

Chapter 2

Satan's Assault Against Job's Life

Job 2

Job 2:1–3 Again 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.

² And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

³ And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

ALTHOUGH thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. Satan had previously implied that the only reason Job feared the Lord, was that God had blessed him and placed a wall of protection around him. Satan commonly introduces false claims against the brethren,

knowing that accusations, even if later proved untrue, will still damage the innocent. The devil is described in Scripture as a liar¹ and one who accuses the saints night and day in his constant attempts to impugn their name in God's sight. In Job's case Satan repeatedly brought forth false accusations against him in a continued effort to try turning the Lord against this faithful servant of God. Unremarkably, it can be seen that the devil will always do his best to pit believers against the Lord, and the Lord against them. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night* (Rev. 12:10).

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Rev. 12:10) The description of Satan as an accuser accords with the opinion of the ancient Hebrews in regard to his character. Thus he is represented in Job 1:9–11; Job 2:4–5; Zechariah 3:1–2; 1 Chronicles 21:1.² The phrase “of the brethren

¹ John 8:44 *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

² Job 1:9–11 *Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? ¹⁰Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. ¹¹But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Job 2:4–5 *And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. ⁵But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* Zech. 3:1–2 *And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. ²And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* I Chrn. 21:1 *And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*

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ren” refers to Christians, or to the people of God; and the meaning here is, that one of the characteristics of Satan—a characteristic so well known as to make it proper to designate him by it—is that he is an accuser of the righteous; that he is employed in bringing against them charges affecting their character and destroying their influence. The propriety of this appellation cannot be doubted. It is, as it has always been, one of the characteristics of Satan—one of the means by which he keeps up his influence in the world—to bring accusations against the people of God. Thus, under his suggestions, and by his agents, they are charged with hypocrisy; with insincerity; with being influenced by bad motives; with pursuing sinister designs under the cloak of religion; with secret vices and crimes. Thus it was that the martyrs were accused; thus it is that unfounded accusations are often brought against ministers of the gospel, palsying their power and diminishing their influence, or that when a professed Christian falls the church is made to suffer by an effort to cast suspicion on all who bear the Christian name. Perhaps the most skillful thing that Satan does, and the thing by which he most contributes to diminish the influence of the church, is in thus causing “accusations” to be brought against the people of God.

It is worth noting that those who bring false claims against the Lord's elect have close kinship with the devil. Ultimately, those who follow his ways are under his

influence. Whenever, then, false accusations are brought against the people of God without reliable evidence, we can be sure that the devil is highly involved in seeking to impugn the Lord's elect. Nothing also reveals the true colors of sinners more than when they bring false charges against the righteous. The Jews did this with the Son of God,³ Sanballat with Hezekiah,⁴ and Korah with Moses.⁵ From these records and many others like them in Scripture, we see that a common weapon to blunt the outreach of the kingdom of God is to falsely accuse those who are members of it.

Job 2:4–5 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

⁵ But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 2:4) Satan sneers bitterly at man's egotism and says that Job bears the loss of property and children because these are mere outward and exchangeable goods, but he will give up all things, even his religion, in order to save his life, if you touch his bones and flesh.

We now observe the devil's new spiritual attack—to inflict physical pain, beyond

3 Matt. 9:34 *But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.*

4 Neh. 6:1–8 *Now it came to pass when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) ²that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. ³And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? ⁴Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. ⁵Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand; ⁶wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. ⁷And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together. ⁸Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.*

5 Num. 16:1–3 *Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: ²and they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: ³and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?*

even the emotional damage he had already accomplished through stripping Job's family and wealth from him. In respect to the Lord's chosen, the devil will never be content until both life and soul are taken from them. Satan did not actually know what Job would do; rather, he merely hoped that he would curse God if sufficient pain and suffering were inflicted upon him. It is not enough for the Lord's adversary to steal from believers, as his ultimate aim is always then to kill and destroy them.⁶ Indeed, the hatred of the devil is so intense toward the chosen that he will never be fully satisfied until death has followed, bodily torture. This was seen in Satan's assault on the Savior's life, when it was not enough for Jesus merely to be crucified without prior to it the devil inflicting as much pain and suffering on Christ's body as He could bear.⁷ *As many were [astonished] at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men* (Isa. 52:14). Throughout human history Satan has repeatedly inflicted the bodies of the saved, hoping that by touching their bodies the believers' pain will cause them to abandon religious piety and curse their God. Nothing can discourage and even break the human spirit more than bodily torture.

