

## **The Role of Satan** **Job 1:6-12**

Last week we began the book of Job by looking at the first six verses of chapter one and asked the questions who is Job? Specifically we looked at three key facets of the life of Job:

- a. The integrity of Job
  - A real man who believed in Israel's God
  - Upright and Blameless
- b. The purpose of Job
  - An innocent sufferer in its acutest form
- c. The godliness of Job
  - A righteous man who interceded on behalf of his family

All of these qualities of Job set the stage for the conflict that Job will soon encounter. However, before we can dive into that conflict, we must finish setting the stage. Job is only one character presented in this conflict. Another key character that we must gain a better understanding of in this story is Satan. He is for sure an interesting character but more importantly he is often mischaracterized – many people don't truly understand his place, his lie, and what his purpose is. Tonight I want to set out to answer those questions. By doing so, we will be better equipped to understand the conflict presented in the book of Job.

### **Job 1:6-12**

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan<sup>[a]</sup> also came among them. <sup>7</sup>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." <sup>8</sup>And 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?" <sup>9</sup>Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? <sup>10</sup>Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. <sup>11</sup>But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." <sup>12</sup>And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

### **I. Satan's Place**

In this passage, we are first informed of the setting. This appears to be something similar to a courtroom of heaven. We are told that on this day, the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. Naturally, we should ask ourselves who are the sons of God?

If we allow the book of Job to interpret itself (the intent of the author) then Job 38:7 appears to tell us that the sons of God referenced in Job 1:6 are angels.

when the morning stars sang together  
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

So we have a gathering of the angels in the presence of God. \*Elsewhere in Scripture it is affirmed that angels can stand before God (Gabriel in Luke 1:19)

Interestingly though, the verse goes on to tell us “and Satan also came among them.” That is a qualifying statement – something is different about Satan. He stands out among the crowd, he is not like the other angels that are present. So who is he?

The name Satan (hassatan) literally means “the opposer” or “the adversary.” Job is one of the oldest books of the Bible and outside of Genesis; this is the first potential mention of Satan.

\*It must be noted that the Hebrew grammatical construction of hassatan is not a proper name.

\*If Genesis mentions a crafty serpent (Genesis 3:1) but doesn’t call Satan by name, are we dealing with the same being? Once again, lets allow the Bible to interpret itself. Revelation 12:7-9 appears to affirm that the Satan (adversary) of Job is the same serpent of Genesis. He is the adversary and oppose of the one true God.

Revelation tells us that Satan was banished from heaven with other fallen angels. Was Satan an angel as well? Ezekiel 28:14 tells us that he was the anointed cherub. This appears to mean that Satan was the highest of all the angelic hierarchy. As such, it is important that we understand who Satan was and who he is.

- First and foremost, Satan is a created being
- He is not eternal like God or all powerful like God
- He was created as an anointed cherub, not created as an adversary but he chose his path

A large question that remains is why Satan was allowed in the presence of God. We have this meeting of angels in the heavenly courtroom, Satan is clearly identified as different, and we now know he has presented himself as God’s adversary. Why would God allow him in the room?

On the outset, this does not appear to make any sense to the human mind. However there are a few important lessons from this scene that should provide us with comfort.

1. Job 1:7 tells us that God is the one that has initiated this meeting. God called Satan to himself; Satan didn’t and does not have open access to God’s presence.
2. In the interactions that are to follow, the end result is Satan’s power being limited and God being glorified.

Both of these points teach us to rest in the fact that God is sovereign and in control. Just as in the life of Job, a lot will happen in our lives that we do not understand. However, we can rest in the fact that God is in complete control while Satan is extremely limited.

## **II. Satan’s Lie**

1 Peter 5:8 tells us that Satan roams about the Earth seeking someone to deceive and devour. This falls in line with Job 1:7 as God questions where Satan has come from. Will look at these

questions more later on but for now, what led to Satan's fall. What was and is his great lie and purpose. How is he trying to deceive and to what ends?

As we read earlier, Ezekiel 28:15-18 tells us that iniquity was found in Satan and he was thrown out of heaven. It also tells us that this iniquity was pride.

Isaiah 14:13-14 tells us that Satan believed that he could overthrow God and reign over creation.

You said in your heart,  
    'I will ascend to heaven;  
above the stars of God  
    I will set my throne on high;  
I will sit on the mount of assembly  
    in the far reaches of the north;<sup>[a]</sup>  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
    I will make myself like the Most High.'

Even though he was thrown out of heaven, Revelation 20:7-10 teaches that Satan was not deterred, He still thinks he can win by overthrowing God, but why rebel in the first place. All indications are that he was in a good place at the top of the angel hierarchy.

Satan was created "full of wisdom" (Ezekiel 28:12) and elsewhere in Scripture (namely Jesus' temptation) we see that Satan knows Scripture. It appears that his rebellion is rooted in the fact he doesn't believe God's Word or is offended by it. The proof of this is his belief in the lie that he is equal to God.

Interestingly, this is the same lie that Satan perpetuated in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. In Genesis 3:5, Satan tempts Adam and Eve with opportunity to be gods themselves.

This is Satan's great lie – a lie that rejects God as the one true creator God and a lie that proposes one's own equality with God. This leads us to Satan's purpose.

### **III. Satan's Purpose**

Satan's activities are designed to defeat God's purpose in creation and especially His purpose for the men and women created in His image. It is the fact that men and women are created in the image of God that really sets off Satan and all of the angels that joined in his rebellion.

What about fallen angels?

