

Job

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Job 2:1-8



Job 2:1-8

Vss. 1-6

- The opening verses of Ch. 2 correspond closely to 1:6-8.
- The implication in “Again there was a day...” is that one year at least has passed. God’s messengers have gone out to tour His Kingdom and have returned to report. Satan again shows up uninvited, but this time comes “to present himself before the Lord”, which was not the case in Ch.1. Here again God inquires as to where Satan has been and gets the same reply as before: circling the earth and all it contains.
- God then enquires as to Satan’s project with Job. God describes Job as He did before, but adds that Job “**STILL** holds fast to his integrity” despite Satan’s best efforts to cause him so much pain that he would curse the Lord to his face.
- The phrase “to ruin him” is a single Hebrew word meaning to “swallow completely”, which may have been in Peter’s mind when he said in 1 Peter 5:8, “... the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour”.
- In verse 4, Satan pushes back. “Skin for a skin!” It is difficult to know exactly what this means, but most scholars agree that the skin that is offered comes from the ancient practice of barter, in this case bartering one animal skin for another. This practice continued to the 1800’s when trappers would trade skins like money for food and supplies. Up until a couple of generations ago, “skin” was slang for dollar bills. What Satan seems to be suggesting is that he hasn’t offered enough skins to buy Job’s condemnation of God. Remember that Satan is projecting his mercenary heart on to Job, so the idea here, says Adam Barnes, seems to be that Job’s own health and life, his own skin and body, were dearer to him than anything else. Other people would have been afflicted by the loss of children and property. But Job was willing to part with any or all of these, provided he himself was safe. The 4th century theologian, Ephrem the Syrian, states ‘Skin for skin! Satan believes that the cost of the skin not only of flocks, but even of his sons will he give, in order to save his own.” Satan saw faith in God as supremely selfish. So to Satan’s mind, the loss of property and even of children, Job could bear, provided his person was untouched.
- In verses 5-6 Satan reveals his real reason for intruding on the Divine Council. He comes to request that God allow him to push Job further. Its true that the loss of all of his possessions and even the loss of all 10 children was not enough to make Job curse God to His face, but, Satan

reasoned, if Job were to lose his health, if his bone and his flesh were to be afflicted, THEN surely he would curse God to His face.

- But God is supremely confident in his relationship with Job. The Lord allows Satan to up the ante and afflict Job's whole body with pain. But Satan was not allowed to take Job's life.

Vss. 7-8

- Satan strikes Job with "sore boils". The word carries the visual images of inflamed, swollen open sores, oozing with puss and fluid.
- Adam Barnes: "It has been commonly supposed that the disease of Job was a species of black leprosy commonly called "elephantiasis," which prevails much in Egypt. This disease received its name from ἐλέφας elefas, "an elephant," from the swelling produced by it, causing a resemblance to that animal in the limbs; or because it rendered the skin like that of the elephant, scabtons and dark colored. It is called by the Arabs judhām (Dr. Good), and is said to produce in the countenance a grim, distorted, and "lion-like" set of features, and hence has been called by some "Leontiasis." It is known as the black leprosy, to distinguish it from a more common disorder called "white leprosy" - an affection which the Greeks call "Leuce," or "whiteness." The disease of Job seems to have been a universal ulcer; producing an eruption over his entire person, and attended with violent pain, and constant restlessness. A universal bile or groups of biles over the body would accord with the account of the disease in the various parts of the book. In the elephantiasis the skin is covered with incrustations like those of an elephant. It is a chronic and contagious disease, marked by a thickening of the legs, with a loss of hair and feeling, a swelling of the face, and a hoarse nasal voice. It affects the whole body; the bones as well as the skin are covered with spots and tumors, at first red, but afterward black...It should be added that the leprosy in all its forms was regarded as contagious, and of course involved the necessity of a separation from society; and all the circumstances attending this calamity were such as deeply to humble a man of the former rank and dignity of Job."