

# Job—The Target: The Body

## Job 1-2

As we open the pages of the book of Job, we look at chapter 1, and the first thing we notice is that Job is a man of complete integrity.

The Scripture says he was a man who feared God and turned away from evil (Job 1:1).

Integrity, in this context, refers to an unwavering loyalty to God.

This is demonstrated in Chapter 1.

Even when Job's children would go away to feast, Job would make burnt offerings for all of them, just in case they had sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

The Bible tells us, "this was Job's regular practice" (Job 1:5).

It doesn't take long, however, to find out that we are stepping into the beginning of a cosmic conflict.

In verse 6, we are introduced to a divine council in which God sits in the heavenlies, and the sons of God come to present themselves.

And it says that Satan also came among them.

This conflict serves as one of the clearest illustrations of spiritual warfare in the Old Testament.

The most important thing to know about spiritual warfare is that Satan is not sovereign.

Only God is sovereign.

And so, for Satan to act in Job's life, he needed divine permission.

### **[Read Job 1:12]**

So Satan left the Lord's presence.

At the conclusion of Chapter 1, Job faced the devastating loss of his family, livestock, and wealth.

In the beginning, Satan uses other agencies to bring about Job's suffering before he attacks Job's body.

### **1. Human Agents:**

In 1:15, the Sabeans swooped down and took away the oxen and donkeys.

In 1:17, the Chaldeans formed three bands and raided Job's camels, striking down his servants with the sword.

These were human agents used as vehicles to bring about suffering.

### **2. Natural Elements:**

We also see that suffering comes through natural elements.

In 1:16, fire fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants.

In 1:19, a powerful wind struck the corners of the house where his children were, and it collapsed and killed them.

### **In the process that Satan uses to attack Job:**

First, he goes after the fruit of his body, his children.

Second, Satan attacks the means to sustain his physical body by taking his livestock and his wealth.

In response to this initial suffering, 1:20 says that Job stood up, tore his robe, shaved his head, and then he fell to the ground and worshipped.

The utterance of his mouth was, "The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

His posture and his actions were a response of worship unto God.

He did not sin or blame God for anything.

I believe it was this very response that brought about the second round of Satan's testing of Job.

### **[Read Job 2:3]**

The Lord boasts about Job's integrity and even states that, through Satan's first attempts, Job retained it.

The Lord says that Satan came to stir Him up, to destroy Job without reason.

The text says that Satan "incited" God against Job.

Now, we know that God cannot be tempted, nor can He be incited to do anything evil.

When God speaks this way, it is a reflection of Satan's true agenda.

God is expressing Satan's own perspective.

Satan questions God's reasons for blessing Job, and in turn, God questions Satan, pointing out that he had no reason to accuse Job.

It is important to note that Satan doesn't need a reason to accuse anyone because his very title is "the accuser."

If he needs a reason, he will lie to establish one.

Job is still holding on, actively clinging to his integrity.

And so, Satan wants to ramp up the suffering and go for Job's body.

He says, "Skin for skin!" (Job 2:4).

God gives sovereign permission for Satan to strike Job's flesh and bones.

## **I. Satan's Target—The Body.**

Warren Wiersbe says, "If Satan cannot defeat you by deceiving your mind, he will then try to destroy your body...If we believe his lies, then we will destroy ourselves."<sup>1</sup>

"So Satan left the Lord's presence and inflicted Job with terrible boils from the soles of his feet to the top of his head." **Job 2:7**

Job's wife looks at him, and it is interesting what she encourages him to do.

She says, "Are you still holding on to your integrity?" Are you still clinging to it? Are you still morally loyal to God?

In essence, she's trying to give him permission to abandon his loyalty to God.

She's questioning, "What is the point of your integrity?"

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<sup>1</sup> Warren Wiersbe, *The Strategy of Satan: How to Detect & Defeat Him* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, INC., 1979), 27-28.

Her question in verse 9 mirrors Satan's agenda in verse 5, where he predicted, "he will surely curse you to your face." She says, "Curse God and die!"

When life is good, integrity is rarely challenged; however, the good and bad in life should not compromise one's integrity.

Integrity is an unwavering loyalty to God.

His integrity was his hope, and his piety was his confidence. **Job 4:6**

Job himself later declares, "I will not deny my integrity." **Job 27:5**

It was not hidden; all could see it.

Even his friends knew he was a man of integrity, but after seven days of observing his suffering, they began to challenge it.

They kept insisting that he needed to repent to avoid the punishment he had received.

His friends operated on a "retribution theology," which highlights that the righteous are blessed and the wicked are cursed.

Eliphaz suggests that Job's calamity is due to a hidden sin, implying that the innocent do not suffer.

