

Exhibit A

When Lightning Strikes – Part II

Job 1:6-12

Introduction

D. L. Moody, the evangelist of the late 1800s and founder of the Moody Bible Institute, once remarked, “I believe Satan exists for two reasons: first, the Bible says so and second, I’ve done business with him.”ⁱ

Frankly, the average Christian goes through life without giving any thought to the war they are in.

One author wrote, “Many people get up, 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.”ⁱⁱ

Now the powers of hell and the powers of heaven are not on equal footing. It is not a battle between two equally strong forces of which we are left to wonder which will win. The power of God is supreme and the conflict has already been won. However, the forces of hell have yet to concede defeat.

The war has been won, but there are daily skirmishes. The defeated general has been allowed to roam the earth seeking new recruits who will deny the glory of God and the sovereignty of Christ.

His favorite target is the child of God. Silencing the praise and thanksgiving of one believer gives Satan more delight than provoking the curses of a thousand unbelievers. He hates the glory and worship of God.

Isaiah informed us that it was God’s throne he coveted; it was God’s glory he wanted; it was the worship of adoring humanity he lusted for, and for that, Satan was judged. One-third of the angels joined him in his mutiny and now serve him as fallen angels, attacking the work of God, the ways of God, and the workmen of God.

Peter informs us that Satan’s desire is “to devour,” which could be rendered “to discredit,” someone who claims to know Christ as Savior. (I Peter 5:8)

Watch out! You are in his sights.

The way Satan can attack the glory of God is through disobedient, disloyal, ungrateful, wayward children of God who refuse to glorify Him because of trial or tragedy or apathy or sinful lives. To mute the worship of a believer is his highest objective, for he knows that God’s throne is out of reach, but not the children of God.

Charles Spurgeon, used mightily in the ministry two centuries ago in London, England, suffered greatly with physical ailments nearly his entire life. He preached almost one hundred sermons on the book of Job during his ministry, and for him, it was no exercise in homiletics. Spurgeon was a sufferer. His bouts with ill health, causing him to live daily with almost continual pain and the need for extended bed rest, began in his twenties about the same time he began to pastor the church.

Spurgeon’s wife Susannah also suffered and became a semi-invalid in her thirties. She was rarely able to come to Sunday services where 10,000 gathered weekly to worship.

In one of his sermons that I read this week, Spurgeon said,

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 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, "He that offers praise, glorifies Me," and so Satan lays the axe at the root of our praise, that God may cease to be glorified.ⁱⁱⁱ

Is this true? How do we know this? How can we be sure that the grand scheme of Satan is to silence the praise and destroy the testimony and worship of the believer toward the sovereign King of Kings and Lord of Lords?

- Just listen – as for the first time in human history, the curtain is pulled back in the heavens and we can hear a conversation between God and Satan regarding the faithful life of a believer on earth.
- Just watch – as God takes the life of this believer named Job and offers it to human history as “Exhibit A”; as evidence that there is at least one on earth who will worship God through tears and trials.

The curtain rises in Job chapter 1 verse 6.

Job – Scenes One and Two

If you were with us in our last session, we were introduced to Job with six words that we derived from his personal profile provided in the first five verses of Job chapter 1. He was:

- righteous;
- real;
- reverent;
- resistant;
- rich;
- a reformer and a reconciler.

What a man! What a testimony!

He had seven sons and three daughters – what a godly heritage!

One author said that at the end of verse 5 there must have been a pause. If this were a play, the curtains would close at the end of verse 5. The audience would be given a few moments to stand and stretch, and then, would sit back down for the

opening of the curtains after the stagehands changed the scenery from earth to heaven.

The truth is, Job goes to sleep at the end of scene one and awakens in scene two, never expecting what is about to happen.^{iv}

Job has no idea that while he was asleep, Satan was awake. In fact, he has no idea that while he rested on his bed that night, God had already chosen to radically alter everything about his life the following day.

Scene Two would in no way resemble Scene One.

Scene One is:	Scene Two will be:
Calm	Chaotic
Filled with blessings	Filled with tragedies
As we would expect for those who live godly lives	An unexpected riposte of calamity, death, and disease

This is not the first time it has happened to one of God's beloved.

