

03a JOB

This is Friday, the 12th of May, 2006. We continue tonight our study in the book of Job, resuming in chapter 1, verse 13. We will pause for a moment, as we always do, to make sure that God the Holy Spirit is recognized and that we are each able to avail ourselves of His ministry.

Shall we pray? Father, we count it a privilege to spend time together in fellowship and in the study of Your Word. We thank You for the presence of each one here. We ask Your blessing on us as we seek to understand Your Word and rightly divide it.

And we pray that we will find in it tonight those things that will thoroughly equip us for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.

We have been introduced to the character of Job. Chapter 1, verse 1 in Hebrew says, I just read you that because I think it sounds neat. His name in Hebrew is Eyov.

Of course, there is no J in Hebrew, but the Germans supplied it for us and we typically stick with that. So, Job is good. Instead of calling him Eyov every time we come across it.

He was presented to us and we have seen the issue that he poses in the heavenly conversation between God and Satan. We explored that at some length last week. And Satan says, the reason Job is faithful and the reason he fears God and shuns evil is because essentially he's been bribed.

God has blessed him, has placed a hedge around him and is keeping him loyal by blessing him. This, of course, was the Old Testament expectation. You see it reflected earlier than the time of Job in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

You see it later than Job in the law of Moses and the blessings and curses that were pronounced on Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. You see it in the Psalms. You see it in the Proverbs especially where the expectation is that if a man is faithful and obedient, his earthly life will be blessed.

And this became so much of an expectation that by the time of Christ, you see it entrenched as sort of a given. Well, look, here's a man that's blind. Somebody must have sinned.

Was it him or his parents that he's blind? The rich and the influential are obviously blessed by God. This was the position of the Pharisees and so on. So this had become very well ensconced in the minds of Israelites in the ancient Near East that if you do what's right, you're blessed.

If you do what's wrong, you're cursed. Job is doing everything right. And Satan says, well, that's exactly why he's loyal.

If you take away his blessings, take away his possessions, he will bless you to your face. And the word is Barak, B-A-R-A-K, which is a euphemism here for he will curse you to your face. So

Satan says, stretch out your hand and pull away these blessings.

And God very interestingly and wisely responds and says, all that he has is in your hand. Only do not put your hand on him. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

This is where we pick up our detailed study. We did an overview of this toward the end of our study last week, but there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. Now, we don't know this for sure, but if you go back to the earlier part of the text where Job is introduced in verse 4, it says when his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, they would send and invite their three sisters.

And when the days of feasting had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them. He would rise early in the morning, offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all, basically ten sacrifices for all ten of his children. It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

This Job did regularly. At a minimum, he sacrificed for the sons. I guess it's a little unclear if he sacrificed for the daughters or not.

I would suspect that he did. Since I have daughters, I know I would. So, the reason I'm going back and reviewing this is because we are given a particular detail.

Whose house are they feasting in? It's the oldest brother's house, which means that the previous cycle of rotation has just finished. All seven sons have served as host, and now they're starting over again with the oldest brother. And it's not definitive, but it seems, and it seems to me that verse 4 tells us that this was sort of an annual event on Job's part.

He would wait until however many months of feasting were complete where each of the brothers had gone through his rotation, at least seven months. Maybe they knocked off in the dead of winter when the crops weren't growing. They didn't really have anything to feast with.

And then starting in the spring and working all through the summer and fall for a total of seven months, they would have these feasts, seven months of feasts. By the way, how long is the feast cycle in Israel? You start with the spring feasts, then there's a gap in the summer, and then you have the fall feasts. And you have like a seven-month cycle there, right? Well, same sort of idea here.

And however you want to view this, it seems to me that the seven sons have finished their hosting duties, and Job has just done the sacrifices and has sort of cleared the slate for everyone, and now they're starting over with the first son. The other thing I would like to point out is we have in this chapter and some change here an outline, and it is marked with a specific phrase that introduces each scene. If you look at verse 6, and if you don't mind marking your Bibles, you might make a little mark or notation or circle this or something, but in verse... We had

the first scene which introduces Job, verses 1 through 5, just narrative.

Now we have an episode beginning in verse 6. What is the first phrase there? Now there was a day. Now there was a day. And this is sort of a marker for us.

In Hebrew, this is v'yehi ha-yom v'yehi and there was ha-yom, the day, which in Hebrew, the definite article sort of makes it indefinite. Now there was a day. And this is when we see the heavenly scene that we looked at in detail last time.

