

“The Prosecution in Heaven’s Court Room”

Job 1:6-12

In the parliamentary form of government, there exists a term known as ‘loyal opposition’ which is applied to the opposition parties in the legislature. The term indicates that the non-governing parties may oppose the actions of the sitting cabinet while remaining subject to the source of the government’s power. The phrase, “His Majesty’s Most Loyal Opposition,” is attributed to a British politician named John Hobhouse who used it in 1826 in a debate in British parliament in which he gave a speech before the House of Commons. It is intended to illustrate that members of parliament in a country’s legislature may oppose the policies of the incumbent government while still remaining subject to that government.

Beginning verse 6, you and I are introduced to His Majesty’s Most Loyal Opposition—the Adversary. He is our prosecution. And though he seeks to oppose God in every way, he is not sovereign, and he is subject to the rule of God as a created being. He is not God’s equal.

His objective is to reduce us to total ruin. Consider how he tried with Job. By the close of the second chapter, on a trash heap, in excruciating pain, desperately mourning over the loss of his children, in poverty, under accusation from his friends, and even rejected by his wife, Job—a man who is experiencing extreme suffering—speaks boldly to the God of the universe and asks, “Why?”

At some point in our life, we have been there or we will soon be. It is senseless and undeserved suffering that we are confronted with in the story of Job, where we ask questions such as:

- Why do the righteous suffer?
- Where is God when it hurts?
- What is the purpose behind my pain?

These questions and others are asked by Job, a man who illustrates suffering in the midst of life’s adversity like no other in the Old Testament. Job’s life serves as a supreme example of how we are to respond to life’s trials with an unwavering faith in God, even when we don’t have answers to our questions.

You and I are privileged as readers to understand what was going on behind the scenes concerning Job's life. Keep in mind that Job doesn't have a clue about what is going on in the unseen realm.

We find out in this text that Satan, ringleader of the opposition party, has made Job's life the focus of his attack.

D.L. Moody - *"I believe in the existence of Satan for two reasons: first, the Bible says so and second, I've done business with him."*

Many laugh at the notion of Satan's existence. They make their boast that he is an imaginary being, a figment of man's imagination, a myth from an ancient and irrelevant era of human history.

The truth of the matter is quite different.

The Bible says that Satan is the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience. He is the malevolent dictator who rules this present world system. He is the agent behind all evil, the sinister architect of chaos, and he will stop at nothing to disrupt your life, destroy your marriage, divide your home, and ultimately damn your soul. Even though the Bible says this is the case, many of us live our lives as if Satan were indeed a figment of our imagination.

Roy Zuck - *"Many people get up, dress, eat, drive their cars to work, make phone calls, send emails, tend their children, clean the kitchen, and go to bed without giving one single thought to the existence of an unseen world and the fact that humanity is the staging ground in the greatest battle that has ever taken place."*

We live at the epicenter—the ground zero—where Satan launches his attack in his long war against God. Though the outcome of the war has already been decided, and though Satan is a defeated enemy, he still assaults the people of God relentlessly until that day comes in which his final sentence will be carried out.

2 Corinthians 2:11 - **"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices."**

Satan's favorite target upon which he sets his sights is a righteous man or woman whose life brings great glory to God. The devil hates the idea of God receiving worship from us, and he will stop at nothing until we are silenced. If he is able to squelch the praise of even one believer, then he has one a small victory.

Charles Spurgeon - *"Satan hates to see happy Christians glorifying God. He is well aware that mournful Christians often dishonor the glory of God by mistrusting it, and he thinks if he can worry us until we no more believe in the constancy and goodness of the Lord, he shall have robbed God of His praise. God said, 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me,' and so Satan lays the axe at the root of our praise, that God may cease to be glorified."*

Here in this text, we're told that Satan tries to 'lay the axe' to the root of Job's praise. This passage in Job 1 reveals to us the way that our enemy operates—he is active, he levels accusations, and his access is limited and must be permitted by God.

1. Satan's constant ACTIVITY

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. 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.' 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?'"

If this were a stage drama, the curtains would close at the end of verse 5 and when the curtain rose in verse 6, the scene would be totally different. Between verses 5-6, the scene changes from earth to heaven. Notice what we learn about Satan's identity and activity from these verses:

He is presented with the angels in heaven

The Bible says that there was a day when the 'sons of God' came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also comes and is among their number.

"Sons of God" - *a reference to an innumerable multitude of angelic beings; also used in chapter 38 to refer to angels present at creation*

The scene that we are presented with is the throne room of heaven, and all the angels are gathered around the throne, Satan himself being present.