Perhaps it has happened to you. While you were not aware of it, God was unleashing a plan that would amaze you, shock you, and perhaps even crush you. He is permitting things to get under way that you would have never expected.^v

You were expecting a soft cushion, but were instead, placed in the furnace of affliction.

Without Job having a clue, there is a conversation taking place beyond the constellations. It is a conversation that will change Job's life like we could not imagine.

An Appointment With God

Scene two of Job's life opens in the heavens. Look at Job 1:6.

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

The expression, “sons of God,” can refer to angels, as it does later in Job 38:7 when the angelic host are rejoicing as they observe the triune God creating and ordering the universe.

The angels are before the Lord to give an account and Satan is with them.

If you have been led to believe that Satan does not have access to God because God cannot be in the

presence of sin, you are misinformed. There is nowhere that God is not. He is omnipresent.

Satan stood in the Lord's presence and accused Joshua. (Zechariah 3:1)

Revelation informs us that Satan accuses the believers before God day and night. (Revelation 12:10)

In Luke, the Lord told Peter that Satan had come and asked if he could "sift you like wheat." Then the Lord said to Peter, "But I have prayed for you that your faith may not utterly fail." (Luke 22: 31-32a paraphrased)

Even more interesting is the fact that in the Greek, the verbs indicate these acts were already past. Satan had already asked to test Peter and the Lord had already prayed for him.^{vi}

Imagine that! The testing you are going through right now – Jesus Christ interceded for you regarding this particular trial, 1,000 years ago!

However, the truth remains – Satan:

- goes to God and accuses you before God;
- comes to you and accuses God before you;
- tells God you are not worth keeping;
- tells you that God is not worth following;
- tells God that you are sinful;
- tells you that God is absent;
- whispers in God's ear that you are unfaithful to Him;
- whispers in your ear that God is uninterested in you.

The name Satan in this verse in Job, has the definite article "the," or "the Satan," which is actually referring to his activity as the adversary. It could be rendered "the prosecutor". In the New Testament, the article will be dropped and he will simply be referred to as Satan, thus we often forget that his chief objective is to accuse and prosecute.^{vii}

Satan is not make-believe. He is not a funny cartoon character in a red suit with a pitchfork in his hand and a pointed tail. He does not have horns.

Satan was created as part of the cherubim class of angelic beings.

When we think of cherubs, we think of fat little babies with pink cheeks and mischief in their eyes. However, the cherubim were actually the angels that stood closest to the throne of God. In fact, when the Ark of the Covenant was crafted, it was constructed

with two sculpted cherubim on either side of the lid, or mercy seat, with their wings spread toward one another.

It was the cherubim who guarded with their flaming swords, the garden of Eden as Adam and Eve were cast out. (Genesis 3)

It was the cherubim which were carved into the design of Solomon's magnificent temple. (I Kings 6).

Ezekiel describes the cherubim as having been created with four wings and four faces, facing north, south, east, and west. They are able to fly in any direction without ever having to turn around. Their four faces, according to Ezekiel 1, were of a man, a lion, a bull, and an eagle.

Other passages inform us that angels, certainly the cherubim, are able to change their appearance. Some people saw them as men in Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19). Others saw flaming white creatures whose clothing was white as snow and whose appearance resembled brilliant lightning.

Perhaps the four faces indicated the cherubim's mastery at travel and physical transformation.

We know that Satan is called:

- the anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28) and that he is able to masquerade as an angel of light;
- the prince of this world (John 12:31);
- the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), which could be rendered "the ruler of the empire of the atmosphere," and simply conveys Satan's leadership over fallen angels, as well as fallen mankind;
- the god of this world (II Corinthians 4:4), with the word "world" being "aion," which refers to the world's system of thinking and its self-centered philosophy, indicating that he is behind even the world's man-centered thinking;
- Beelzebul (Matthew 12, Mark 3, Luke 11), which is a term that can be translated "lord of the flies," and is a reference to his penchant for corruption and decay;
- Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12), which refers to his incredible beauty and to the aura of light that surrounds him, making him all the more mesmerizing to the millions of angels who followed him in his mutiny against God;
- the deceiver and accuser (Revelation 12);
- the enemy (Matthew 13);

- the father of lies and a murderer (John 8:44).

