

## GOD WAS AT WORK IN THE 3 AREAS OF JOB'S LIFE

(The story of Job is often presented as one of “suffering and patience”. We believe the greater lesson is one of “how God molds His children”).

1. Job was a man who had a passion for God.

**Job 1:1** *There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.*

**Job 23:12** (Job said) ... *I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.*

2. God had tremendously blessed Job.

**Job 1:2-3** *Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.*

3. God had a hedge (fence) of protection around Job and all that pertained to Job. This hedge represents God's sovereignty, against which the enemy is powerless. The same hedge surrounds every believer.

**Job 1:8-10a** *The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” Then Satan answered the Lord, “Does Job fear God for nothing? “Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? ...*

Illustration: There are tribes in Africa who traditionally built a hedge around their village to protect themselves and their livestock from marauding predators. **1 Peter 5:8** implores us:

*Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

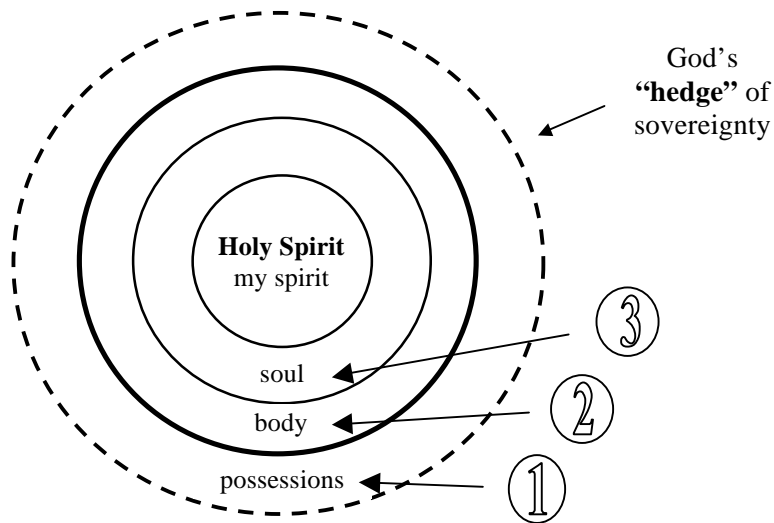
4. In order for Satan to afflict Job (even in the area of “possessions”), he had to be granted permission by God.

**Job 1:10b-12** *You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. “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.*

NOTE: The enemy, Satan, had no power, nor right in himself, to afflict Job (or any believer). He only had power over Job to the degree granted to him by God. Satan has been allowed by God to exert power and influence in this present world, but only to the degree that it accomplishes God's purposes. It is comforting to know that God's absolute sovereignty and dominion over all His creation has never been, and will never be, the least bit compromised.

**Prov. 21:30** *There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD.*

**Dan. 4:35** *“All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”*



5. God granted Satan permission to enter through the hedge and afflict Job in the area of **①** “possessions”, but He ordered Satan to not go into the next area, that of “the body”.

**Job 1:12-19**

**:12** 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.

**:13-15** Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabceans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

**: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.”

**:17** While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

**:18-19** While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

6. Even though Job was crushed, overwhelmed and **①** bewildered by the happenings, Job had long before acknowledged that God is the rightful sovereign Lord over all creation, including all that God had given him. His response was the evidence of that conviction.

**Job 1:20-22** Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.” Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

7. Having lost the battle in the area of “possessions”, **②** Satan returned to request permission to afflict Job in the area of the “body”. God granted Satan permission to enter into the area of the “physical body”, but ordered him to not go further, into the area of the “understanding” and the soul.

## Job 2:1-7

- :1-5** *Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still **holds fast his integrity**, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause." Satan answered the Lord and said, "**Skin for skin!** Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. "However, put forth Your hand now, and touch **his bone** and **his flesh**; he will curse You to Your face."*
- :6** *So the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare **his life**."*
- :7** *Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with **sore boils** from the **sole of his foot** to the **crown of his head**.*

8. Job was once again dismayed and bewildered by the happenings. But as with his possessions, **②** Job had long before concluded that God is the rightful sovereign Lord over all creation, including "**his body**". And again his response was the evidence of that conviction.

