

In our last podcast we discussed the Great Assembly of God and how the sons of Gods, even the Satan, present themselves before their master **Yahweh Sabaoth**, the Lord of heaven's armies. Let's pick back up with the encounter of the Satan with **Yahweh**.

Preparing for Conflict

Job 1:7

Yahweh said to the Satan, "From where do you come?" Then the Satan answered **Yahweh** and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."

As the **Alpha** and the **Omega**, the one who sits outside of time, **Yahweh** always knows the beginning from the end.¹ We are specifically told that He knows all and that no one and nothing is hidden from His sight, and that it is to Him alone that all must give account.² Yet, he asks the Satan, as if He did not know, "*From where do you come?*" This is very much like the question God asked Adam after he had sinned, "*Then Yahweh called to the man, and said to him, 'where are you?'*"

It seems that God wants us to come clean and to honestly confess before Him what is going on in our heart. He knows, but He wants us to know; He wants us to speak truth without our customary delusion or denial. In the case of Adam, He wanted Adam to come to terms with why he was hiding from **Yahweh**, why he let guilt and shame cause him to abandon his trust in **Yahweh** such that he felt he needed to hide from Him.

Yahweh knew Adam had sinned, that was not the issue, it was that Adam's sin induced him to hide, to cover himself, to distance himself from his Creator, to create a relational separation from the one who regularly walked with him in the garden enjoying fellowship.

Through questioning Adam, versus accusing Adam, **Yahweh** was reminding Adam that they have been, are, and will continue to be friends, and that it is the voice of **Yahweh** which Adam should listen to and no other voice. Things had changed and more was going to change in terms of Adam's practical way of life, but **Yahweh** does not change. Therefore, Adam would need to trust in the relationship, what he has known to be true about **Yahweh**, and not what his shame and guilt would say about the relationship.

Though sin is a corrupter of relationships, the power of faith can overcome the effect of those consequences; and the relationship, though altered, can be preserved. We see this, for instance, in the life of Enoch, the 7th from Adam. Enoch was declared a friend of God. He walked with God and was commended as having pleased God, so much so that he did not die but was raptured, translated, into the unseen realms.³ Between God and man, there is always a way.

In the case of the Satan, God, as the **Alpha** and the **Omega**, the one who sits outside of time, knows that the Satan's appearing in the assembly meeting was not coincidental, and that the Satan was "*roaming*"

¹ **Isaiah 46:9-10; Revelation 22:13; See also Psalm 139:16; Acts 15:16-18**

² **1 John 3:20; Hebrews 4:13**

³ **Genesis 5:18-24; Hebrews 11:5, Jude 14-15**

about on the earth and walking around on it" doing personal reconnaissance on who he can accuse, whose life he can wreck. The question forces the issue, shatters any pretense, and sets the scene for the first challenge that God makes to the Satan.

Did you notice that **Yahweh** did not ask, "what were you doing?" but very specifically, He asked about where the Satan had been. It is a practical and direct question, but it is also an existential question, much like He asked Adam. Where have you been? The answer to this question explains what he had been doing.

The Satan had not been where he originally belonged, with those who dwell in the heavens supporting those who are a part of **Yahweh's** household. He had departed, both physically, emotionally, and relationally. His heart had turned, and he was driven by hatred for the people of God. Where have you been? Not where you should have been! The question must have stung.

From a practical (non-existential) perspective, there are many places where the Satan could go besides earth. In the book of Enoch (quoted by Jude and by Peter), we discover that there are many dimensions in the unseen realms, many places (mountains, wildernesses, plains) where the Satan could have been traveling. But he was not in any of those places, he was busy functioning as an adversary to the people of God, collecting information, gathering reasons for his accusations, reasons why God should let him bring torment into the lives of the guilty (as previously mentioned, this is what he later did with the Apostle Peter, he asked for (and was granted) the right to sift Peter like wheat, separating the chaff (all that was worthless) from that which was good).

In asking the Satan, "*From where do you come,*" it forced the answer, "*From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it,*" which reveals the true purpose of the Satan attending this assembly meeting. He was not just being an obedient servant. "...*the Satan also came among them*" for the purpose of making accusation and seeking permission from **Yahweh** to be **the** adversary to those whom he was stalking, watching, gaining intel, and documenting evidence which he hoped would invoke judgment.