The word used in Hebrew that is translated as 'Satan' beginning in verse 6 is a word that means one who is an adversary. In Hebrew, there is a definite article before the word, meaning that it literally reads 'the Satan.' Thus, it is a reference to both his identity and activity.

The Bible tells us that Satan is a created being, who originally served as a mighty cherub in God's presence.

Satan is a fallen angel who was once among the angelic class of fearsome beings known as the cherubim. In Scripture, the cherubim are those angels that stand the closest to God's presence. For example, we read:

- it was cherubim that God placed at the gates of Eden according to Genesis 3
- they were symbolically crafted and placed as a covering over the ark of the covenant according to Exodus 25
- Solomon carved cherubim into the design of the temple according to 1 Kings 6
- the prophet Ezekiel gives us a terrifying picture of the cherubim

The prophet Isaiah refers to him as 'Lucifer,' a word that refers to his incredible beauty and luminescent figure.

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 - "And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness."

Though he masquerades as an angel of light, his mission is to keep men and women shrouded in total darkness.

He is prowling about on the earth

The Lord God asks him the question, "Where have you been, and what have you been up to?" This is not a question asked from ignorance, but a question asked to emphasize accountability.

Satan says, "I've been going here and there, back and forth upon the earth." The idea is that of one who has been seeking an opportunity.

Satan is our adversary whose main objective is to oppose God and objectify God's people. He is active and relentless in this objective.

1 Peter 5:8 - "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

"Prowl" - *to tread all around; to walk about looking for opportunity*

Like a lion stalking his prey, Satan lurks in the shadows, watches for an opportunity to launch an assault and target your life. Though he is not omnipotent, he is more powerful than you and me. Though he is not omniscient, he is cunning and intelligent. Though he is not omnipresent, he is supernaturally fast and is surrounded by multitudes of other demonic beings that have joined his unholy cause. By yourself, you are no match for the devil:

- He is smarter than you
- He is faster than you
- He is stronger than you

The only thing you and I have been commanded to do in Scripture is to put on the armor of God and resist the enemy in the power of God's Spirit. James says that we are to submit to God, and only then can we resist the enemy.

Jude 9 - "But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.'"

You and I had better not even attempt to engage the enemy in debate or conversation. Rather, I'm just going to suit up, submit to God, and stand fast in His strength.

He is provoked by God concerning Job's life

Notice that the name of Job only comes up when first mentioned by God. It is God who brings Job's life to the forefront and says, "Have you considered My servant Job?"

“My Servant” - *an awesome acknowledgement of Job’s life; though he was a great man, he was a godly man*

God commends Job’s integrity! Look at what He says about Job:

- none like him on the earth
- a blameless and upright man
- fears God and turns away from evil

It is one thing for others to commend your life, but it is another thing entirely for God Himself to commend your life. Heaven pays attention to a righteous man or woman, but be forewarned—hell does too.

2. Satan’s vicious ACCUSATION

“Then Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘Does Job fear God for no reason? 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. But stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face.’”

Each of the names that we find recorded in Scripture reveal a different aspect of his wicked character:

- Satan—the adversary
- Devil—the slanderer
- Lucifer—the shining one
- Tempter—the one who solicits us to do evil
- Deceiver—the source of all lies
- The god of this world—controls this present world system of thinking (2 Cor. 4:4)
- The prince of the power of the air

Here in the text, we read that Satan is the accuser. He makes an accusation about Job in an attempt to discredit his worship of God, essentially arguing that Job only worships God for what

he can get from God. In other words, Job doesn't worship God because God is deserving of it — he worships God because God keeps him on the payroll. He essentially says to the Lord, "Sure Job worships You, but who wouldn't? You've given him all his toys!"

What if your name were to be substituted for Job's name, and the conversation was about your life? Could the enemy say, "The only reason he worships You is because of...

- the good paying job he has
- the family he has
- the good things he has in his possession

I wonder if this truly describes the extent of our loyalty to God? It wasn't true about Job. Yet as the accuser of Job's righteous life, the devil says, "Job doesn't worship You because You are deserving. He doesn't worship for the sake of Your glory, but for Your gifts."

Satan is our adversary and our accuser.

Revelation 12:10 - "...the accuser of the brethren."

