

The Book of Job

Lesson 2: Job Afflicted in Body; His Three Friends Arrive -- Job 2:1-13

We left Job sitting in the ashes of a single, ruinous day. The herds were gone, the servants slaughtered, the ten children buried under the rubble of a collapsed house. And against every expectation, Job had risen, torn his robe, and worshiped: the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Round one of the test is over, and astonishingly, the man's faith is still standing. You can almost hear heaven holding its breath.

Then chapter two opens with a scene that feels like an echo of chapter one. Again the sons of God present themselves before the Lord. Again Satan comes among them. Again God points with something like holy pride to His servant Job, and adds a phrase that should stop us cold: he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without cause. Without cause. Job's suffering has no earthly explanation, and that is precisely the point. This is not punishment. It never was.

But the accuser is not finished. Skin for skin, he sneers. A man will give all he has for his life. Let the trouble reach Job's own body, his bones and flesh, and then watch him curse you. So God permits a second, more intimate assault, with one boundary fixed and unbreakable: spare his life. Soon Job is covered head to foot in painful sores, scraping himself with a piece of broken pottery, sitting in the ash heap, a portrait of human misery. And from the lips of the person closest to him comes the cruelest blow of all.

Yet this dark chapter ends with one of the tenderest pictures in all of scripture. Three friends hear of Job's troubles and come from far away. They weep. They tear their robes. And then they do something we have nearly forgotten how to do: they sit down on the ground beside him and say nothing at all for seven days and seven nights. Before their words go terribly wrong, their presence goes wonderfully right. There is much to learn here, both about suffering with integrity and about how to sit with those who suffer. Let us read.

Group Discussion: Job's friends sat with him in silence for seven days before any of them spoke. What does our generation get wrong about comforting the suffering, and what would change if we recovered the ministry of simply being present?

Personal Reflection: When someone you love is in deep pain, are you quicker to offer explanations and advice or to offer your quiet, patient presence? Which does the suffering person usually need more?

Read Job 2:1-13

Study Questions

1. In the second heavenly scene (2:1–6), what does it mean that God describes Job’s suffering as being destroyed “without cause,” and how does that phrase guard us against false ideas about suffering?
2. Satan claimed, “Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life” (2:4). When you examine yourself, how far would your own faith bend if suffering reached your body and not just your circumstances?
3. When the affliction reached Job’s own flesh, God again set a fixed limit: “only spare his life” (2:6). What does this second boundary teach us about how God governs the work of the adversary?
4. Picture Job scraping his sores with broken pottery, sitting in the ashes (2:7–8). What does his condition stir in you about the reality of suffering and your own response when your body fails you?
5. Job’s wife said, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die” (2:9). How should we understand her words, and what does Job’s answer reveal about godly integrity under pressure?
6. Job’s wife had buried the same ten children and lost the same wealth. How does remembering her own grief shape the way you would respond to people who say wrong things out of deep pain?

7. Job answered, “Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?” (2:10). What does this reveal about a mature, biblical view of God’s hand in both blessing and hardship?
8. Verse 10 notes that “in all this Job did not sin with his lips.” How carefully do you guard your own words when you are suffering, and why do the lips matter so much in a trial?
9. Job’s three friends sat with him seven days in silence, and “no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great” (2:13). How does Job model integrity by trusting a God who has not yet explained anything, and how do the friends model true comfort before their later words go wrong?
10. Looking back across this whole chapter, name one specific way the Lord Jesus is forming you, whether to hold your integrity when God does not explain, or to sit with the hurting the way these friends first did.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: James 1:12, the blessing on the one who remains steadfast under trial; 2 Corinthians 1:3–4, the God of all comfort who comforts us so we may comfort others; Romans 12:15, weep with those who weep; Job 1:21–22, Job’s first response of worship and not sinning; 1 Peter 4:12–13, sharing in Christ’s sufferings without thinking them strange

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