Now look at verse 13. We have the identical same phrase. v'yehi ha-yom Now there was a day.

When the sons and daughters were eating and drinking in their oldest brother's house. So all of this is going to happen on this day. A messenger came to Job and said, the oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding beside them.

By the way, just in case I forget to mention it later, look at chapter 2, verse 1. What's the first phrase there? v'yehi ha-yom And there was a day. So this is the scene marker for each of these first three scenes. But we're going to take a look at this second scene.

We've been in heaven listening to Job being disgusted by God and Satan. Now we're down on earth. And this is where the earthly action really starts happening.

A messenger came to Job and said, the oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding beside them when the Sabaeans raided them and took them away. Indeed, they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you. Well, why do we have the oxen and the donkeys mentioned together? I ask myself.

And upon doing some research on agricultural practices in the ancient Near East, the fields are extensive and they're far away from where Job and the servants live. They're back in the... If you can imagine a western ranch, and you've got the bunkhouse for the servants or the ranch hands. Then you've got the big main house for the family.

Job and his servants are all sort of centrally located, but he's got these extensive land holdings. So they're going to go out and plow the south 500, let's say. It's a huge tract of land that they're going to plow.

Well, all of the stuff is up there at the central location. So what do they do? When they plow, what do they do? They plow and then they plant. So when you're getting ready to go out and do the plowing and planting for the south 500 acres, you get donkeys and you put all the seed in sacks and you get the plows and the plow shares and all the equipment for the plowing and you load it up on donkeys.

You drive the oxen down there and you bring all of the supplies on the donkeys. Unload the donkeys, get everything hooked up and ready to go, get all the servants distributed. You've got

some guys that are plowing.

You've got some guys that are coming behind putting in the seed and you've got some other guys after that that are turning the ground back over the seed and stomping it down. You've got guys picking up empty feed bags. You've got guys keeping an eye on the donkeys because they're just going to graze while you're getting all this stuff done with the oxen.

Then at the end of the day, you pack all the stuff back up on the donkeys, the plows and the plow shares and so on, and take it all back. So that's why the donkeys are out there with the oxen. They bring all the stuff.

They're like the trucks. And the oxen are like the tractors. So they're all out there.

Now, who are the Sabians? There's two different main ideas about this. The first is, the word is, in Hebrew here, is the same word where we get like the Queen of Sheba. These would be the Shebaans, the Shebeans.

However, at this early time, Sheba is not what it would be in terms of a kingdom down there in Africa, south of Egypt. And if these were the Queen of Sheba, Shebeans, they would be like a thousand miles from home. And I don't think they're going to run a thousand miles up there and take Job's stuff and try to get the donkeys and the oxen all the way back down south of Egypt.

It just doesn't really make sense. But we know from a couple of other passages in Scripture, and I won't go to them, but you may remember reading here and there where it says something about Sheba and Dedan, and they're linked together. And these are both northern Arabian entities, northern Arabian tribes or areas.

And there seems to have been a Sheba that was not the south of Egypt Sheba, but one that was in the northern Arabia area. This would be south of us. So these Shebeans are a nomadic, northern Arabian band of raiders and marauders and live off the land types who just go around seeking whom they may devour.

And Job evidently has been here for many years and has had many holdings and has never had any trouble with these people. But for some reason, they decide to make Job a target. We know the reason.

So these Shebeans come up from the south and grab these oxen and donkeys, obviously being marauding raiders and vagabonds and living a nomadic life. They're not going to go plow their own fields. They're going to take these and sell them on the black market, the oxen black market and the donkey black market and get cash for them.

So they're just taking them far enough away to sell them and then they'll be gone. But what's unusual is that they don't just overcome the servants. They kill them.

Now this is for one of two reasons. Either they are just really nasty marauders or the servants of Job are loyal and they put up a fight to the death trying to protect this stuff. I suspect that the latter is slightly more likely.

I think they are devoted to Job. They're devoted to their job and they lay their lives on the line to try to protect this stuff, but it's in vain. Now if you remember the roster of the oxen and the donkeys, there were 500 oxen and there were 500 donkeys that belonged to Job.

And evidently they are all out there because this raid wipes them out. And if you can imagine the number of servants that would be necessary to manage 500 oxen, 500 she-donkeys, all of that equipment, do the plowing and the planning and the distribution and all of that, every single one of these servants. It says he had a large household, which means a lot of servants.