Satan's accusation against Job was really an attack against God. As one who opposes and accuses us, here is what Satan does:

- accuse you before God, and accuse God before you
- tell God that you are not worth keeping, and tell you that God is not worth worshiping
- remind God of your sin, and remind you of your just desserts

Steve Lawson - *"Satan is accusing us of our sins before God. Day after day, he is like a grave-digger, stirring up dirt against us. He says, 'Look there, God. He's the biggest hypocrite on earth. He says he loves You, but look at the way he's living his life. He is disobedient. He is selfish. God, You've got to judge him.'"*

Satan makes it his aim to continually accuse you before God and whisper lies about God and about you into your ear. He will try to cast a shadow of doubt on God's goodness like he did with Eve. He will solicit you to place your confidence in your own self and your own resources like he did with David. He will tempt you to find some immediate satisfaction by circumventing

the will of God like he tried to do with Jesus. He will often say, “If God is good, then why are you hurting so much?” Or, “If God really wanted you to be happy, then why are you so unfulfilled in life?” He will try to convince you that God’s way is the wrong way, the foolish way, the way of death.

Satan will also accuse you of your past. He will often try to bring up the memory of past sins, past failures, and past mistakes. He does this all in an attempt to prevent you from demonstrating present obedience that brings God glory. As the accuser, he is vicious and merciless in his accusations.

The accusation that Satan levels against Job is that he worships God not because God is worthy, but because God makes him rich. Who knows what accusation he levels against us as the church. Perhaps the accusation is that we are not worth saving.

He’s a vicious prosecutor, and for this reason, we desperately need someone to defend us before God. We need an Advocate, a defense attorney, who will represent us and take on our helpless case.

1 John 2:1-2 - “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

“Advocate” - *one who pleads another’s cause before a judge*

The hymn writer expresses this wonderful truth in a hymn entitled, “My Faith has Found a Resting Place,” which says:

*My faith has found a resting place,
Not in device nor creed;
I trust the Ever-living One,
His wounds for me shall plead.*

*I need no other argument,
I need no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died,
And that He died for me.*

*Though Satan may my life accuse,
and though my past assail,
The Son of God is my Defense,
And in His name prevail!*

Every time that Satan accuses the believer, Jesus is there, pleading His blood, presenting His wounds as evidence, and releasing us from every charge leveled against us.

3. Satan's permitted ACCESS

“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.”

Satan is actively seeking our destruction, and he is accusing us before God. But notice we find out here in the text that his access to Job's life is permitted. In other words, he is not an independent devil who does as he pleases. Rather, the Bible says that he is subject and accountable to the living God.

The mountains shake before our God, the demons run and flee, At the mention of the name—King of Majesty. There is no power in hell, nor any who can stand, before the power and the presence of the great I AM. The enemy trembles and has been defeated by our Savior.

Since this is true, Satan and his demonic hosts cannot touch my life without sovereign permission. There are two mistakes we often make when it comes to spiritual warfare:

- we often **overestimate** the enemy and in our minds give him more power than he has; don't think too highly of Satan!
- we often **underestimate** the enemy and foolishly face him in our own strength and power; don't think too little of Satan!

The solution to these mistakes are knowing what Scripture teaches about Satan so we are not ignorant of his strategy and tactics, and relying each day on the indwelling power of God's Spirit.

Slowly read the words of verse 12—“All that he has is your hand.”

This is a chilling thought, that God would permit Satan to have access to Job's life in such a way. It is not ultimate access, for He determines the devil's limits by keeping him from Job's

actual life. But God allows Satan to have access to everything else. The reason is that God in His infinite wisdom will show Satan what Job is truly made of.

Spiritual warfare is not an eternal tug of war between two equal powers. It is the triumph of a greater power over a lesser one.

Application for life:

Be prepared—authentic faith in Christ will always be tested

Be vigilant—the enemy is relentless in his pursuit of your life

Be encouraged—nothing can enter your life without God's permission

God didn't spare even His own Son from the enemy's accusations and attacks. Jesus was tempted and tried by Satan, and though the serpent of Eden bruised His heel, our Lord crushed his head. In so doing, He proved to us that we have a victorious Savior who is stronger than our adversary. And as such, the adversary is subject to our Lord. Satan is His majesty's most loyal opposition who answers to Him, who will bow the knee to Him, and who will one day be thrown by Him into a lake of eternal fire.

You don't have to be a partaker in his future condemnation. Come to Christ in faith, trusting in His righteous life and His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead as being sufficient, and thereby be saved from sin and death.

Believer, if you feel the weight of struggle presently in your life, and if you sense you are in the heat of the battle, be encouraged—the war is won and victory is yours in Jesus Christ.