

A Guide To The Reader

Pastor recommends that to obtain maximum benefit from his comments you read in full from the Bible every reference whenever one appears. Otherwise the reading of the comments is simply a skimming over the surface. They are rather designed to make you stop and meditate and even look up further references as the Holy Spirit guides you. Do pray before you read that the Holy Spirit will be your Tutor and that the time you spend will be time spent with Him.

Job 2

2.1-6. Here is a glimpse revealed by the Holy Spirit Himself as to what was constantly going on until Satan fell from heaven (Luke 10.18; Revelation 12.7-10). The angels of God went forth “to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Hebrews 1.14) and at regular, appointed intervals would seem to report back formally. They “came to present themselves before the LORD.” Whether the Lord formally interviewed each one, or whether some reported at one time and others at another, we are not told but we are privileged to glimpse the governmental activity of the Lord, fulfilling the work afterwards spoken of in Ephesians (1.22) as administered by the Saviour who was given “to be head over all things to the church.” There is considerable similarity between verse 2.1 and 1.6 but there is a difference. In the present verse we find the added words concerning Satan “to present himself before the LORD.” Our attention is drawn to the now apparent eagerness, rather than possible reluctance, with which Satan comes to the meeting. He has inflicted much damage, though his aim has not been sufficiently achieved to his satisfaction so long as Job does not curse God but, on the contrary, worships Him. Again 2.2 and 1.7 are parallel in their description of the occasion.

It may be that these are formal proceedings and that therefore a certain format was customarily observed. It is not until the end of 2.3 that the Lord Himself furthers the matter of Job and initiates conversation once again concerning him.

“Integrity” means “whole”, “healthy”; our word “integral” means “central” or “vital.” At the centre of our life is spiritual life, and there is no ultimate, permanent, eternal soundness without faith in Christ Jesus. Whatever failings may subsequently be revealed in Job’s handling of what was befalling him, this faith in the rightness of God’s dealings with him in salvation, through the burnt offerings which prefigured Christ, never wavered. He held fast his integrity. Again, this is high commendation. If God comes to this judgment (in Christ) about anyone, His judgment is true.

Quoting Psalm 35.19 and alluding to Psalm 69.4, the Lord Jesus Christ spoke concerning the people’s hatred of Him and His Father because of their sin, “this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled which was written in their law, They hated me without a cause” (John 15.25). The meaning is that there was no cause in Job

himself, as there was no cause in Christ Himself, to warrant such hatred. The cause was in Satan's malice, in the lesson which he had to be taught and in the long subsequent battle against him.

"Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life." Satan's insinuation is that a man's life is so precious to him personally, and he is thinking of Job in particular, that he wouldn't care how much damage was done, how many people were killed, as long as his own life was preserved. Now this was not true of Job, nor is it universally true, despite mankind's strong urges towards self-preservation. A man will still give his life for another. Speaking of the admittedly general truth, but referring to Himself and His work, the Lord Jesus Christ said, (John 15.13) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Satan moves a decisive stage further in revealing his hand. Reflecting his own hatred of God, he insists that Job will in fact curse God to his face if He afflicts his person with chronic ill-health. God mandates Satan with permission to further his ends but must spare his life. However much Satan would have liked to go that one step further this is a line of disobedience he knows he must not cross.

2.7-8. Boils underfoot, boils on the legs, behind the knees, on the thighs and buttocks, in the groin, on chest, back and shoulders, on the arms, neck and face to the crown of the head. Underfoot so it was too much to bear weight; on the buttocks so he could hardly sit down; on his back so he could scarcely lie down; on the hips and arms so he could not really find relief lying on his side. Boils everywhere. Running sores, made worse by scraping. With pus and possibly disease spreading. Boils were potentially fatal in later days with Hezekiah and Job believed it would be so with him.

A potsherd is a shard of broken pottery. It is possible that an ash heap was a part of every house from the quantity of wood that would of necessity be burned. He had not sprinkled himself with dust and ashes earlier, so far as is recorded. If that was his intention now, he chose the very place to sit where there was a constant supply.

2.9-10. If his wife had restrained her observations earlier she could do so no longer. She doubtless in her own way felt keenly the loss of sons and daughters and the estate. If she had not been best pleased in her husband's maintaining his moral and spiritual integrity before, she boiled over with indignation now. "Curse God, and die" she said. She knew the enormity of the offence of cursing God, that it would entail His displeasure even unto death. Perhaps she felt the sooner what she thought to be an inevitable death came to her husband the better. Maybe she had only her own interests at heart and thought that Job's righteousness was too rigid and had brought all the trouble upon her as well as himself and deserved to die in her view. We do not know. But it was a demoralising as well as a wicked thing to say. This we can observe;

that it best expressed how she felt about God. Of Job, we may say that he remained holy, and unblameable and unreprieveable in God's sight (Colossians 1.22).

2.11. It was suggested in our overview that Eliphaz was the very same with the Eliphaz of 1 Chronicles 1 and also of Genesis 36. Genesis 36.9-10 reads, "And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: these are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bahemath the wife of Esau." It tallies with the evidence to think that Job is in fact the Jobab recorded in 1 Chronicles 1.44-45, the son of Zerah of Bozrah. Reuel was Eliphaz' brother. Reuel's son was Zerah and his son Jobab (Job). So Eliphaz was by this reckoning his grandfather's brother who might, for reasons not known to us, have taken a special interest in Job down the years, perhaps because of the very abilities which made the greatest of all the men of the east. Eliphaz is described as the Temanite; Teman was the eldest son of Eliphaz and therefore the same generation as Zerah, Jobab's father. This portion of the family took its name from Teman rather than Eliphaz.

We have no other mention of Bildad or Zophar in the scriptures except in this book. We can do nothing in pursuit of their background but think that the words appended to the Septuagint have truth on their side. In which case they are contemporary dukes, the leaders of their respective family divisions. Clearly they are (or were) special friends; confidants and counsellors. Bildad is described as the Shuite which the Septuagint identifies as Sauchaeans (which may simply be a rendering of Shuites.) In 1 Chronicles 1.32 (Genesis 25.2 also) Shuah is a younger son of Keturah, Abraham's concubine. We read in Genesis 25.6 that the family were sent eastwards by Abraham away from Isaac, so that would figure with their location in the time of Job. Job was the fifth in line of descent from Abraham (1 Chronicles !) so that would have occurred four generations previously. Again, as to the Naamathite, the Septuagint speaks of the Minaeans. The only name in the Genesis 36 and 1 Chronicles 1 lists which bear any resemblance at all to that name is the eldest son of Reuel (brother to Zerah, Jobab's father) is Nahath. If Jobab be in fact Job then we have the scriptural note in Genesis 36 33-34, "And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. And Jobab died, and Hisham in the land of Temani reigned in his stead."

The friends contacted one another when they heard the awful news and found that it was quite as bad as they had been led to believe, if not worse. For they did not recognize Job; and possibly not even his property. They sat down in the dust with Job and sprinkled dust in token of mourning upon their heads and rent their mantles as an act of identification with him. They wept with him that wept. There are times when calamities are so appalling that they are too deep for words. Silence alone and mute grief suffice to convey their own response to their friend Job's terrible condition. So for one whole week, day and night, they kept him company wordlessly. All this is very

genuine and betokens a lifelong friendship. Nothing has yet severed relationships. The severing of those relationships is the next weapon in Satan's armoury.