All of those servants are killed. All of the oxen and donkeys are hauled off, except for one. There's one servant who escapes.

So he comes back and gives his report and says the Sabians raided them and took them away. They have killed the servants with the edge of the sword and I alone have escaped to tell you. This is an attack from an earthly source.

The Sabians are known raiders and bandits of the area. So that's episode number one in this scene. While he was yet speaking, and this is going to link each of these four reports together.

While he was yet speaking. And it's not only, of course, accurate for the episode as it actually happened, but as a narrative note, as a part of the story, this really compresses and compounds the impact of each of these reports, doesn't it? Before the guy could even finish speaking. You find this in other places in Scripture where it will talk about while he was yet speaking.

In Genesis 24-15, for example, when the servant goes up to get Rebecca and bring her back for Isaac. He's praying and he says, Lord, I don't know where to look for this gal. While he was yet speaking, Rebecca, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor Abraham's brother, came with her pitcher on her shoulder.

He had just got through praying, let it be the one who offers to water the stock. And before he even gets the words out of his mouth, here she comes. And it's a very effective part of a narrative to have something happen like that.

You have this in a couple of other places. We saw it in Daniel chapter 4 when Nebuchadnezzar says, Oh, look at my great kingdom. Look at all the stuff I've done.

I'm a pretty big, mighty, important king. While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven, King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken, the kingdom has departed from you. And he goes into the hair like feathers and long nails and seven years of insanity.

While the words were still in his mouth. There's immediacy. Now, what I find fascinating about this is, we know that Satan is orchestrating these attacks on Job.

Satan put the idea and the timing into the heart of the Sabians to go raid Job on this particular day. Satan wants this stuff to happen in one day. He knows the day that the sons and daughters are going to be feasting.

And the Sabians don't show up a day early. They don't show up a day late. Can you imagine the anticlimax if everything else happened and the sons and daughters died? And then the next day, as Job sat in the ash heap or something, oh, here came a servant straggling in.

Oh, Master, we lost the oxen and the donkeys. Well, big whoop. I lost all ten of my children.

So what? But these are coming not only in terms of disasters that Satan has brought about, but he has chosen the timing and the sequence. And this is the one that comes first. Now, why is this important? It's not just 500 oxen and 500 donkeys.

What does this mean? This, again, looking at the sequence of the seven sons feasting and so forth, apparently is the time of the latter rains and the time of the fall planting. These oxen are plowing and they're planting grain. This is going to be the crops that are going to come up.

You've lost all the seed, all of the donkeys, and all of the oxen. That wipes out the next crop. What are you going to plant a crop with? How are you going to cultivate it? Where are the servants who are trained and have all of the experience and know where the fields are? I mean, he's lost the whole agricultural end of his holdings.

So this is the first big blow. And this cuts off a hope for the future. Where is our food going to come from? Where is next year's planting seed going to come from? How am I going to start over? But, well, I've got some reserve.

You know, he's thinking, well, I can recover from this. But before this guy finishes speaking, here comes the next servant. Verse 16, while he was still speaking, another also came and said, the fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them.

And I alone have escaped to tell you. Good heavens. Go back up to verse 3. How many sheep are we talking about here? 7,000 sheep got burned up with fire from heaven? 7,000 sheep? When's the last time you saw 7,000 of something? Whenever I try to think in numbers in the single digit thousands, I can remember as a midshipman sitting in a big stadium and seeing the entire brigade of midshipmen, which is 4,500 people.

And I remember what that looks like and how many people that constitutes. So that's sort of my mental benchmark. Maybe you've been in a stadium and they said, well, we've got so many fans here today or something.

Well, if you can imagine 7,000 sheep, this is a whopping lot of sheep. And typically you don't have 7,000 sheep all congregated in one place. They're scattered out.

I mean, how could you not? So these would be distributed over several hillsides. When you think about fire from heaven coming down and incinerating 7,000 sheep, this is not like a stray lightning bolt. And the term fire of God is sometimes used and it seems to talk about lightning.

But I mean, think about it. You can't incinerate this large of an area with all of the shepherds to manage 7,000 sheep and to 7,000 sheep. They're scattered over, who knows, a couple of square miles of area possibly.

