

Last week in starting our study of Job, we considered verses 1-12, wherein we saw three primary figures: Job, Satan, and God. Job was a righteous and wealthy man (the greatest of all the people of the East); Satan presented himself to God (along with the angels), in a sign of submission; and God was sovereign over all things.

Chapter 1 can be divided into three sections: the character of Job (vv1-12); the troubles of Job (vv13-19); the response of Job (vv20-22). Thus, having seen the first of these, we come this morning to: Job's Troubles and Response.

- I. Job's Troubles (vv13-19)
- II. Job's Response (vv20-22)

- I. Job's Troubles (vv13-19)

1. From verses 13-19 we learn two things about Job's troubles or dilemma: (1) its source and (2) its extent.
2. (1) The source of his troubles—here I want to suggest, there are three sources to his troubles (Satan, wicked men, and a sovereign God).
3. (a) Satan—from v12 we learn, God gave a measure of authority (power) to Satan over Job's possessions.
4. V12—"And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.' So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD."
5. Satan will be given further authority over Job in the next chapter, but at present, it's limited to his possessions.
6. (b) Wicked men—while this ruin came from Satan, it came through wicked men (Sabeans and Chaldeans).
7. Francis Andersen—"Sabeans come from the kingdom of Sheba in South Arabia, made famous by the queen who visited Solomon." Steven Lawson—"Chaldeans were a fierce group who eventually aided in the formation of the Babylonian Empire."
8. This means, Satan has a direct influence over fallen and depraved men; he uses them to achieve his purposes.
9. Jn.8:44—"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him."
10. Our Savior describes the devil as their father because of his influence over them and their imitation of him.
11. But notice our Savior makes an important point—though Satan influenced them, they acted freely and of themselves.
12. Thus, while the Sabeans and Chaldeans acted freely, willingly, and wickedly, they were influenced by Satan.
13. (c) A sovereign God—here I simply want to underscore the fact, that God was in control of every event.
14. So much so, that Job himself says in v21—"The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away"—not Satan, the Sabeans or Chaldeans.
15. He understood the same Being who gave these possessions, was the very same Being who took them.
16. Before I go further, let me address the question on what ability does Satan have to control the elements.
17. We learn from v16 the "fire of God fell from heaven" and v19 a "great wind came from across the wilderness."

18. Some have suggested by "fire from heaven" is meant lightning, but I rather believe it was literal fire (similar to the fire and brimstone that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah).
19. It's possible by "a great wind" is meant tornado, but it more likely refers to a wind storm common to the desert.
20. Thus, the question is this—who sent the fire and wind? Does Satan have the ability to control the elements?
21. There are two possibilities: first, God gave Satan temporary power to send fire and wind; second, God Himself sent the fire and wind.
22. Personally, I prefer to the second answer, simply because, nowhere does Scripture ascribe such power to Satan (but everywhere we learn that God controls the elements).
23. Furthermore, v16 expressly describes this fire as "the fire of God that fell from heaven (i.e., it came from God)."
24. Remember, while Satan has a hand in all of this, ultimately speaking, the LORD Himself is testing Job.
25. All of this can be illustrated in the sufferings of our Savior—who was the cause of our Savior's suffering?
26. Satan and wicked men had a hand in our Savior's troubles, but ultimately speaking God was testing Him.
27. But either way, the fact that fire from heaven and wind destroyed some of his possessions and children, must have created a serious dilemma in Job.
28. Remember, Job didn't have insight into his troubles as we do—the book of Job had not been written yet.
29. Job knew that fire and wind belonged to God, and so, he must have thought that God was against him.
30. John Calvin—"So Job could have concluded, 'Here is God, warring against me from one side, men from another. Both heaven and earth are arrayed against me. Alas! What will become of me?'"
31. In fact, as we shall see in later chapters, this is one of the largest struggles for Job (relating his troubles to God).
32. (2) The extent of his troubles—here I want to point out that all of his possessions (including his 10 children) were lost.
33. All of his oxen, donkeys, servants, sheep, camels, and children—they were all taken away from him.
34. I think I'm safe to say, never did a man endure such trouble and affliction! Everything was taken at once.
35. All of his possessions that he worked hard for—all of his servants—and most of all, all of his children."
36. Keep in mind, Job lost all of his possessions in a single day—30, 40, 50, years of hard work lost in hours.
37. Truly this teaches us that all created things, even our family, can be taken from us in the blink of an eye.
38. Job woke up a very rich man, and yet he went to bed that night with nothing (only his wife who would prove of little help).
39. Obs.1—All Christians endure troubles—the reason being, we live in a world filled with hateful enemies.
40. Martin Luther—"And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us, we will not fear, for God has willed His truth to triumph through us. The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him; his rage we can endure, for lo! His doom is sure; one little word shall fell him."
41. We all, along with Job, live in a world "with devils filled" who control and influence wicked and evil men.

