

## **"WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOUR 'HEDGE' IS REMOVED?"**

**TEXT:** *Job 1:9-10 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*

**THESIS:** To show the proper response of the believer when Satan attacks.

**INTRO.:** A. Things are going well. You are healthy, have a good job, make enough money to pay your rent & utilities & put some food on your table (i.e., you are better off than most of the planet's population), have a nice family, etc. You give God the glory & some measure of credit for your blessings. But **"WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOUR 'HEDGE' IS REMOVED?"**

**ILLUS.:** A "hedge" is a barrier or fence around the believer which God has erected to keep him safe, healthy and/or prosperous, as well as to keep Satan from frontal attacks on him or her.

B. God providentially watches over His children, posts guardian angels about them, pours out blessings upon them, gives them a measure of health in spite of their abuse of their "temple." Both God & Satan take note of how we respond to these blessings. God, of course, knows how we will respond, but others - including Satan - want to know **"WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOUR 'HEDGE' IS REMOVED?"!**

**TRANS.:** We are about to find out how one man responded to a hedge removed. But the issue is

**"WHAT WILL YOU DO...?!"** We are about to witness what goes on behind the scenes in the invisible world of God, Satan & angels and how these events may impact upon us. We will get a "sneak preview" of the "ETERNAL TRIANGLE" between God, Satan & man...

## I. GOD'S TESTIMONY: v.8

### A. God Planted Job's Hedge:

1. God's testimony was that Job was more than what appeared on the surface (are YOU?).
  - a. Job was "**perfect**" i.e., "complete" or thoroughly given to a godly life.
  - b. Job was "**upright**" or "straight" speaking of his constancy & loyalty - he was not an "on again - off again" saint or an "up & down" believer.
  - c. Job "**feared God**" i.e., not just fearful of God's power or vengeance, but he had a fear of displeasing God!
  - d. Job "**eschewed evil**" i.e. shunned all forms of immorality & detested everything that was unlike God's character or contrary to God's Word.

**ILLUS.:** Job's "hedge" of prosperity, family, good health & friends was not the reason for Job's character & integrity or godly life, but perhaps had something to do w/God's willingness to plant the "hedge" around Job. Job's character & righteousness was no mere veneer which could be scratched to reveal some secret flaws or stains of secret sins! (How about yours?!) All that Job was had to do w/God's grace. Because he belonged to the Lord & was a spiritual man, God also graciously "planted a hedge" around him. Your "hedge" may *not* be wealth or physical blessing but simply God's providential protection for you & yours.

## B. Job Enjoyed God's Hedge:

1. Job no doubt daily praised the Lord for His goodness, wealth, family, friends.
2. Job surely recognized all God's blessings upon him as he compared himself w/others & their meager circumstances & possessions.

**ILLUS.:** Perhaps one of the reasons we lose the blessings of God is that we don't appreciate what God has blessed us with. As with anyone who gives, though they may not have thanksgiving as the motive, they nonetheless appreciate recognition...so w/the Lord, the greatest Giver!

## II. SATAN'S TAUNTING: v.9,10

### A. Satan Wanted to Uproot Job's Hedge:

1. Nothing displeases the devil any more than to see God's children being blessed, praising the Lord & enjoying God's hedge!
2. Here we see something of the malevolent nature of this arch-demon, ***the "god of this world,"*** second only to God Himself in wisdom & power.
3. Satan hates God & God's children & ***"as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour."*** ***1 Pet.5:8***

**ILLUS.:** Insight is also provided here to how Satan has access to God's throne room & is able to have an audience w/the King of Kings as the ***"accuser of the brethren."*** In this case he is about to get his wish & attack Job - but he must always operate w/in the permissive will of God. ***"behold, all that he has is in thy power..."*** ***v.12***

## B. Satan Wants to Uproot Your Hedge:

1. Satan was responsible for Paul's ***"thorn in the flesh...a messenger of Satan to buffet me..."***
2. Satan desired to ***"sift..."*** Peter.
3. Satan took note of Job & takes note of YOU if you are also serving God!

