

The Protective Hedge - Job 1 1.4.2023

Turn in your Bible tonight to the book of Job. Tonight, we kick off our 12-month study, I'm sorry, did I say 12 month, I mean 12 week study in the book of Job, that we have named, Consider Job. We will be looking at all of Chapter 1 this evening. How many have heard this statement used in a prayer? "Lord, I pray that you will put a hedge of protection around them!" Is that biblical and what exactly is that hedge? First, yes, it is biblical, and we will see that term used as an accusation against God.

What is that hedge? I am going to speak to that in a spiritual sense. We see a good description of this from the promises that God gave to Israel. God said these words to Moses for the Israelite nation. In the book of Exodus 6:7. God is telling Moses that he will redeem the people from Egypt's bondage and God said, "***I will take you to be my people and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.***"

With that proclamation, Israel was brought under the protection of God! Listen to what Moses said to the Israelites right before they were going to cross over the Jordan river and take the promised land.

Deuteronomy 31:6

⁶ Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord who goes before you. He will not leave you or forsake you.

The "THEM" are the nations they were to drive out to take the promised land. God was going to protect them and give them what he had promised because they were under his protection.

The Psalms are full of verses that speak to the fact we are under God's protection. Psalm 91, one of my favorites says these words from God.

Pslam 91:1-4

¹ He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. ² I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." ³ For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. ⁴ He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

Look at these words used in those four verses:

Shelter, In the Shadow, Refuge, Fortress, Shield, Buckler

What do each of the words reveal to us? Protection! If we are in the shadow of God it means, he is surrounding us. You've shielded your child from something or someone before! There is so, so much more I could go to and relate to God's protection, but, before we get these illusions of grandeur, that we should have no struggle or suffering in this life, may I remind us of a few things.

As we looked at those words, we saw two that were defensive and offensive. The shield and buckler. This would show us we are in a battle. The shield being a larger piece of military warfare would be used in a defensive posture most of the time. **As in this picture:**



With a shield we are fairly passive. With a buckler like this:



We are in hand-to-hand combat if you will with the enemy up close and personal. In fact, in medieval times these were worn as personal protection from the possibility of attack. You couldn't quite carry a huge shield around with you, but with a buckler you could hook it to your belt along with your sword, to be ready to defend yourself.

As a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, our attacks are not from the physical realm. It is the spiritual realm! 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 tells us this:

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, ⁶ being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

What our weapons of warfare? Well, we go to the armor of God! Breastplate of righteousness, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, belt of truth, feet shod with the shoes of the Gospel, and the Sword, The Word of God and Prayer! Well, let's dig into our verses. Let's read Job 1, beginning with verses 1 to 5.

Job 1:1-5

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. ² There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³ He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so

that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. ⁴ His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

By what we read we just learned a lot about Job, and will learn more as we go through this study. More importantly we once again will see the glory and majesty of God as we answer some aged-old questions about the believer and suffering.

First, we learned he was from the Land of Uz.



Uz is considered more of a region, than a city. As you search through Scripture it was always related with Edom. So, this is why I used the map showing Edom, rather than Uz. We read that Job was a very wealthy man and had a large family of 10 children, 7 sons and 3 daughters. We also see right at the beginning here that he was a God-fearing man and sought to follow and honor the Lord. Job obviously loved his family very much and was concerned for their souls. How do we get that?

First, we see that his children would come together and have a feast. I think it was a good sign that Job's children loved each other and wanted to spend time together. What all went on during this feast? We don't know but there was enough going on that it gave Job concern to consecrate and offer burnt offerings for his children after the feast. In verses 4 and 5 we see that the feast would move from house to house. It was at the end of this rotation, that Job would then offer sacrifices for his children not after each feast.

What does it mean to consecrate?

Consecrate: to set apart, to sanctify, to dedicate, to observe as holy

As we see Job offering these sacrifices it would show us that Job lived before the Mosaic Law was given to the Israelite nation. For Job, in offering these sacrifices for his children, is acting as priest for his family here to remind them and lead them to live in obedience of and worship God and remember all they have has come from God. The children definitely enjoyed the great wealth that Job and his family had.

Now did Job's act of sacrificing these animals make his children holy? The answer is no! Job's act of obedience, his act of worship could no more save his children or make his children holy than we can do that for our own children, grandchildren.

Dad's, Husbands, it does give us a great reminder that we are the priests of our households. We are to open the Word of God to lead our family, to remind them, that we all individually must repent of our sins and call on God to save our soul. Then we are to live in obedience with a life to where we are living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2), holy, set apart, acceptable to God for the area of service he has given us.

What Job was providing for his children was an opportunity to repent and if there was deviant, sinful, behavior going on at those feasts, they would repent and turn and commit those sins no more. Young person, your Mom and Dad's salvation does not save you! You must repent of your sins and call on the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved!