42. Furthermore, we all live in a world filled with sorrow and pain, and thus we all will endure many troubles.
43. I mentioned last week that Job's troubles were largely fourfold—he lost his possessions, family, health (ch.2), and name (his friends questioned his integrity).
44. And if you think about it, these are the four things this world offers—wealth, family, health, and honor (name).
45. And all of our troubles have relation to one or more of these categories (both in losing and gaining them).
46. Obs.2—All Christians endure various troubles—that is, the Lord determines the degree and duration of trouble.
47. V12—"And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.'"
48. The LORD determines the degree and duration of our troubles—He does not leave these to our enemies.
49. Jn.19:11 (Jesus to Pilate)—"You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."
50. All that Pilate did to our Savior, was permitted him by God, to whom Pilate would eventually give an account.
51. Both the degree and duration of the trial is controlled by God—it will be as heavy and last as long as He determines.
52. Obs.3—All Christians are known by God in troubles—God was with Job through ALL of his troubles.
53. Isa.63:8-9—"Surely they are My people...In all their affliction He was afflicted...in His love and in His pity He redeemed them."
54. The LORD knew the affliction of His enslaved people, and He was very far from being indifferent to it.
55. So too, as we shall see in the book of Job, the LORD saw every tear and knew every thought of Job.

II. Job's Response (vv20-22)

1. Job responds to his intense troubles in three ways—remorse (v20), worship (v21), and restraint (v22).
2. (1) Remorse, v20—"Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped."
3. Tearing the outer robe and shaving the head, were cultural expressions that illustrated intense remorse.
4. They were outward expressions of deep inward grief—they visualized inward, mental, and spiritual turmoil.
5. John Calvin—"Scripture wanted to tell us here that this saintly man's sorrow was so great and so strong that he could not refrain from following custom even to the point of tearing his garment to show that he was experiencing an anguish so great that it had torn him to the bottom of his heart."
6. Now, this is an important point to keep in mind—suffering as a Christian in no way removes the pain.
7. When we suffer, we hurt! When a loved one dies, we hurt! When we lose our job, we hurt! When we are betrayed, we hurt!
8. Furthermore, it's in no way wrong for Christians to tangibly and openly express remorse and sorrow.

9. Job encountered serious trouble, and he felt great sorrow and grief as the result, which showed itself openly.
10. Ecc.3:4—"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh."
11. Furthermore, if our grief should in proportion to our affliction, then Job had reason for great remorse.
12. Brethren, if the loss of a single child wounds us to the very core, what would happen if we lost 10 children.
13. When the children were younger, I would oftentimes stand in the drive way and wave good bye to the van.
14. And I would often say out loud—"Lord, everything I hold precious to me on earth, is inside that van."
15. Now, what if one day my worst fear came true? What if, a few hours after they left the doorbell rang (and it was the police).
16. And what if the policemen told me that my family was in a terrible accident and my wife and 5 children were dead?
17. Well, if you think about it, Job didn't hear the door ring once, but it rang a total of four times (one after another)!
18. (2) Worship—Job's worship takes the form of a verbal confession—it expressed itself in a verbal testimony (Matt.12:34 – 'For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks').
19. V21—"And he said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.'"
20. Job acknowledges the temporal nature of all created things—they are all limited to this physical world.
21. Just as we enter this world with nothing, so we leave this world with nothing; we enter and depart this world naked.
22. Furthermore, Job also understood, that the amount of possessions we have is determined by God Himself.
23. Now, this obviously does not deny secondary causes, that is, He ordinarily blesses the hands of the diligent.
24. Thus, no person can blame God for not having the possessions of this world, if he fails to work for them.
25. A person who fails to work hard for the things of this world, has only one person to blame, and that's themselves.
26. And yet, ultimately, in the final sense, no person can stick out his chest in pride, if he has an abundance of things.
27. For in the fullest sense, the LORD gives! The LORD blessed Job! The LORD gave Job many possessions!
28. In addition to this, Job also understood that the LORD Himself takes—the LORD gives and He takes.
29. Now, again, this doesn't deny the use of secondary causes—both Satan and wicked men had a hand in Job's troubles.
30. Furthermore, not only did they have a hand in Job's troubles, but they both will be held accountable for it.
31. For example, the LORD used the Babylonians to judge His rebellious people, by taking them into captivity.
32. This captivity lasted 70 years—the Babylonians killed them, enslaved them, and they mistreated them.

