

JOB'S RESPONSE TO MISERY

Prologue, Chapters 1-2

PRIMING THE PUMP: When you read or hear the words *Satan* or *satanic* what comes to mind?

References

1. *Job, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Marvin H. Pope, Professor of Northwest Semitic Languages, Yale University, 1965
2. *Job, A New Translation*, Edward L. Greenstein, Professor Emeritus of Bible, Bar-Ilan University, Israel, 2019

Scene 1 (1:1-5)

1. The land of Uz
 - a. Not identified with any modern place name
 - b. Northeast of Egypt (Jeremiah 25:20, Lamentations 4:21)
 - c. Southern Edom or Northern Arabia (Job's friends, Job 1:11)
 - d. *The Wizard of Oz*
2. Job was righteous and blessed
 - a. Seven sons and three daughters = Ten children
 - b. 7000 sheep and 3000 camels = 10,000
 - c. 500 yoke of oxen and 500 donkeys = 1000
3. His children may not have been as righteous
 - a. The sons lived apart from their parents and threw parties
 - b. The daughters, probably still living with their parents, were invited
 - c. Job did not attend
4. Job offered sacrifices for his children
 - a. "Rise early in the morning" (As soon as possible)
 - b. "It may be...they cursed God in their hearts" (Just in case)

Scene 2 (1:6-12)

1. The heavenly court
 - a. Court officials, "heavenly beings", literally, "sons of God"
 - b. Including the Satan (*the Accuser*; Hebrew *ha-satan*)
 - i. 2 Samuel 24, the LORD incites David to sin
 - ii. 1 Chronicles 21, Satan incites David to sin
 - c. The Satan roamed the earth
 - i. Roaming, roving, spying
 - ii. Persian secret police were called "The eyes of the King"
 - iii. See also 1 Peter 5:8, "Your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour"
2. The challenge
 - a. God to the Satan: "Have you noticed my servant Job? He fears God and turns away from evil."

- b. The Satan to God: “Well, of course he fears God! You have given him every blessing! If you remove his blessings, he will curse you!”
- c. God to the Satan: “All that he has is in your power, but don’t harm Job himself.”

Scene 3 (1:13-22)

1. Series of terrible news delivered by messengers (human or divine?)
 - a. Sabeans stole oxen, donkeys, and killed servants tending them
 - b. “Fire of God” burned up the sheep and servants tending them
 - c. Chaldeans carried off camels and killed servants tending them
 - d. Job’s children were killed in the collapse of a house
2. Job grieved but did not sin by cursing God
 - a. “Naked I came from my mother’s womb and naked I shall return there”
 - b. “The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD”

Scene 4 (2:1-6)

1. The Satan again returns to the heavenly court from roving the earth
2. God points out to the Satan Job’s persistent faith in spite of adversity
3. The Satan wants to up the ante
 - a. “Skin for skin” (value for value)
 - b. “All that people have they will give to save their lives”
 - c. God agrees, but “only spare his life”

Scene 5 (2:7-13)

1. Job is inflicted with loathsome sores
 - a. Often rendered as “boils”
 - b. See the sixth plague against Egypt, Exodus 9:8-12
2. He took a potsherd to scrape himself and sat among the ashes
3. His wife said to him, “Curse God and die”
 - a. Job: “Shall we receive the good from God and not the bad?”
 - b. Job did not “sin with his lips.” Compare 1:22
4. Job’s three friends heard of his troubles and came to visit him
 - a. Eliphaz the Temanite (see Genesis 36)
 - b. Bildad the Shuhite
 - c. Zophar the Naamathite
5. Job was so disfigured by his suffering that his friends didn’t recognize him
 - a. They wept, tore their robes, and threw dust on their heads
 - b. They sat with him seven days and nights without speaking

POINTS TO PONDER

Job’s friends sat with him in silence for seven days. Even so, could their presence have been helpful to Job? In what ways is it important simply to be with someone who is suffering?