is sincere, Satan accuses. It makes us ask **two questions**:

- **"Why do we worship God?"**
- **"Is God only worthy of worship when He blesses us?"**

Two Questions

1. Why do we worship God?
2. Is God only worthy of worship when He blesses us?

Satan disputes that anything is good, for goodness' sake. To Satan, God is not good. Job is not good.

Profoundly, the Hebrew word for blessing and curse in Job is the same word. It's the context which determines which word we use. We know that suffering can be a radical blessing. And often, if we're not careful, we become so distracted by our blessings, that they become an obstacle for us in our relationship with God, thus becoming a curse!

The First Pass of Satan's Terror Attack, 1:13-19

One day when Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, a messenger came to Job and reported, "While the oxen were plowing and the donkeys grazing nearby, the Sabeans swooped down and took them away. They struck down the servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you! "

He was still speaking when another messenger came and reported, "God's fire fell from heaven. It burned the sheep and the servants and devoured them, and I alone have escaped to tell you! "

That messenger was still speaking when yet another came and reported, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, made a raid on the camels, and took them away. They struck down the servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you! "

He was still speaking when another messenger came and reported, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. Suddenly a powerful wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on the young people so

that they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you! " (Job 1:13-19)

It's a similar pattern in each horrifying news moment. In "**one day**," four messengers came and each subsequently piles gut-wrenching news upon soul-emptying sadness. Satan struck.

The Messengers and News

1. Sabeans stole oxen, servants killed
2. Fire from heaven, sheep and servants killed
3. Chaldeans stole camels, servants killed
4. Powerful wind destroyed house, sons and daughters, servants killed

The Messengers and News

1. **Sabeans** stole oxen, servants killed
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3. **Chaldeans** stole camels, servants killed
4. **Powerful wind** destroyed house, sons and daughters, servants killed

Death, death, death, death. Because a man's wealth in that day was measured in herds and flocks for the most part, it meant that Job had lost most, if not everything of his livelihood. "**I alone have escaped to tell you.**" (4x)

Job's Response and Refutation of Satan, 1:20-22

Then Job stood up, tore his robe, and shaved his head. He fell to the ground and worshiped, saying:

Naked I came from my mother's womb,

and naked I will leave this life.

The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away.

Blessed be the name of the LORD.

Throughout all this Job did not sin or blame God for anything. (Job 1:20-22)

What a magnificent, holy and surrendered response! It teaches us much. First, we must note that while it's clear Satan made the attack, **there were different means that brought the destruction**. Sabeans and Chaldeans, fire from heaven and a powerful wind... while Satan was behind it, because of Job's deep convictions that God is sovereign, he immediately attributed the instances to God's sovereignty.

Satan's terror attack was **intended by Satan to prove that Job only liked God because God blessed him**. It was also intended to make Job fearful of God in the wrong ways. Satan wanted to undermine Job's love for God. Profoundly, **Job never feared Satan**. He never indicated that he even knew or cared about what Satan did! Perhaps that in itself is instructive for us. Rather than blaming Satan and focusing our attention on him, we should remain focused on God who ultimately has all power and authority.

Job remained steadfastly a worshiper. Amid the grief and loss, he turned his eyes to God in gritty faith.

You may be tempted to think that there's no way you could respond like that. What got Job there? Daily, submitted worship. Persistent pursuit of God for God's sake.

Satan's Second Accusation and Terror Attack, 2:1-7

One day the sons of God came again to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before the LORD. The LORD asked Satan, "Where have you

come from? "

"From roaming through the earth," Satan answered him, "and walking around on it."

Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? No one else on earth is like him, a man of perfect integrity, who fears God and turns away from evil. He still retains his integrity, even though you incited me against him, to destroy him for no good reason."

"Skin for skin! " Satan answered the LORD. "A man will give up everything he owns in exchange for his life. But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face."

"Very well," the LORD told Satan, "he is in your power; only spare his life." So Satan left the LORD's presence and infected Job with terrible boils from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. (Job 2:1-7)

Same song, different verse, but now there's an edge that threatens to cut Job's personal, bodily autonomy. Notice **God brings up Job again**. This time He points out that Satan's attempts drastically failed. Yet Satan is ready with his sinister rebuttal. He claims that Job only serves and loves God because God protects him. **His suggestion is ugly** - that Job only cares about himself, personally, and if struck, he will curse God.

"Cynicism is the essence of the satanic. The Satan believes nothing to be genuinely good - neither Job in his disinterested piety nor God in his disinterested generosity. Faith in God's goodness is the heart of love and hope and joy and all other radiant things: cynicism is studied disbelief; and a mind turned in upon its own malice is the final horror of the diabolical." (Anderson, 89)