So this is a heavenly appointment with God and His hosts, including the arch enemy of God and His people, Satan. He is:

- the created being standing before his Creator;
- the angel who is both beautiful and evil;
- the fallen cherub who has an aura of light, but is a character of darkness and corruption.

Look at Job 1:7.

The Lord said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”

By the way, Satan is not “smarting off,” he is giving an account. And God is not asking Satan because somehow Satan slipped off the heavenly GPS system and they lost track of him.

God is not uninformed here . . . He does not need a news update.^{viii}

This question was like the question asked in the garden, “Adam, where are you?” (Genesis 3:9)

God knew where Adam was, but offered an opportunity for self-disclosure.

God knew exactly where Satan had been, but Satan did not want to admit it. God knew that Satan had been watching Job, as the text will clarify in a verse or two.

In fact, the words Satan used for “roaming about and walking around” refer to careful scrutiny. He has been peering into things. He has been carefully scrutinizing the ways of Job.

Then the Lord asks Satan a rhetorical question – He already knows the answer. Notice Job 1:8a.

... Have you considered My servant Job?...

Literally, “Have you set your heart on My servant Job?”

It is as if to say, “Wouldn’t you like to knock him off the path? I know you’re salivating for an opportunity to destroy this faithful man’s testimony.”

God continues, in Job 1:8b,

... For there is no one like him on the earth,
...

God then describes what Job is like, in the last part of Job 1:8,

- ***a blameless and upright man,*** (he is righteous and he is real);

- ***fearing God*** (he is reverent);
- ***and turning away from evil.*** (he is resistant to temptation).

God is effectively saying, “I know where you’ve been prowling around. He’s quite a man, isn’t he?”

Let us for a moment, pull back from this conversation and imagine the implications.

While Job slept that night, the adversary was prowling through his estate. He was rifling through his files; he was checking his internet locations; he was reviewing his business contracts. He is looking, searching, probing for the weak spot in Job’s life.

Spurgeon wrote,

As the worker in metals knows that one metal is to be worked at such a heat, and another at a different temperature; as those who have to deal with chemicals know that at a certain heat one fluid will boil, while another reaches the boiling-point much earlier, so Satan knows exactly the temperature at which to work us to his purpose. As the [hunter] has a gun for wild fowl, and another gun for deer and game, so has Satan a different temptation for various orders of men. The enemy, like a skilled fisherman, watches his fish, adapts his bait to his prey; and knows in what seasons and times the fish are most likely to bite.^{ix}

The problem was, Job would not bite.

Would Satan smite him to the ground anyway? Would he take him and destroy his health or his possessions?

Yes! Satan would, but he cannot. He cannot touch Job. He belongs to God and must have God’s permission.

It is the same way with us – we cannot be touched without it.

Ladies and gentlemen of the body of Christ, you are never ultimately in the hands of Satan – you are always in the hands of God. Your trial is proof of God’s permission. Will you praise God through tears and tribulation?

An Accusation Before God

God said, in Job 1:8a,

... Have you considered My servant Job?...

In other words, “Have you been watching Job? I know you have – he is one of My choice servants!”

Satan responds with an accusation, in Job 1:9.

... Does Job fear God for nothing?

He moves from an appointment with God to an accusation before God.

Satan is accusing the motives of Job. He is saying, “The only reason Job reverences You is because You recompense him.”

In other words, “Sure he’s Your servant! Who wouldn’t be if they get all the toys? Look at him – it’s paying off!”

Notice Job 1:10.

Have You not made a hedge about 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.

Satan is saying, “Notice the unending, uninterrupted blessing. That’s why Job loves You; that’s why he worships You.”

Is this true? We are about to find out.

However, what if Satan and God were talking about you and me?

Satan would say, “The only reason they’re in church today is to buy You off; to bribe You into being nice; to keep You on their good side.”

You might say, “I’m not that way!”

