

Blessed
A Study of Job for the Suffering Saint
Session 2: Who Controls My Suffering

By H. M. Coker

*“As an example of suffering and patience, brothers,
take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.
Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast.
You have heard of the steadfastness of Job,
and you have seen the purpose of the Lord,
how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”*

James 5:10-11 (ESV)

Session 2: Who Controls My Suffering?

Session 2, Part 1:

Pray the Word: Dear Father, I cast all of my anxieties upon you because you care for me. Please cause me to be sober-minded and watchful. My adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. May I resist him, firm in my faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by my brotherhood throughout the world. And after I have suffered a little while, you, the God of all grace, who has called me to your eternal glory in Christ, will yourself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish me. To you be the dominion forever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 5:7-11).

Hear the Word: Let's begin this session by looking again at the book of Job. During this session we will be observing the interactions between God and Satan. First, lay a framework for the week by reading Job 1:6-12 and answering the questions.

1. Who are the three individuals/group of individuals in Job 1:6?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Read the following verses in which "sons of God" are referenced in the Old Testament. Depending on your translation, the phrase "sons of God" might not be used, but if you were to go back to the Hebrew you would see the connection. Therefore, it may be helpful to look at the verses in several different translations to see how different English translators handled the phrase. However, do not get bogged down by this activity. Check off each passage as you read it.

- Job 1:6 and 2:1
- Geneses 6:1-4
- Psalm 29:1 and 89:6

Session 2, Part 2:

Pray the Word: Father, if you are for us who can be against us? You did not spare your own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will you not also with him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:31-32). “Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:33-39).

Hear the Word: In Job chapter one “the Lord said to Satan, ‘From where have you come?’ Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it’” (Job 1:7). In his first epistle, the apostle Peter tells us that our “adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8b). We will not be doing a comprehensive study of Satan today, but before we study the interaction between God and Satan, it will be helpful to do a quick overview of who our adversary is and what his tactics are.

Who is Satan?

1. Read Revelation 12:9 and list the five names/description used for him in this passage?

2. How is Satan described in John 8:44?

3. What does Paul call our adversary in 1 Thessalonians 3:5?

- b. Now, let's look at an example we have in the life of Paul. Read the 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 and 1 Thessalonians 2:18. What actions of Satan do we see in these two passages?

- c. In his prophetic vision of Revelation, what does John warn is going to happen? Read Revelation 2:10.

Apply the Word: Did reading about Satan make you uncomfortable or even fearful? Should Christians fear Satan? In the book of Matthew Jesus commands his disciples, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). In this session we are going to look more at what Satan can and cannot do and the limits set upon him by God, but for now let's look ahead to the end of this story. Read Revelation 20:1-10. What will Satan's end be?

- b. Hebrews 4:13 (Try reading this verse in ESV, KJV, and NIV to help you see the full magnitude of this truth.)
 - i. Is anyone hidden from God?

 - ii. But rather, what are they?

 - c. Jeremiah 23:23-24.
 - i. Where is God?

 - ii. What does God fill?

 - d. Job 28:24 (It is Job speaking in this passage.)
 - i. Where does the Lord look?

 - ii. What does the Lord see?
4. So, if God already knew where Satan had come from and what he had been doing then why does God say to Satan, "From where have you come?" Remember the purpose of Satan's presence before the Lord according to Job 1:6 and write your answer below.

Apply The Word: What is a practical step you can take to apply the truth of God’s omniscience and omnipresence to the way you live in the midst of your suffering?

Picture this in your mind right now, “The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds (Psalm 33:13-15). God, the one who fashioned your heart, has his eye upon you right now.

1. Who sees me in my suffering?

But Why? Is he an impartial observer? Does he watch, but not get involved? “Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine (Psalm 33:18-19).

2. Why is his eye on me?

So, knowing this, what do we do? “Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you” (Psalm 33:20-22).

3. How should everything we have learned today affect the way we live today?

Session 2, Part 4:

Pray the Word: Dear Father, help me to keep my life free from love of money and be content with what you give in each season. For you have said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:4b). So I “can confidently say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?’” (Hebrews 13:6).