Though surprising to most, there can be a divinity in undergoing physical pain, simply because when men's spirits are broken, their ears and hearts can be opened. The pride of many is so great that it is not until all is either lost or seemingly lost (which often includes the loss of physical health) that they become humble enough to turn to God. For the prodigal son it took a famine and the loss of all his earthly inheritance to help him come to a spiritual state of mind and return to his father.⁸ For Christians, we also may need to experience both emotional and physical pain before we come to realize the paths that we are on may be both sinful and personally destructive.

Job 2:6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

The Lord gave Satan permission to do what he had requested, with one unalterable restriction—he could not in any way endanger Job's life. Here we see that even in Job's religious trial, the Lord was protecting his life. Satan was given limitations, and God's power would ensure that they would be kept. Just as God knows those who fear Him, so does He also know the temptations that they are able to overcome. *There hath no temptation taken you*

⁶ John 10:10a *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.*

⁷ Matt. 27:26–35 *Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. ²⁷Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. ²⁸And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. ²⁹And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! ³⁰And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. ³¹And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. ³²And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. ³³And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, ³⁴They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. ³⁵And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*

⁸ Luke 15:14–18 *And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. ¹⁵And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. ¹⁷And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,*

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but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (I Cor. 10:13).

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, I Cor. 10:13) *There hath no temptation taken you.*—What is meant by a “temptation common to man” (or rather, *suited to man*) is explained further on as a temptation which one is “able to bear.” From the warning and exhortation of the previous verse the Apostle passes on to words of encouragement, “You need not be hopeless or despairing.” God permits the temptation by allowing the circumstances which create temptation to arise, but He takes care that no Fate bars the path of retreat. With each temptation he makes a way to escape from it.

Though Job's trials were extreme, the Lord knew that he possessed sufficient strength of faith to endure Satan's assaults and ultimately reach God's end for his life. Because of Job's deep and reverential fear of the Lord, a trial that would have destroyed lesser men only purified Job's faith. God's promise is that none will ever be tempted above that which he is able to endure; consequently, if men sin while in temptation, they alone are to blame.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, I Cor. 10:13) If people fall into sin, under the power of temptation, they only are to blame. They have strength to resist all the temptations that assail them, and God has given the assurance that no temptation shall occur which they shall not be able, by His aid, to resist. In all

instances, therefore, where people fall into sin; in all the yielding to passion, to allurements, and to vice, man is to blame, and must be responsible to God. And this is especially true of Christians, who, whatever may be said of others, cannot plead that there was not power sufficient to meet the temptation, or to turn aside its power.

When many read about the trial of Job's life, they often will also very ignorantly blame the Lord. Blind to the Lord's ways with man, sinners will maintain no restraint in judging His ways. Consequently, the book of Job has caused many to bring false accusations against the Lord, simply because they lacked the spiritual insight to see God's ultimate grand and good purpose.⁹ Ultimately what Job endured did not exceed the limitations of his faith. Because his fear of God was great, he possessed sufficient spiritual faith to endure what God would allow Satan to do to his life. It is foolish to question God's purposes for this God-fearing man, simply because the Lord knew Job's inward heart, and there was nothing in Job's trial that could not be overcome if he remained constant in his faith. Though sinners will never agree, trials are necessary in weaning men from sin and developing strong confidence and trust in God. All truly godly men will see that at the end of their trial, all that has been endured was necessary for both their spiritual growth and increased holiness.

Job 2:7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with

⁹ Job 42:10–17 *And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.* ¹¹*Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.* ¹²*So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.* ¹³*He had also seven sons and three daughters.* ¹⁴*And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.* ¹⁵*And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.* ¹⁶*After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.* ¹⁷*So Job died, being old and full of days.*

*sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.*¹⁰

(Benson Commentary, Job 2:7) *And smote Job with sore biles*—ἐλκει πονηρῶ, with a foul ulcer, or evil inflammation, say the Seventy; breaking out and spreading itself over all his body. The biles, it seems, were like those inflicted upon the Egyptians, which are expressed by the same word, and threatened to the apostate Israelites, (Deuteronomy 28:27),¹¹ whereby he was made loathsome to himself and to his nearest relations, and filled with consuming pains in his body, and no less torments and anguish in his mind. *From the sole of his foot unto his crown*—In all the outward parts of his body. “His tongue,” says Poole, “he spared, that it might be capable of uttering those blasphemies against God which Satan desired and expected him to utter.” One boil, when it is gathering, is very distressing, and gives a man abundance of pain and uneasiness. What a condition was Job then in, who had biles all over his body, no part being free, and those as much inflamed, and of as raging a heat, as Satan could make them! If at any time we be exercised with sore and grievous distempers, let us not think ourselves more hardly dealt with than God has sometimes dealt with the best of his saints and servants. We know not how far Satan may have a hand, by God’s permission, in the diseases with