33. And guess what God did to the nation of Babylon after 70 years—He judged them for their sin by the Persians.
34. God raised up the Babylonians—He used them to fulfill His purposes, and then He judged them for it.
35. Job then says—"Blessed be the name of the LORD"—to "bless" fundamentally means "to give or bestow."
36. God blesses man as He gives us blessings, and Christians bless God as they give Him praise and adoration.
37. (3) Restraint, v22—"In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong"—he trusted and loved God.
38. Remember what I've said, all of this is a test from God, wherein He's purifying (purging) His beloved Job.
39. Furthermore, this also underscores that Job understood his troubles were ultimately controlled by God.
40. Thus, the point of these afflictions is to purify Job—to reveal what exactly is within the heart of Job.
41. John Calvin—"We must be ready when God is pleased to afflict us and put us to the test with many evils and hardships so that we will learn restraint and humble ourselves in subjection to him and learn to be patient and peaceable as we receive everything, he does to correct us."
42. Now, verse 22 does not mean that Job had no sin at all, but it means, in the beginning of his troubles (because more trouble is coming), generally speaking, Job submitted himself to God and did not transgress.
43. Thus, in closing, I want to summarize three reasons why (or how) Job responded this way to his troubles.
44. While few (if any) Christians will endure the same degree of trouble like Job, all Christians endure trouble.
45. And this is one of the primary purposes of the book, to help us respond to trouble in a God-honoring way.
46. It's rather easy to serve and praise God in times of prosperity—but how do you respond when things get hard?
47. How do you respond when that relation ends, your child becomes sick or dies, or your savings are depleted?
48. I suggest Job had knowledge of three things—all things come from God, are taken by God, and are inferior to God.
49. (a) All things come from God—"The LORD gave"—all that Job had came from God—every donkey, camel, and servant.
50. These were physical possessions that came from God—all of Job's riches and wealth were gifts from God.
51. And this is essential to Job's response—he understood the ultimately speaking, he was blessed by God.
52. All of the benefits he had—his possessions, family, and influence—were all the result of God's grace.
53. Everything he had—he received from God—this of course included spiritual as well as physical blessings.
54. Jn.3:27 (John the Baptist)—"A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven."
55. Dear friends, put plainly, we will never respond like Job to trouble, unless we clearly understand this point.

56. Everything I have is the result of God's grace! Everything I am and have has been given to me from heaven.
57. 1Sam.2:6-7—"The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up."
58. (b) All things are taken by God—"and the LORD has taken away"—if God sovereignly gives, He sovereignly takes.
59. This means we must hold on to all created things with a loose grip; we must understand they are temporary.
60. Job understood this world (with all of its riches and wealth) is temporary, and will one day return to dust.
61. This means we have to trust God when He takes things from us—we must trust Him in all that He does (He must trust Him as sovereign, all-wise, and loving).
62. (i) God is sovereign—this means, God has the right to give what He gives and take what He takes (it's all His).
63. (ii) God is all-wise—this means, God knows what we need, how much we need, and when we need it.
64. (iii) God is loving—this means, God doesn't act arbitrary toward us, but gives and takes because of love.
65. God doesn't give and take for no reason—He doesn't give and take simply because He can—He has a plan.
66. And that plan ultimately has two basic purposes—to glorify Himself through the testimony of His people.
67. Let me illustrate this—as I was working with this passage a sermon came to mind that I used to listen to soon after I became a Christian.
68. Someone gave me a cassette with a sermon by E.V. Hill—it was the sermon he preached at his wife's funeral.
69. The text was Job 1:21 and it had three points: 1. The LORD gives; 2. The LORD takes; 3. The LORD should be praised.
70. In the sermon he talked about the LORD gave in his wife (he talked about what a fine Christian lady she was).
71. And then he talked about how the LORD took—and here as you can imagine pastor Hill become emotional.
72. But it was when he came to his third point that you could hardly understand what he was saying (due to his emotion).
73. How was he able to trust God in the midst of such heartbreak? He knew God is sovereign, all-wise, and loving!
74. (c) All things are inferior to God—"blessed be the name of the LORD"—Job praised God with nothing because he actually had everything.
75. If you remember, there's two basic reasons behind Job's troubles: first, to purify Job; second, to glorify God.
76. Fundamentally, God wanted to show Satan (and to underscore to God) that He was superior to all things.
77. Job—as important as your possessions are they are not Me, and as important as your family is—they are not Me.
78. Heb.11:13-16—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country."