Hear the Word: Read Job 1:6-19. At this point in our study, you may be tempted to skip reading the passage and go straight to answering the questions. After all, you’ve read this passage so many times you probably have it memorized—but that’s the point. As you read a passage of Scripture again and again you become more and more familiar with it, you memorize it, you begin to see things you didn’t see before. So, go ahead, read Job 1:6-19 and then answer the questions.

1. According to Job 1:6-8, who initiated the conversation? Don’t guess but rather read Job 1:6-8 again if you need to.
2. In Job 1:8 the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?” What was Satan’s response to God in Job 1:9b?
3. According to Job 1:10 what had God done (make sure you don’t miss a single aspect)?
4. What was Satan’s claim in verse 11?

12. Review and reflect on all you have studied this week so far. Who was in control of this situation from start to finish? (Job 1:6-12)

Apply the Word: Did Job work for what he had? Job 1:10b says, “You [God] have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.” Notice the reference to, “the work of his hands.” So, yes, Job had worked for his livelihood, but who was responsible for Job’s success? Read Job 1:10b again, “You [God] have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.” Next Read Job 1:21, “And he [Job] said, ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.’” So, it was God who was responsible for what Job had. God blessed. God gave. How does knowing this affect the way you view Job’s losses in chapter one?

Now consider all that you have: money, possession, family. You have probably worked hard, and that is good, but is what you have a result of what you have done? Look at it another way. Think of what you do not have: the house, the promotion, the child. Do you have ultimate control over these things? Who does? Can you from your heart say with Job, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” (Job 1:21b)? Here are some verses to help you. Meditate on them for the rest of the day.

“Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it” (Deuteronomy 10:14).

“Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

8. What were the new parameters set by God? (Job 2:6)

9. According to Job 1:21 who gave to Job, and who took away?

10. Once again, who is in control of this situation?

Apply the Word: Add the following hymn to your playlist, “God Moves in Mysterious Ways” by William Cowper and K. Jason French. I personally love the arrangement by Hymns of Grace. Listen to this hymn every day as you continue this session of study.

Session 2, Part 6

Pray the Word: Dear Father, “Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,’ even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.” (Psalm 139:4-12).

Hear the Word: God Placed a hedge of protection around Job and in God’s timing and for God’s purposes he removed that hedge. However, even in removing it, God remained in control of Job’s suffering. He set limits on Satan’s attacks. What about us? We learned last week that believers will suffer. Is God in control in our suffering just like he was in Job’s? Is there a limit to what Satan can do to you today? Oh, what sweet, wonderful truth we are going to study today! “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Romans 15:13).

1. First, let’s look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.
 - a. In John chapter fourteen, Jesus told his disciples, “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming.” Read John 14:30-31. Did Satan have any claim on Jesus?
 - b. Read 1 John 3:8b. According to this passage, the reason the Son of God appeared was to _____.
 - c. Was what happened to Jesus within God’s control?
 - i. Read Acts 2:23-24.

ii. Read Matthew 26:39-46

2. Does death have any power over believers? Who frees us from the power of death and how?

a. 1 Corinthians 15:55-57.

b. Hebrews 2:9b and 14b-15.

3. Can Satan touch believers without God's permission? Read John 10:27-30.

a. What does he give to his sheep?

b. Will anyone snatch the sheep from Jesus's hand?

c. Who is greater than all?

d. Is anyone able to snatch a believer out of the Father's hand?

4. Does God set limits on Satan today?

a. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13.

- i. God is _____
- ii. God will not _____
- iii. But with the temptation God will _____
- iv. That you _____

b. Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. (You may want to go ahead and read 3-7 as we will be returning to these verses in the weeks to come.) According to this passage what can Satan never touch?

God has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an _____ that is _____, _____, and _____, kept in heaven _____ you, who by God's _____ are being _____ through _____ for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Apply the Word: In light of everything we have learned what should we do? How do we combat the attacks of the devil?

1. The apostle Peter tells us our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Read 1 Peter 5:6-9. What instructions are given us in this passage?

2. Read James 4:7 What instructions are given in this passage? What is the result?

3. Paul tells us that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). Read Ephesians 6:10-18a. What instructions are given in this passage?

Now, Believer, go live accordingly.

I would love to know you are doing the study! Send me an email by going to the contact page of www.Surpassing-Worth.com. If this study has blessed your life, please share it with a friend.

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