What happens then, when God does not pay up? What happens when you do not get your way; when your life does not come up smelling like roses all the time?

What happens to your spirit in the hospital? What happens to your prayer life in the emergency room?

What happens to your walk with God in bankruptcy court? Or beside a grave marker? Or in the unemployment line?

Does Satan have our number?

The truth is, Job does not deserve the accusation. He has walked with God for many years.

In addition, as one author wrote, Job is called the servant of God. Satan could not care less. Let him know what it is like to suffer the death of a child; let him go through the loss of all those possessions. Let all that hit him full force and then You will see what Job is made of.^x

Imagine, Job had no idea this conversation was taking place in heaven. Wow!

Before we move on, do not miss this – Satan is also accusing God.

Warren Wiersbe wrote these perceptive words,

Satan’s accusation was really an attack on God, “The only reason Job fears You is because You pay him to do it. You two have made a contract: You protect him and prosper him as long as he obeys You and worships You. You are not a God worthy of worship! You have to pay people to honor You.”^{xi}

Dear friends, do not ever forget that when we refuse to praise God and worship God and surrender to God because trials come our way, we not only fulfill Satan’s accusation against us, which delights him, but we also fulfill Satan’s accusation against our Savior, and Satan lives for that!

“See, You are not worthy of loyalty. See, You are not worthy of love. Take away Job’s health and his family and his possessions and watch his faith crumble into dust.”

Now notice Job 1:11-12.

“But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.”

Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.

Look at what God is going to risk. His glory is staked on the response of Job.

Not on your life!

Contrary to the popular writings of today, God risks nothing. He learns nothing. He is not reckless about anything.

God is not some cosmic poker player betting all His chips on Job’s response. Not that I know how to play poker, by the way.

Satan is not omniscient. He cannot know the future as God knows it with perfect clarity.

Satan does not know what Job will do. God knew everything about what Job would do before time began.

God will play Satan like a puppet on His string to fulfill His purposes, not only in the life of Job, but in your life as you look to the testimony of Job.

Do you want to make Satan angry? Remind him of the story of Job. [He has been defeated by a mere man.]^{xii}

Conclusion

Before we close, let me make some statements about Satan that we have observed in this text. Several things that we can learn about our accusing, defeated enemy include:

1. Satan is loose on the earth, but accountable to God.
2. Satan is brilliant and shrewd, but not omniscient like God.
3. Satan is unable to touch the saint without the permission of God.
4. Satan's influence and destructive power is limited by the will of God.
5. Satan's ultimate defeat is when the believer continues through tears and trials to praise the name of God.

God says, "Here, take Job! Let him be 'Exhibit A' that every man is capable of praising Me even when he loses everything."

Martin Luther, the reformer who wrote the great hymn text, *A Mighty Fortress is our God*, once said, "Let us spite the devil, by singing psalms to God."^{xiii}

So let us stand together and, no matter what you suffer, no matter how weak your faith, sing to God. For Job has revealed to us that ultimately, we are not in the hand of Satan – never – we are in the hand of God.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him all creatures here below;

Praise Him above ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This manuscript is from a sermon preached on 1/14/2007 by Stephen Davey.

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ⁱ Holman Old Testament Commentary: Job (Holman, 2004), p. 23.

ⁱⁱ Sitting With Job, ed. by Roy Zuck (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1992), p. 145.

ⁱⁱⁱ Charles Spurgeon, The Suffering of Man & the Sovereignty of God (Fox River Press, 2001), p. 7.

^{iv} Charles Swindoll, Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance (W Publishing Group, 2004), p. 8.

^v Ibid., p. 8.

^{vi} J. Sidlow Baxter, Explore the Book (Zondervan, 1960), p. 36.

^{vii} John C. L. Gibson, Job (Westminster Press, 1985), p. 10.

^{viii} Gary Crandall, Gold Under Fire (BMH Books, 1992), p. 48.

^{ix} Spurgeon, p. 10.

^x Swindoll, p. 11.

^{xi} Warren W. Wiersbe, Job: Be Patient (Victor Books, 1991), p. 16.

^{xii} Spurgeon, p. 16.

^{xiii} Spurgeon, p. 7.