And this evidently was some kind of supernatural fire from heaven that came down and incinerated everything. Just left a big burn spot. When you're a child and somebody gives you a magnifying glass and you go outside and you find some ants or something and focus the sunlight on them.

Well, this is like the world's biggest magnifying glass just hitting this whole area and everything goes except this one servant. Now, what's the difference between this and the first episode? Sabians are a natural agent of destruction. Fire falling from heaven and incinerating this many people and sheep is a supernatural phenomenon.

While he was yet speaking, another also came in, verse 17, and said, The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you. Now, the Chaldeans, these are the Chazdim in Hebrew, K-A-S-D-I-M. And of course, the Chaldeans of Daniel's day have not yet arrived.

These are not Chaldeans from up in Babylon. Once again, the Chazdim, and you can look in the genealogy lists in Genesis, these are a band up in the north. They're up in the area of Palestine.

And so, the first attack came from the south. The Sabians came up from the south, got the donkeys and the oxen, killed all the servants. This next attack seems to have come from the west.

The storms are typically going to blow across the land from the Mediterranean Sea. And whatever this giant fire from heaven type of thing, you would imagine supernatural lightning or some incredible electrical storm that was just endless amounts of lightning or some supernatural fire. But if it was storm related, it very likely came from the west.

So we have the south and then the west. Now we have the Chaldeans and they come down from the north, the Chazdim. And much like the Sabians from the south, they steal.

The stuff is not destroyed, it is stolen and removed. The camels were one of the most expensive animals that you could own in the ancient Near East and they were a sign of wealth. Job owns

3,000 camels.

This had to be a whopping lot of Chazdim to come down and steal away 3,000 camels. I mean, if each guy can take 10 camels, you still have to have 300 guys. And I suspect there were probably 5, 6, 7, 800 of these.

This is a huge little army that comes down and takes these and slays all of the camel drivers, all of the camel tenders who are managing this bunch for Job. And one servant escapes. What kind of an attack is this? We had earthly, then we had heavenly, fire from heaven.

Now we've got earthly men as agents stealing just like they did the first time. While he was yet speaking, verse 18, another also came and said, Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. Now this reminds us and repeats essentially the first information we had in verse 13.

We had a statement of peace and tranquility and prosperity in verse 13 before all of this began, didn't we? There was a day when Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. It was a great day. It was a day of celebration.

Starting a fresh feast cycle. And bad news came. Now, in this fourth episode, we have the very same thing repeated.

Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. And suddenly, a great wind came from across the wilderness. Where do the winds come from when they come from the wilderness in this part of the world? They come from the east.

They come from across the desert. It's the east wind. We have many, many references to the east wind in Scripture as an agent of destruction.

It's going to be mentioned here in Job chapter 15 verse 2. Should a wise man answer with empty knowledge and fill himself with the east wind? It's something that's useless and destructive. Hosea chapter 13 and verse 15. Though he is fruitful among his brethren, an east wind shall come.

The wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness. His springs shall become dry. His fountains shall be dried up.

He shall plunder the treasury of every desirable prize. Jeremiah chapter 4 and verse 11. At that time, it will be said to the people and to Jerusalem, a dry wind of the desolate heights blows in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan or to cleanse, but to come in and destroy.

So, four attacks, four points of the compass. What do we know about the number four in Scripture? It's the number of comprehensiveness on earth, isn't it? These attacks just box the

compass. Two from earth and two from heaven.

Two natural, two supernatural. This east wind is going to come and it's going to be a Sirocco. It's going to be one of these swirling winds.

It's going to strike all four corners of the house. And it fell on the young people and they are dead. What's particularly poignant about this is in the previous three reports, when it said that the servants were stricken with the edge of the sword or the servants were incinerated, burned up with the sheep.

You know what the word is for servants? It's not eved, which is the usual word for servant. It's na'arim. And na'arim means young men.

The young men were killed with the edge of the sword. The young men were burned up. And in verse 15 again, they have killed the young men with the edge of the sword.

Now, in this episode, it says the wind struck the four corners of the house and it fell on the na'arim, the young men. But this time, na'arim means the sons. And this tells us two things.

First of all, it tells us how close a fellowship the household of Job was. The servants and his sons are referred to by the same word. When it says he had a very great household, he thought of his servants as sons.

They're all his na'arim. They're all his young men. But these, of course, are the sons of his body and his three daughters.