**Job 2:8-10** *And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!" But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this **Job did not sin** with his lips.*

For the next 29 chapters (chapters 3-31) Job defends himself against the accusations of his three friends.

9. God wanted to focus Job's attention on an error he **③** had in the area of his "**understanding**". He uses Elihu, a young man who has been listening to the debate, to expose Job's spiritual pride (chapters 32-37), after which He spoke directly to Job.

**Job 32:2-3** *... the anger of Elihu ... burned; against Job his anger burned because **he justified himself before God**. And his anger burned against his three friends because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*

**Job 33:8-12** (Elihu to Job) *... I have heard the sound of your words: 'I am **pure, without transgression**; I am **innocent** and there is **no guilt** in me. 'Behold, **He invents pretexts** against me; **He counts me as His enemy**. 'He puts my feet in the stocks; He watches all my paths.' "Behold, let me tell you, **you are not right** in this, for **God is greater** than man.*

**Job 34:5** (Elihu continued) *"For Job has said, 'I am **righteous**, but God has **taken away my right**; should I lie concerning my right? My wound is incurable, though I am **without transgression**.'*

**34:12** (Elihu) *... "Surely, God **will not act wickedly**, and the Almighty **will not pervert justice**.*

**34:17** (Elihu) *"Shall one who hates justice rule? And **will you condemn** the righteous mighty One?"*

**34:35-37** (Elihu) *'Job speaks **without knowledge**, and his words are **without wisdom**. ...'*

NOTE: The way in which Elihu gently and humbly pointed out Job's error is a worthy example of Gal. 6:1-2, where the Lord instructs us: *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore** such a one in a spirit of **gentleness**; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. **Bear one another's burdens**, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.* (Gal. 6:1-2) (For further insight into Elihu's thoughts, read also Job 32:6, 13, 18, 21; 33:3, 6-7, 32; 34:4)

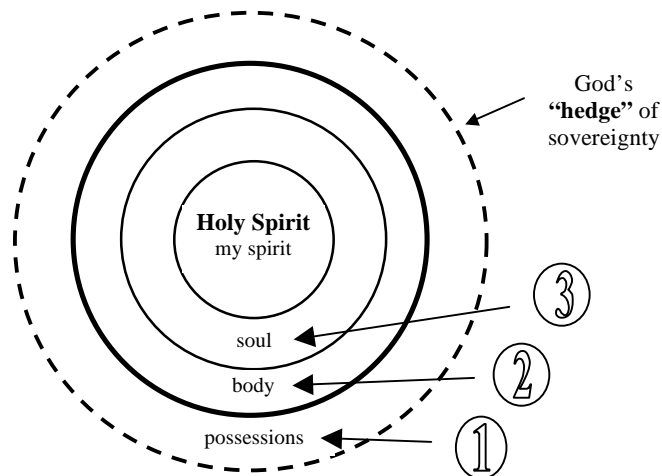
10. God then corrected Job directly (chapters 38-41).

**Job 38:1-4** Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words **without knowledge**? ...

③

**Job 40:1-2** ... the Lord said to Job, "Will the **faultfinder** contend with the Almighty? Let him who **reproves** God answer it."

**Job 40:8** (God said to Job) Will you really **annul My judgment**? Will you **condemn Me that you may be justified**?



11. Job acknowledged his error to God and repented.

**Job 42:1-6** Then Job answered the Lord and said, "I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' "Therefore **I have declared that which I did not understand**, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and **You instruct me.**' "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You; therefore **I retract**, and **I repent** in dust and ashes."

③

12. God rebuked the three accusers, and restored Job.

**Job 42:7-8** ... the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right **as My servant Job** has. "Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and **My servant Job will pray for you**. For **I will accept him** so that I may not do with you according to your folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, **as My servant Job** has."

③

**Job 42:9-12** ... The Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the Lord increased all that Job had **twofold**. Then all his brothers and all his sisters and all who had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversities that **the Lord** had brought on him. And each one gave him one piece of money, and each a ring of gold. The Lord blessed the latter days of Job **more than** his beginning; ...

Note: **For more Scriptures on "Suffering", see Lesson 1-14**