Angels were created before man and specifically were created to serve as ministering spirits to all who would someday become God's heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:13-14). Being made to serve, offended Satan. Human beings were made from the dust of the ground while angels were arrayed in beautiful splendor and yet God chose human beings for His purposes and created them in His image. As a result, Satan rebelled and several angels joined him. This was an opportunity

for them to attempt to make the world meet their desire and benefit as opposed to serving God and man.

Again, the lie is that God is not the one true Creator God and fundamentally you are no different than Him and can even be equal to Him. This is the lie that deceived Satan, the fallen angels, and mankind.

Genesis 6 and the book of Jude, provide a deeper look at this lie and the actions of fallen angels. Sadly, this material is often overlooked in Sunday School.

Genesis 6:1-5 speak of the Nephilim (giants)

Part of Satan's rebellion included the angels (sons of man) mysterious use of human reproduction. Angels alone cannot reproduce. All angels in Scripture are presented as male. Although the current culture is doing everything it can to prove otherwise, two men cannot reproduce. Therefore, it makes sense that angels cannot reproduce. While Scripture says that angels do not marry (Matthew 22:30), it does not strictly say they cannot reproduce. All indications are that these fallen angels intermingled with some women of Earth to create these giants. Notice they are called the men of renown. There is thought today that Greek and other mythologies trace back to these giants. Why would the fallen angels do this? Possibly to prove that they could create just as God had created or simply so mankind would worship anything but God alone – the created (Romans 1:21-32)

This rampant wickedness led to the great flood and God's purge of wickedness from the land.

After the fall, we see a similar deception take place with Nimrod and the tower of Babel. Interestingly Genesis 10 lists Nimrod as a descendent of Ham and describes him as a "mighty one." The Hebrew word for mighty one used here is *gibborum* is the same one used to describe the Nephilim giants in chapter 6. Also, the Septuagint (Greek translation of the O.T.) reads he became a giant. No doubt this is a difficult text but regardless of what truly transpired it appears to be clear that the same game plan of Satan is in play here. This led to the tower of Babel and a one world religion aimed at achieving god-like status (something going on here about reaching the heavens). Remember, Satan's lie centers around equality with God.

From Babel and the dispersion of mankind come all of the false religions that ultimately deny the existence of the one true creator God and as we assess our own culture and time period, this same lie and purpose of Satan is still at work. One example is the prominence of evolutionary thought in science as it denies the existence of a creator and places all living matter on an equal playing field.

While this may seem a far leap from the book of Job, I believe it is important that we have an understanding of Satan – who he is and what he is up to.

He believes that he is equal with God and wants us to believe that lie as well. Satan believes he can still win this cosmic battle.

As we turn back to Job 1:6-12, Satan approaches God with this arrogant attitude and challenges God to a test.

Remember, God has summoned Satan to this court otherwise Satan would not have the authority to enter. We also see an excellent game of one-upmanship as God questions Satan.

The fact that God is omnipresent and omniscient and Satan is not is on full display here. Satan has been doing reconnaissance on the Earth walking to and fro. He clearly has not been in multiple places at once. Before Satan can speak again, God asks him if he has considered Job. This is fascinating. God proves his omniscience as he knows exactly what Satan is going to ask before he does so. God provides the answer without the question. We must remember that God is in complete control!

God's description of Job is on point with what we learned last week. He is unique, blameless, and upright. However, Satan pushes back on this by saying, "Does Job fear God for no reason?" In other words, Job only worships you for the things you provide him. Look at all you have provided him, including the protection he has. If you would take it all away, he would curse you.

It is almost as if Satan is saying, you are no better than me and I can prove it because the man you hold in such high esteem would curse you if you didn't bless him as you do. If he was harmed he would quickly prove my point.

Satan's goal is to have Job renounce God and he believes that Job will. His goal is the same for you and me – Satan wants us to renounce God.

In verse 12, God calls Satan's bluff and the game is on with one rule – Satan cannot physically harm Job. This is a reminder once again that God is in control of this game – not Satan.

#### **IV. Personal Implications**

This passage provides us with three key implications for our personal lives.

1. **God is always in control.** While in Job's life it will soon appear as though Satan has a substantial amount of control, this passage has made it clear that God has Satan on a leash. In our own lives, we often give Satan too much credit. He is not all powerful, omnipresent, or omniscient and therefore we should not act as though he is. As his name implies, he is the great opposer and deceiver. If we are rooted in the things of God, his power quickly diminishes. Perhaps the greatest weapon against the lies of Satan is the truth of God's word. In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus models this for us in his own temptation. With every lie proposed by Satan, Jesus rebuked him with the truth. We would do well to do the same.
2. **Satan's game plan is to deny God the glory He is due.** Satan's greatest aim is to prove that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not the one true God. He believes that he is on an equal playing field and wants us to buy into this lie as well. You cannot have a

good game against your opponent if you don't understand his game plan and devise your own. As Christians we must be able to recognize this lie as it pervades our culture. Anything that denies God the glory He is due, minimizes His authority, or denies Him altogether should be not only avoided but also spoken out against.

- 3. We must always be on guard.** 1 Peter 5:8 teaches that Satan is walking about seeking whom he may devour. "Seeking" is a present tense active participle implying present and repeated action. Satan's history backs this up. He failed in the Garden, failed prior to the flood, failed at Babel, failed with Jesus, and yet he does not give up. A Christian that does not recognize this is asking for trouble. A successful boxer does not fight with his hands down – he is always on guard or else he is susceptible to a knockout blow. We must keep our hands up and be on guard at all times.