

The Book of Job: Blessed Be the Name of the Lord!

Lesson Seven

There is a thief who does not want your money. He wants your faith. He wants to take it from you. In the first two chapters of Job, this thief is called Satan, which means *accuser*. And you may remember, that Satan accused Job of serving God only for the blessings he could get out of God. And Satan accused God of bribing Job. God defended Job. He said Job served Him, not because of any bribe but because Job was faithful, a blameless and upright man. To prove it, God gave Satan permission to take everything Job had but his life. Satan took all Job had in order to take Job's faith.

Then Satan disappears from the Book of Job. Or does he? Does Satan show up again here in chapter 41? Only, in this chapter might he be called Leviathan? Read Job 41:1-9.

This is not the first mention of Leviathan in Job. See Job 3:1-11. In chapter 3, after Job loses everything but his life he says, "May those who curse days curse the day of my birth, those who are ready to rouse Leviathan. Why did I not perish at birth and die as I came from the womb?" In these verses Leviathan is linked with cursing, the wish to die, and death itself.

Elsewhere, Leviathan is linked with the word *serpent*. In Isaiah 27:1, Leviathan is called a *nachash*. *Nachash* is the same word used for the deceiving serpent in the Garden of Eden. See Genesis 3:1.

And what sort of serpent is described here in Job 41? Read Job 41:12-32. One whose nostrils pour out smoke. Fire streams from his mouth. His breath sets coals ablaze. The kind of serpent described here is a dragon. Which brings us to Revelation chapter 12. Where John writes: "The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray." (Revelation 12:9)

Now read Job 41:33-34. That ancient serpent knows no fear. He means deadly woe. He is eager to devour us. With dread craft and great might he arms himself to fight. He comes to rob faith. Not so much into praying? The Accuser hisses in your ear, "No problem. All of that praying and studying and thinking about your faith is not real life. You know what real life is." Have some anger issues? The Accuser hisses, "You're right to be angry." Sexual fantasies? He hisses, "Go ahead, full throttle." Prone to gossip? The Accuser hisses, "Everybody does it. No big deal." And when you fall for that stuff, the Accuser is again quick to hiss into your ear, "Not much of a Christian, are you?"

But it is God who is doing the describing here in chapter 41, going back to Job 40:1. God describes Leviathan, that dragon serpent. God asks Job, "Can you pull in Leviathan with a fishhook or tie down his tongue with a rope? Because I can." God asks Job, "Can you make a pet of Leviathan like a bird or put him on a leash for your girls? Because I can." It is in Job that we learn that Satan was put on a leash, given limits and boundaries by God, as though on a leash. Satan was permitted to take everything of Job's, except his life. Limits, boundaries, leash.

In Job's time, Satan's boundaries allowed him access to the throne of God. He could go there and accuse Job. But when Jesus came, that changed. No longer was Satan permitted that sort of access. His boundaries got squeezed. His leash got shortened. So, when the disciples returned from the very first missionary journey, Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:17-18)

Satan is judged. In Revelation 20 it says: "And the devil was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur." Jesus' victory for us over Satan, celebrated on Palm Sunday, secured when Jesus crushed the serpent's head in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, sealed when Jesus rose from the dead, sealed Satan's future. His boundaries will be hell itself. When Satan accuses you regarding your past, remind him of his future.