In all that Job did, we see the humble, the faithful, the God-fearing man that Job is. Job's desire to see his children live for the Lord. Job getting up early when the feasts were over, making sure to bring his children before the Lord. I am sure offering these sacrifices it reminded Job to live holy before the Lord. As it says in verse 5, he did this *continually*.

That's another good example for us parents to *continuously* pray for our children, to *continuously* teach the Word of God to our children. Job's children had it all, but Job saw to it that they understood there is an eternity at stake and this stuff of the world holds no meaning at the end of your life, only Jesus!

Well, Job's life was about to suddenly change! Let the drama unfold!

Let's read verses 6 to 12 of Chapter 1.

Job 1:6-12

⁶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. ⁷ 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." ⁸ 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?" ⁹ Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." ¹² 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.

The term, sons of God, is a reference to the angels. In Hebrews 1:14, angels are described as such:

Hebrews 1:14

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Angels are spirit beings created by God. What do angels do?

Angels stand at the throne of God in worship.

1. Angels called "seraphim", as seen by the prophet Isaiah, were praising God as they flew around God's throne, saying, "***Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!***" ***Isaiah 6:4***
2. This is also described of all angels in Nehemiah 9:6 as the people of Israel are worshiping God ***You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them, and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.***

As we just read in Hebrews, angels were sent by God to minister to believers, followers of the Lord.

1. Angels came to Abraham, Sarah, and Lot before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and to pronounce Isaac would be born. (Genesis 18. Genesis 19)
2. An Angel came to minister to the prophet Daniel. (Daniel 10)
3. Michael, one of the two named angels in Scripture, described as an archangel, battled a demon in Daniel 10 so the other angel could get to Daniel.
4. Though not at the throne of God, angels announced the birth of Jesus Christ to the shepherds and gave praise to God. (Luke 2)
5. Gabriel, the other named angel, also considered to be an archangel, visited the priest Zechariah, to prophecy of the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah and Elizabeth. (Luke 1)
6. Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell that she was going to give birth to the Messiah. (Luke 1)
7. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream to tell of Mary being pregnant, as well as to escape to Egypt when King Herod sought to kill Jesus when he was a child. (Matthew 1 and 2)
8. Angels ministered to Jesus after being in the wilderness, fasting for 40 days and nights. (Matthew 4)
9. An angel freed Peter from prison. (Acts 12)

Angels are also used in judgment

1. Angels were sent to guard the entrance to the Garden of Eden, after Adam and Eve sinned (Genesis 3:24)
2. Angels were used to pass out judgment upon Israel and on nations that came against Israel.
3. The Apostle John recorded that angels will be used to pass out the judgments on the world during the great tribulation as described in the book of The Revelation.

You may ask, “Why did you go over all that?” To give us all a good idea of why the angels were there before God. First and foremost, always to worship! Second, to get their assignments! Though we are not angels, may we always come in an attitude of worship and praise, when we come before the Lord, but also, ready to receive our assignments as we are ministers of the Lord to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Well, while they are there, who had the audacity to appear before God? Satan!

We must remember, Satan, is a created angel as well, who in his pride thought he was going to take over as God and was promptly kicked out of heaven to earth. Ever since he has been and is the author of all lies that goes contrary to the Word of God.

Isaiah 14:12-14 describes the reason Satan was cast out of heaven:

Isaiah 14:12-14

¹² “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³ You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’

As we read, Satan was still allowed access to God at this time. God asks Satan, “Where did you come from?” What was the answer? *To and fro upon the earth!* Satan is not omnipresent like God. Satan cannot be everywhere at once. So, he is doing as he is described in *1 Peter 5:8 – Be soberminded, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* Waiting for his time to pounce in temptation or attack upon a person.

But, here, we see God, without be prompted, say something to Satan. Look at verse 8 again.

Job 1:8

8 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?"

We see this conversation ensue between God and Satan. This is where we see another characteristic of Satan. Satan is described in Revelation 12:10, as the accuser of the brethren, and he accuses them night and day. In Zechariah Chapter 3 verse 1, we get a good picture of this as God gives Zechariah a vision of his restoration of Israel from Babylon.

Zechariah 3:1

1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

We do see in these verses Satan accusing Job, but Satan accuses God of something as well. Look at verses 9 to 11 again.

Job 1:9-11

9 Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? 10 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. 11 But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face."

Satan could not deny that Job feared and served the Lord. His accusation though is that the only reason he did was because of all that God had blessed him with. Satan speaks of the hedge again. Let something bad happen to him, take his stuff away, remove that hedge, and he will curse you!

We talked about the hedge in a spiritual sense earlier. This description would help the reader understand what is being described. Wood, block, or stone walls around homes were not common. What was common is that the homeowner would make a hedge made of plant material and would have intertwined and would use some plant material with thorns. The bible has mentioned lions, bears, wolves, leopards, and hyenas. These hedges were built to keep them out. Satan is described as a roaring lion!

Pastor Kevin and I were talking, and it reminded us of how we saw this in our mission work in Ethiopia.



This is a hedge that was built around the church that Katy and I taught.