He essentially says, "You must have done something wrong. Repent, and God will fix it right" (Job 4:5-7).

Bildad cruelly suggests that Job's children received what they deserved due to their sin, arguing that suffering proves guilt (Job 8:4).

Zophar calls Job a man with an "abundance of words," a babbler, for his claims of innocence.

He even says Job deserves worse and throws insults at him.

Job's friends even invent sins for him.

In Job chapter 22, they accuse him of being unjust to the poor: "You gave no water to the thirsty and withheld food from the famished... You sent widows away empty-handed, and the strength of the fatherless was crushed." **Job 22:7-9**

Job cannot repent of these things.

If he says yes, he agrees to sins he did not commit.

If he repents, Satan has won, and God has not been justified.

Job laments, "I am a laughingstock to my friends, by calling on God who answers me." **Job 12:4**

### **So why does Satan attack the body?**

- The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
- We exalt God with our bodies.
- As believers shine the light of the gospel, God is seen through their lives.
- God uses a believer's body to reveal His glory to the world.
- Your body is God's vessel; it is the treasury that holds the Holy Spirit.
- Satan attacks your body because it is God's testing ground.

## **II. Satan's Weapon—Suffering.**

God was always in control in the spiritual battle over Job's body.

Remember, Satan had to have divine permission.

The one thing that God will not control in our suffering is how we respond.

This is where Satan works.

He utilizes our emotionally driven responses, and through them, he seeks to fulfill his purpose.

**Wiersbe points out three different kinds of suffering we must discern through prayer and the Word:**

1. **Natural Suffering:** Our bodies are fallen, broken from God's original design, and under the influence of the elements, sickness, and disease.
2. **Disciplinary Suffering:** This is where God is acting not to persecute but to perfect. Like a parent who disciplines a child, it is a vehicle that helps us mature and a process that tests and protects our faith.
3. **Satanic Suffering:** This is what Job endured.  
"Satan wanted to use Job's body to defeat God, and God wanted to use Job's body to defeat Satan."<sup>2</sup>

### **III. Satan's Purpose—To Make You Impatient with God's Will.**

When we're impatient, we seek to move ahead of God, rather than waiting on Him.

James writes, "You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful" (James 5:11).

Job did become impatient with himself and with his friends, but he knew that he could trust God and that God would ultimately vindicate him.

Patience is a fruit of the Spirit.

**Wiersbe points out several fruits of impatience:**

- Impatience is a byproduct of immaturity.
- It is a mark of unbelief.
- It is a mark of fleshly living.
- Impatience always leads to costly mistakes.

Satan knows that if he can make us impatient, he can lead us to do something foolish or get ourselves and others into trouble.

Wiersbe said that "Satan tempts us that he might bring out the worst in us, but God permits it that he might bring out the best in us."<sup>3</sup>

### **IV. Your Defense—The Imparted Grace of God.**

So what is your defense against Satan and suffering? Wiersbe says it is the imparted grace of God.

We see in the New Testament that Paul had a "thorn in the flesh," a messenger of Satan sent to torment him (2 Corinthians 12:7).

He prayed for God to remove it.

God did not answer Paul's prayer by removing the thorn, but God did meet Paul's needs.

He said, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 40.

When suffering comes, it is not wrong to pray for deliverance.

But only God's grace can give us the patience we need to withstand the suffering, to endure it, and to come through the fire.

God's grace is His provision for every one of our needs.

It cannot be deserved, and it cannot be earned; it can only be given.

So what steps should we take when Satan attacks the body with suffering and wants to make us impatient with the will of God?

**Wiersbe suggests four things:**

**1. Submit yourself immediately to God.**

Tell God exactly how you feel, but also tell Him that you love Him and trust Him.

**2. Thank God for the trials.**

This doesn't mean you enjoy the suffering, but you rejoice because you know it is within the will of God.

Satan hates it when a believer worships and praises God.

That is exactly when he sought to attack Job even further in chapter 2, right after Job prostrated himself in worship.

**3. Spend time in the Word of God.**

Wiersbe makes a powerful statement: "We do not live on explanations. We live on promises."

God doesn't explain everything to us about our lives, but He gives us promises to keep us going.

**4. Look for ways to glorify Christ through your body and your suffering.**

Patience in suffering always glorifies God.

It demonstrates to the world that Christians can endure suffering without complaining or rebelling against God's sovereign will for their lives.

Wiersbe says that God may not change the circumstances, but He will change you.

The circumstances will work for you, not against you.

You and I cannot control the origin or the operation of suffering, but we can, with God's help, control the outcome.

The Apostle Paul says, "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

If you live to please yourself, then Satan will win. But if you live to glorify God, Satan will lose.

The imparted grace of God is the only weapon that can defeat him. And that grace can be found only in the God of all grace.