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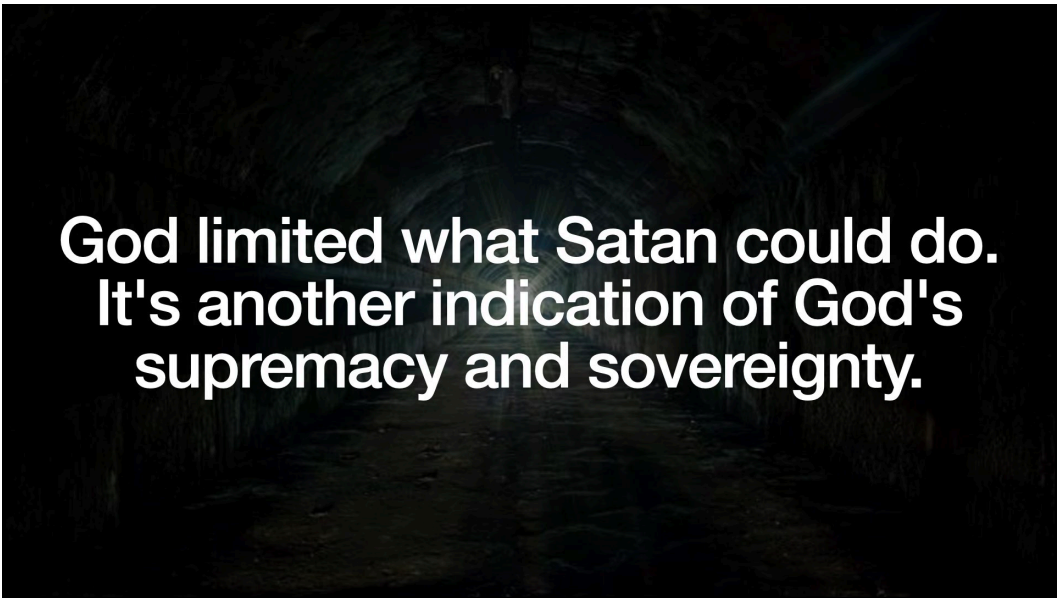
Satan loves robbing people. Jesus called Satan a thief who "steals, kills, and destroys." Satan hates what God does to bless people - especially when it comes to sharing the gospel with them. In Jesus' parable of the soils, he said,

"The sower sows the word. And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, **Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.**" (Mark 4:14-15)

Satan attempts to foil our evangelism. Satan also knows how fickle people are. In *The Screwtape Letters*, the two demons in conversation discuss how to get a man to turn away from God. The parable of the soils also addresses how a person's attention can be drawn away from believing the gospel. What does it?

"...the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful." (Mark 4:19)

It's important to note that even as **God gave Satan permission again**, there were limits. **"Only spare his life."** God limited what Satan could do. It's another indication of God's supremacy and sovereignty.



God limited what Satan could do.
It's another indication of God's
supremacy and sovereignty.

Job's Response, Job's Wife's Response, Satan's Refutation, 2:8-10

Then Job took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself while he sat among the ashes.

His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die! "

"You speak as a foolish woman speaks," he told her. "Should we accept only good from God and not adversity?" Throughout all this Job did not sin in what he said. (Job 2:8-10)

What are we to make of Job's wife? Throughout history, perhaps influenced by early writers, we have ascribed evil to her comments. Augustine called her the *diaboli adjutrix* (devil's advocate). John Chrysostom said that one of Job's biggest trials was that his wife did not die, calling her "the devil's scourge." John Calvin called her *organum Satani* (a musical instrument of the devil, playing the devil's song). Ouch! However, let's remember that "she too has lost her wealth, position and children... She responds out of desperation to Job's situation and says some things she might not normally say." (Belcher, 27)

It's a sober warning to us all to **be wary of our words in the heat of emotions.**

Job rebukes her words as being like that of a "foolish woman," and he calls her to a deeper, broader and more faith-informed perspective.

Job's profound question is also a reset for us as we encounter trials, tribulation and suffering.

"Should we accept only good from God and not adversity?"

It reminds of the second question from earlier... "Is God only worthy of worship when He blesses us?" If we are quick to turn from Him or curse Him in times of hardship, we reveal that we worship what we get from Him rather than worshipping and adoring Him for Who He is. Job would say we are being foolish.

Job passes the first and second tests. He did not do what Satan claimed he would do. He maintained his faith and trust in God.

The Friends and Sitting in Silence, 2:11-13

Now when Job's three friends — Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite — heard about all this adversity that had happened to him, each of them came from his home. They met together to go and sympathize with him and comfort him. When they looked from a distance, they could barely recognize him. They wept aloud, and each man tore his robe and threw dust into the air and on his head. Then they sat on the ground with him seven days and nights, but no one spoke a word to him because they saw that his suffering was very intense. (Job 2:11-13)

Job's friends heard about his situation. They coordinated their meeting, and they traveled together. Their purpose was to **"comfort him."** And that's what they began doing. They stepped into Job's pain, wept along, and demonstrated genuine grief. Their days of silence were a beautiful offering of presence and identification with the sufferer. We should take note of their manner as a model of initial comfort.

Thoughts for those seeking to comfort

- Don't just say something.
- Demonstrate that you see and grasp what has happened.
- Seek to empathize. Feel what they feel.
- While not stated, pray deeply, passionately and consistently.
- Show up. Be present.
- Don't expect anything from the sufferer.
- Prepare yourself to receive what comes next with grace, wisdom and compassion. (What a sufferer says first must often be filtered.)

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These are instructions *before* you say something. The next weeks will bring wonderful wisdom to *how* we speak truth to those who are suffering.

At this point, it's important to note that beginning in the next chapters, **all of Job's human relationship are characterized by doubt, suspicion and even antagonism toward Job**. His wife was first. Eventually his friends will pile on. He will be completely cut off, isolated, on top of his emotional and physical torment. What does a man of faith do in such moments? The stage is set.

Point to Jesus.

In one day, without warning, **so much had been laid on Job**. However, as we've seen, Job was prepared for suffering. How? Through his faith and the regular practice of worship, communion and confession before God. He had a relationship with God.

In one day, another man suffered beyond what we can imagine. His name was Jesus. Everything was laid on Him.

"All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and **the LORD has laid on him**
the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

It could be said that Job's sufferings were for us. That we might have an example of how to suffer and respond to God. We have the word and book of Job to guide us. However, **Jesus truly suffered for us!** To bring us hope, forgiveness and peace with God!

"For Christ also **suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous**, that he might bring you to God." (1 Peter 3:18)