which mankind, especially the children of God, are afflicted; or what infections that prince of the air may spread, what inflammations may come from that fiery serpent. We read of one whom he had bound for many years, Luke 13:10.¹² And should God suffer him to have his will against us, he would soon make the best and bravest of us very miserable. It is a judicious remark of Dr. Mede here, that it is not Job himself or his friends, but the author of the book, who attributes his calamities to Satan; for this writer’s intention seems to have been to show, by a striking example, that the world is governed by the providence of God; and as the holy angels, whose ministry God makes use of in distributing his bountiful gifts, punctually execute all his commands; so Satan himself, with his agents, are under the power of God, and cannot inflict any evils on mankind without the divine permission.

Job 2:8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

All Job had left with which to care for himself was a potsherd, an indication of the deep loss and depravity of his destitute and lonely condition. And although Job’s condition needed the most tender and loving care, all he possessed to deal

10 (Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, Job 2:7) 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 *elephas*, “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. “Coxe, Ency. Webster.” 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.

11 Deut. 28:27 *The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.*

12 Luke 13:10–13 *And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.* ¹¹ *And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.* ¹² *And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.* ¹³ *And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.*

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with his affliction was a hard, sharp, broken piece of pottery. We see Job sitting in the ashes of what was once a wealthy and abundant life. And now, after Satan's assaults, a potsherd was indicative of the low state of internal discouragement he found himself in. Symbolically the potsherd represented what once had been a beautiful vessel, distinguished and worthy of admiration, but now after being broken, like Job, it was fit for nothing but the dunghill. At this point if not earlier, Job understood that he had progressed beyond all human ability to help himself. He could not put his shattered life back together without divine assistance, and it is certain that he was increasing in this spiritual conclusion. By observing Job despondently sitting among the ashes, it is revealed how his soul lacked the strength to either stand or do anything more in his life. Job knew that he was defenseless to stop the vicious spiritual attacks on his family, possessions, and body, so he resigned himself to sit and potentially wait for whatever future tragedy might come next. What was true of Job is likewise true of ourselves—that without the Lord's protection and divine intervention, there is nothing a man can do when attacked by evil spiritual forces other than to pray for God's deliverance.

Personal power and human ability are therefore never enough to protect any believer from spiritual wickedness that resides in high places¹³—without divine intercession. If Job had feared the Lord before, now his fear was intensified.

Nebuchadnezzar, a man of great governmental power and influence, learned the same lesson as Job:¹⁴ that the mighty in this world may possess position, wealth, and/or worldly influence, but these things cannot protect them from God's overarching sovereignty, and if allowed, Satan's assaults. No one—neither the world's greatest governments nor its highest-ranking individuals—can prevent the will of God from being done on the earth. Thus, if the Lord desires to bring men low, there is nothing of their own natural strength or ability that can prevent it. The Lord is sovereign,¹⁵ and time will prove that none can alter what God has either purposed or willed to be done on the earth.

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 2:9) Then said his wife.—Thus it is that

13 Eph. 6:12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

14 Dan. 5:18–22 *O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: ¹⁹and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. ²⁰But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: ²¹and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. ²²And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;*

15 Isa. 46:9–10 *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, ¹⁰Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

Dan. 4:35 *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*

Isa. 14:24 *The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:*

a man's foes are they of his own household (Micah 7:6; Matthew 10:36, &c.).¹⁶ The worst trial of all is when those nearest to us, instead of strengthening our hand in God and confirming our faith, conspire to destroy it.

When Cain slew his brother,¹⁷ Abel, not even brotherhood could prevent his envious and evil heart from committing murder. Sadly, family bonds, mean nothing to those with corrupt and sinful hearts. Job's wife should have demonstrated compassion, but instead her hard and insensitive heart spewed nothing but contempt. This might explain the pleasure-seeking lifestyles of Job's children, simply because a wife and mother this insensitive to another's pain and turmoil could not have influenced her children in any truly good and godly manner. Job's wife's words were "*Curse God, and die,*" and they reveal her lack of proper respect for both Job and God. It is also quite possible that Satan was the primary influence in turning Job's own wife against him. No sound person would encourage death to another, let alone a family member, without wicked spiritual influence. That Job's wife spoke of cursing God, thus bringing the Lord into the conversation, proves that her hate was not singly against Job but also against the Lord. It is worth noting that at the core of all spiritual betrayal, devilish forces are at work. This is observed with Judas, and it has been repeated since the dawn of time. Where spiritual betrayal exists, and

especially so in earthly families,¹⁸ Satan is near, leading and influencing it.