And they are dead. And I alone have escaped to tell you. And the knell and the ringing bell of death that strikes through these four reports without relent has been orchestrated by Satan.

Satan put it into the heart of the Kazdim. Satan put it into the heart of the Sabians. Satan evidently has some power over weather.

Certainly when God permits it, he does. Because he brought about this fire falling from heaven. And he brought about this supernatural cyclonic wind.

And it is evident in Scripture, both here and in Corinthians, that individuals can be, as Paul puts it, turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. And it's not always for discipline. Remember, the Apostle Paul says that about the man who is living in a pattern of evil with his stepmother in the Corinthian church.

And he says, I hear that this is being practiced among you, a thing that even the heathens are shocked by. This man is living with his stepmother. And he says, I have turned him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

And this is a removal of the hedge of protection and a removal of that border of blessing that God

puts around those who belong to him for discipline, in the case of Corinthians. Here it's removed for another purpose, which is going to become evident in the course of the book. But Satan can have the power of death when God grants it to him.

And that's what happens here. Now, think about this as a story. These servants come in, one after the other.

They're all four standing there now with these tales of woe. What does Job do? Does Job launch into a soliloquy? Does he stand up and shake his fist at God and say, how could you do this to me? What he does is very understated and yet it's very eloquent. Job arose.

He tore his robe. This is the outer robe. This is his badge of rank and wealth and authority.

The clothing of the ancient Near East. They had an undergarment, then they had a tunic, and then they had their robe that they wore over that. It's basically a three-layer type of clothing.

And this is the outermost, the richest and most ornate. No doubt this was a costly embroidered garment that as soon as somebody saw Job, they immediately knew he was one of the most prominent men of the East. And so he takes this badge of his rank and this symbol of his wealth and his prosperity and his influence and he tears it up.

And it's very evocative. It says a lot. Job doesn't speak a word.

In fact, except for the thought of his heart that perhaps his sons have cursed God in their hearts, we haven't heard Job say anything yet in this book. Have we? Job hasn't said a thing. And here, this is a mute response.

It doesn't say, Behold, Job let out a great cry. He stood up. And this seems to be a very deliberate act.

These things have hit Job like four punches to the gut. And he stands up. He grabs a hold of his robe.

And he tears it. And then he shaved his head. And this is something that requires some preparation.

People don't just have razors and bowls of suds laying around. They don't just reach over and say, Oh, and their head is shaved. He's going to have to call one of the household servants and say, Bring me some water.

Bring me a flint or a bronze razor or whatever it is he had. And this is a ritual shaving of the head. There's some speculation about what this might mean.

In pagan cultures, there's some thought that they are sort of casting their lot in with the dead in

the same way that you throw dust on your head. You say, Well, they're dead. I'm sharing the calamity.

I'm putting dirt on me just like we're going to have to put dirt on them. They're turning to corpses and their hair is going to fall out. I'm shaving my head.

I think this is a little bit more meaningful because of what Job says next. If you remember in Leviticus chapter 14, think about the book, Leviticus. Levi, the tribe of Levi.

This is the instructions for the priests. Leviticus 14 is the instructions for cleansed lepers. If they have leprosy and God heals them, they are to show themselves to the priest.

And the priest has a ritual that he goes through. And the leper, at a certain point, once the priest has done a certain number of things for him, the leper begins to do things for himself. And there's a certain point in that ritual.

I don't have time to review it all, but it's absolutely fascinating. There's a point at which the leper shaves all of his hair off, or the former leper. And then he sits outside his tent.

And he waits eight days. What does it symbolize? He has been born again. He has been born anew into the fellowship of Israel.

Maybe he used to be an Israelite. He got leprosy. He had to go outside the camp unclean, unclean.

Couldn't get near anybody. Couldn't go worship. And now he's been cleansed.

And the priest does these things with the bird and the bull and the hyssop and the blood and so on. And there's a point at which the leper shaves off all of his hair. And what's he saying? Symbolically.

I'm a newborn babe. And on the eighth day, he gets rededicated and reentered, just like you circumcise a male child on the eighth day. And so the shaving of the head for the cleansed leper symbolizes I'm a baby again.

That's what Job does here. And look at what he says. He fell to the ground and worshipped and he said, naked I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return there.

He says, look at me. I look just like I did when I came into this world. I came into this world essentially from a little known place and that's where I'm going to return.