The hedge is a barrier of protection, and it shows there is a boundary that is not to be crossed. Does that mean that there is not the possibility of suffering? Well, let's look at what happened next.

What does God say next to Satan? He's yours! Do whatever you want to all he has but do not kill Job! Now, those words, at some time in our lives, as we read them, made us cringe. Wait a minute! God, you just called Job blameless, upright, who fears you and turns away from evil! You are going to allow him to suffer? You are going to turn Satan loose on him?

This begs that aged-old question of, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Well, I will ask this, "Why do good things happen to bad people?" The first thing we must understand is that there are no good people in the absolute sense of the word good. We are all tainted by sin.

Even with that thought, Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 verse 45, he causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, the rain to fall on the just and unjust. In that instance God his showing love to his enemies. God is desiring for them to see his goodness and be drawn to him to salvation.

In contrast, even for the believer, Jesus made it clear in John 16:33, In this world we will have tribulation! When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's Word in the Garden of Eden, what happened? You tell me, you talk to me! Sin! Because of sin what happened to us and to the world. We became broken! We are a sinful people! Disease, hate, death came into the world, and it is part of life.

We all live in a broken world because of sin, and we are all at some point going to experience the effects of this brokenness. It may come by way of sickness, emotional strain, financial issues, dry times of our lives as if we feel like we just can't sense God around us, and death!

Any of those circumstances though does not diminish the love, mercy, or protection, which comes from God. It does not diminish his holiness and his justice, but all can and will be used to show his glory and for us to proclaim his glory.

Scripture tells us that all trials, and tests are for our benefit and that once we go through them it brings glory to God. Why? Because we praise the Lord for what he did!! Thank you, Jesus!!

1 Peter 4:6-7

⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Satan leaves from the presence of God and begins his attack upon Job.

Job 1:13-19

¹³ Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶ While he was yet speaking, there came another 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 yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

There is not much to add to that description. Job lost everything in one day, possibly within hours. Job lost his children, livestock, meaning he lost his sources of income, with the sheep gone, his way to offer sacrifice to the Lord, and his servants!

How did Job react? Do you think Satan was sitting back! Oh boy! Wait until God hears what Job is about to say about him! Before any of you think that Job is just a pawn being used here for God and Satan's amusement, let me stop that thought right now. The pawn here is Satan. Satan continues to think he is going win. All Satan can do is tempt us; Satan can't make us do anything. If we give into temptation, it is of our own doing.

What did Job do? Let's read verses 20 to 22.

Job 1:20-22

²⁰ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." ²² In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Do we not still grieve in our times of grief? Do we not feel pain in our time of struggle? Sure, we do! Look at what Job did. Job tore his robe, shaved his head in a display of anguish and mourning because of the pain he was feeling. Then, he shook his fist at God, and said, "Why are you doing this to me? This is not fair; I have been faithful to you! I'm supposed to be having my best life now!"

Is that what he did? What did he do? Answer me! He did what? He did what? He fell on the ground and worshiped! What did Job realize? Everything he had was not his to begin with. Everything he had was only on loan anyway.

Our wives, our husbands, our children, our grandchildren, our money, our homes, our jobs, our businesses, our cars, our lives are only on loan from God. I see so many, so called Christians, walking around miserable because they are not content with the Lord. Did you hear what I said? I said they are not content with the Lord; I didn't say anything about the stuff. If we are complaining about what we don't have then most likely we are not content with the Lord either.

Listen to this very familiar Scripture as Paul is writing to Timothy.

1 Timothy 6:6-8

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

Sounds like what we just read from Job. What brought Job to the point in all this tragedy that he could worship and bring no charge against the Lord? Humility!

Job's humbleness, realizing, first and foremost, our lives are from him. God created us and when God breathed the breath of life into Adam and made him a living soul, we too are a creation of God. When we take that first breath when we come out of our mother's womb, until we take our last breath, everything in between is the Lord's. All that is good in this world is because of the goodness of God.

In my studies, I found this verse in Psalms.

Psalms 138:6

⁶ For the Lord is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.

It is through humility that we recognize this about ourselves, just as the Apostle Paul did, again from 1 Timothy: ¹⁵ *The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.*

What we saw happen to Job was a great tragedy! None of what happened was outside of the sovereignty of God! Does it say anything about the salvation of Job's children, his servants? No! Nothing can happen to us outside of God's sovereign hand over us.

Will we consider Job? Will we consider his humility and like he did worship God through all of it? It doesn't mean we don't grieve or struggle or ask questions, but will we worship God and praise his Holy name! I close with this. I had lunch with a man from this church the other day. He is here tonight. We talked about these last few verses for just a moment.

So, I asked the question, how could Job say what he said? This gentleman was quick to reply with these words, "The Lord was enough for Job! All that he had was a blessing from the Lord, but whether it was a million dollars or 10, the Lord should be, no the Lord is enough!"

What if God asked Satan, Have you considered? Is the Lord enough?