Job 2:10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Here Job defends God, as a righteous and godly man both must and will always do. Instead of siding with his wife in cursing God, Job righteously labels her a fool in a defense of Him.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 2:10) This is the true expression of piety. It submits to all the arrangements of God without a complaint.

True Christians know that regardless of divine judgment, the Lord's actions are never unfair. Whereas an ungodly man will quickly smear God's name in times of trouble, those with a deep and reverential fear of the Lord will defend it. To a truly righteous and upright man, God's name is deemed far more important than even his own.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 2:10) In addition to that, true piety feels that all claim to any blessing, if it had ever existed, has been forfeited by sin.

When the truly righteous suffer loss, their eyes will turn inward, seeking to see how

¹⁶ Mic. 7:6 *For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.*

¹⁷ Matt. 10:36 *And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

¹⁷ 1 John 3:12 *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*

¹⁸ Gen. 4:8-9 *And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. ⁹And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?*

¹⁸ Matt. 10:36 *And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

¹⁸ Matt. 10:21 *And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.*

¹⁸ Luke 21:16-18 *And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. ¹⁷And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. ¹⁸But there shall not an hair of your head perish.*

they have sinned to bring about the negative consequences in their life. Knowing that God never errs, they will undergo personal introspection through seeking the Lord for some hidden sin undetected by the human spirit.

Job 2:11 *Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.*

As the book's structure reveals,¹⁹ we are now ready for the next important event in the book of Job: the arrival of his three friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. No doubt these individuals were godly associates of Job, yet the record will reveal that they ultimately lacked anything through their own natural wisdom to help their friend. And though they were surely sincere in the words they would speak, all they really did was add salt to Job's wounds and bring greater distress to his soul. Good intentions, as it shall be seen with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, do nothing to guarantee profitable results. Likewise, just because men are sincere in trying to help in religious matters does not mean that they are truly led by God. Hence, just because someone

may be a believer does not mean that what he says is being inspired by the Lord and His Spirit—as the pride of man will often lead him to meddle in others' affairs that are in fact none of his business. Foolishness often flows from the mouths of those who, though they may possess some faith, foolishly esteem themselves more inspired than they really are. The Scripture also wisely commands men to be quick to hear and slow to speak, until by divine and heavenly revelation they are given something truly meaningful to say. *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath* (Jas. 1:19).

Job 2:12–13 *And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.*

¹³ *So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.*

The Scripture reveals that at the sight of their friend, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar cried aloud, rent their clothes, and sat on the ground next to him. And though Job's religious friends would later prove to have little wisdom and actually themselves needed to be prayed for,²⁰ still their acts of human compassion at this point

¹⁹ *The Book of Job: A New Translation* by Dr. E. W. Bullinger

A | i. 1–5. Introduction. Historical.

B | i. 6—ii. 10. Satan's assault. Job stripped of all.

C | ii. 11–13. The Three Friends. Their arrival.

D | iii. 1—xxxi. 40. Job and his friends.

E | xxxii.—xxxvii. Elihu.

D | xxxviii. 1.—xlii. 6. Jehovah and Job.

C | xlii. 7–9. The Three Friends. Their departure.

B | xlii. 9, 10. Satan's defeat. Job blessed with double.

A | xlii. 11–17. Conclusion. Historical.

²⁰ *Job 42:7–10* *And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. ⁸Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. ⁹So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite*

in the record should not go unnoticed. Taken aback by Job's condition, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar barely recognized that this was the same healthy and prosperous man they once had known. Job was, at least on the outside, a shell of his previous self, and his friends recognized the great grief that filled his soul. At least for now, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar remained wise and spoke not a word. Job's present condition of being afflicted with

boils prompted his friends to initially say nothing at all. They had observed Job's grief and wisely refrained from voicing any of their inward opinions, though this present spiritual approach would soon be abandoned.

(Benson Commentary, Job 2:13) "A long silence," says Dr. Dodd, "is a very natural effect of an extraordinary grief, which overwhelms the mind, and creates a sort of stupor and astonishment."

went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. ¹⁰And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