We don't know much about the womb and we don't know much about Sheol. I came out from the unknown looking like this and this is how I'm going to return to the unknown. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. And this tells you, I mean, you think about how this kind of news would rock you on your heels. I was listening to a man who was an Air Force pilot.

Very, very good Air Force pilot. He actually piloted Air Force 2 a few times. A lot of pilots are on a constant adrenaline rush.

On the weekends, he would dirt bike and he and a friend were out dirt biking on the weekend. They were flying over hills when he had a motorcycle accident and he screwed up one of his legs. He shattered it in several places.

They went in and they pinned it and they tried to operate on it, but it just kept getting from bad to worse. The longer his leg took to heal, the further he was ever getting from returning to flight status. It finally reached the point where he knew that the only way he ever had a shade of a chance of flying again was to amputate his leg.

This is my point about this whole story. He said, I had endured this horrible pain with my leg. I wanted so badly to fly, get back in the air again and resume flying as an Air Force pilot.

I thought I had prepared myself as well as anybody could and had psyched myself up for this operation and for losing my leg. But he said, when I woke up from the anesthetic and I looked down and one leg was there and the other leg was gone, he said, there's just no way you can prepare yourself for that. He said, I thought I was prepared, but when I woke up, it just knocked the wind out of me for days.

There's just no way to prepare yourself for the loss of a major limb like that. Well, to me, that is a pale impact, a light thing compared to what Job has just experienced. Seven sons, three daughters, all of his earthly possessions wiped out.

He finds out about it in the space of about 15 minutes. But look at what's inside Job's soul. He has self-control.

He has a grip on his emotions. He is thinking. And what is he thinking? He's thinking divine viewpoint.

All of these things were given to me by God. I don't have a right to them. I didn't earn them or deserve them.

I came into this world naked. God gave me all this stuff. God has now taken away all this stuff.

Seems to me like maybe He's getting ready to take me out, so I'm going to shave my head. I'm going to go out looking just like I did when I came in. Had nothing.

Not even my hair. But you can see him cycling the Word of God through his thinking in this greatest challenge I'm sure he had ever faced in his life. And it tells you what a strong believer he

is.

I cannot imagine very many people having the sand in their craw, having the intestinal fortitude, spiritually speaking, to produce this response and mean it. And not absolutely go ballistic at this news. But Job methodically tears his robe, shaves his head, falls to the ground and worships.

Falls to the ground and worships. He turns to God with a positive attitude. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

I just lost my 10 children. Blessed be the name of the Lord. I just lost 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 she donkeys, 7,000 sheep, my servants who I love like sons.

Everybody's dead. Everything is gone. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

I just don't think we can appreciate the level of spiritual maturity of this man Job. This is why God calls his name. have you seen my servant Job? Wouldn't it be a great thing when we face God, for him to say, well done, good and faithful servant.

For God to love us as servants the way Job loved his servants, like sons. That's sort of the comparison you have here. Job loses these sons and it hurts him.

This is what happened to God when he lost the human race. Made in his image, after his likeness. And through the work of Christ, we are restored and we are adopted as sons.

And God regains many of us that he lost at the point of Adam's fall in the garden. In all this, verse 22, Job did not sin, nor did he charge God with wrong. How many people do you find throwing over their relationship with God, developing a hugely bad attitude toward God? You hear people say this all the time.

There can't be a God. If there was a God, how can this child abuse happen? How can starving children in Afghanistan happen? How can horrible disasters? Why did God let this happen to me? There can't be a God. If there is, he's a mean, vindictive SOB of a God.

And if he is there, I don't like him. I don't like him. Because look at what he lets happen.

He's either weak, inept, or disinterested for this stuff to be happening. This is the puny-minded view of God. Job doesn't have that view.

Job does not charge God with wrong. We have a hard time with our small circumstances not getting a little bitter or not getting selfish or self-centered. And we have a hard time remembering that God is a merciful and loving and compassionate God and that all things work together for good.

And our trials are nothing, generally speaking, nothing like what we see Job facing here. It is a challenge to us looking at Job, even though this was 3,600 years ago, Job, his life, his faith, his

attitude toward God still stands. It's still being used by God.

What a testimony to the grace of God and to the power of the Word of God in the soul that 3,600 years later, your life is still making a difference in God's plan. Well, it's our opportunity as well when we have the same attitude that Job had. We're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we're going to pick up in chapter 2.