**ILLUS.:** It is interesting how closely associated God & Satan are in relationship to their dealings w/men. ***"Put forth THINE HAND now..." (v.12)*** In the next chapter God says ***"thou movedst ME against him, to destroy him w/out cause..." (2:3)*** Apart from revelation & illumination the believer has a hard time knowing whether disaster, disease, disability, debt, divorce, desertion, damnation, drug abuse or death originates w/God or the devil! In ***1 Cor.5:5*** Paul tells the church at Corinth to turn over a wayward saint to Satan ***"...for the destruction of the flesh."***

## III. JOB'S TRIALS:

**ILLUS.:** Now that God & Satan have had their conversation catastrophe strikes! Job loses his real-estate holdings, his livestock & his 10 children (& almost his sanity - try to bury 10 children in one day & see if you can stay sane!).

### A. Job's Hedge Penetrated:

1. God's original question to Satan was ***"hast thou considered my servant, Job?" v.8a***
2. You can bet your booties he had! As he does every child of God living for Him.

**ILLUS.:** Satan had just been on a planetary excursion looking for someone to torment. v.7 Here is the real antithesis to the Christ. He is a Prince (like Christ), an Angel (as Christ), a Messiah ("anointed one") like Christ, a King (like Christ), he will ride a white horse (like Christ), he has a bride (like Christ), he has ministers, apostles, prophets & churches (like Christ), he can & does perform miracles (like Christ) & will one day descend from outer space to set up his kingdom (like Christ)! He is a powerful, subtle, intelligent enemy & you had better not try to confront him, fight him or defeat him in your own power or strength!

3. He penetrates Job's hedge "big time" & Job is absolutely defenseless before him.

4. Here was the most spiritual man of his day & he was utterly helpless before Satan & did not have the foggiest idea as to what was taking place.

**ILLUS.:** The next time you experience some trial or loss, don't assume it is because of what you have done *wrong*, it may be because of what you have done *right!* It was w/Moses, Joshua, Peter, Paul & John and Job!! When God plants a hedge around someone who serves HIM, don't you know that another god (who desires worship) will be interested in the competition & want to penetrate that hedge?!

#### B. Job's Hedge Destroyed: 1:2 & 2:3-6

1. His first attempt failed (1:2), so Satan seeks another opportunity (2:3-6)!

2. Satan's answer: "***skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life***" v.4 reveals his knowledge of human nature.

**ILLUS.:** In 1944 on a Japanese ship sailing from Pier 7 in Manila to Japan you would have found American G.I.'s who were educated & civilized, choking each other & then slitting each other's throats to get blood to drink.

There were P.O.W.'s. In the death camps of Auschwitz, Poland in WWII the young men stomped over the bodies of their mothers & fathers to get air, while their mothers & sisters were trampling their little children to death to get that same air. ***Skin for skin...*** The officers in Vietnam were often "fragged" by their own troops because they didn't want to go hand-to-hand w/their oriental enemies. ***"Skin for skin..."*** Satan knows human nature!

3. Finally Satan is allowed to take away man's most prized possession: his health!
4. The "hedge" is not only penetrated - it is destroyed!

**ILLUS.:** Here he is, God's trophy of grace, sitting among the ashes of his own devastation on top of the bodies of his children w/oozing sores from head to foot & **his wife** mocking him. No one has ever been lower! (v.6-9) But Job's response was not only classic, but amazing!

***Job 2:10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.***

- a. His hedge is gone, his home is gone, his honor is gone & his health is gone.
- b. But he states clearly the principle that God's blessings are gifts & the Giver has a right to withdraw them w/out being charged w/evil.
- c. We don't merit God's goodness, so what right do we have to complain if he withholds it or takes it away?!

**ILLUS.:** What a man of God Job was! When God was looking for someone special to show that even if they were present, because of His absolute justice, he could not spare his judgment, he chose Noah, Daniel & **JOB!**

***Ezek.14:14 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.***

**ILLUS.:** Perhaps because God needed this test recorded for the rest of us, he chose the most spiritual & prosperous man of all, Job. Job first had to be blessed in greatest measure to be tried in the greatest measure. Job's physical & spiritual prosperity was a definite factor in Job's testing.

**CONCL.:** **"WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOUR 'HEDGE' IS REMOVED?"!** Better think about it NOW, before the time comes. Better get spiritual NOW so when it comes you will be able to come through it unscathed, spiritually. You will NOT escape it physically - unless you are raptured!