Roaming & Walking

The Spirit was very specific; the Satan was both roaming about and walking on the earth. Why the specificity? Perhaps a good way to picture this is how a hawk flies overhead, to-and-fro, looking for a specific prey, and then when the hawk spots the creature he wants for his own, he then dives down for an up-front, personal, and not so friendly encounter.

This is how the Satan works. He peruses those on the earth, observing them from afar, "*roaming about on the earth,*" and when a person piques his interest, he makes it personal.

1 Peter 5:8

You are commanded to be sober; you are commanded to be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, **now** prowls around like a lion choosing to **now** be roaring, **now** seeking someone to devour.

Once he takes interest in someone, the Satan then walks on the earth and carefully examines each-and-every detail of that person's life, carefully composing his facts, gathering his proof, so that when he appears before the council to make accusation, with all his damning evidence, the judge of all the earth will not deny him the right to be used as a tool (he and all his minions), to bring judgment into the life of

his target or targets. We must not miss the fact that "the adversary" knows the scriptures.

1 Peter 1:17

If you **now** choose to address as Father the One who is **now** judging impartially according to each one's work, you are commanded to be caused to conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay [on earth;]

Hebrews 10:30-31

For we know Him who has been saying, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL IN THE **FUTURE** REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL IN THE **FUTURE** JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the **now** living God.

Colossians 3:25

For he who is **now** doing wrong will in the **future** choose to receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that is **now** without partiality.

The Father is always now judging, without prejudice, which is why Jesus, our faithful high priest, is always now interceding for us. But through His judgment, the Father gives people the opportunity to learn **WHY** they can and should trust themselves to **Yahweh** and **HOW** to trust themselves to Him. But so many people hate judgment, hate, what the Spirit calls discipline, and so they writhe in their pain and choose to turn from Him and apostatize.⁴ This is why Jesus interceded for Peter and prayed that Peter would not abandon his faith.

Again, the Satan roams about the earth to find targets and then walks on the earth to gather intelligence, secure evidence, all for the purpose of making accusation before **Yahweh** about those in the household of God. He wants God to judge, and he wants to be appointed (he and his minions) as the instrument, the tool, to bring about the judgment, or shall we say the torment, which from another perspective, God's perspective, is also known as godly discipline.

The First Challenge

Job 1:8-10

Yahweh said to the 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 the Satan answered **Yahweh**, "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? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased

⁴ See **Hebrews 12:4-17, 29**

in the land.”

Job was a man who feared **Yahweh**. In fact, God bragged before the Satan and before all the spiritual forces in the heavens who had gathered to present themselves before **Yahweh** at this great assembly, and He said: *“For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil” (1:8)*. Truly, Job was a man like no other, for this is quite a commendation considering the source. It is also the second time the Spirit of God communicates these attributes, and when God repeats Himself, we had better pay attention to what He is saying.

According to the **Code**, the number two (2) represents both witness and division. In calling out Job’s character, twice, the Spirit is testifying or giving a witness to the veracity of the statement and setting Job apart, dividing him, so to speak from all other men as being uniquely blameless and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

But what is completely unnerving is how **Yahweh** introduced this commendation by asking the Satan: *“Have you considered My servant Job?”* The Hebrew makes it even more disconcerting. This was not just celestial chit chat, **Yahweh** asked the Satan if he has yet to set his heart, his will, and his intellect toward Job, if he has yet to make Job the center of his pursuit, the target of his earthly wanderings. That’s a terrible, awful question.

This entire story started by God putting the Satan to the test.

The Satan retorted that Job only honors God because God has made it easy for Job to honor God. Job is blessed by God in all that he does, all the works of his hands such that even his possessions have increased in the land. The Satan argues that no harm has been able to touch him because **Yahweh** has literally set a hedge of protection about him; therefore, his armies have been unable to draw near, so of course it is easy for Job to be faithful. He has no pressure and no resistance and no reason to turn away from God.

Lesson of the Heavenly Realms 2

God protects His own and they are untouchable by the evil one unless He, Yahweh, gives specific permission allowing them to be harmed.

From this response to **Yahweh’s** question, we can surmise that the Satan is the original source of the if/then lie that is told about **Yahweh**. The if/then lie has been promoted and reinforced within our hearts by the spiritual forces of wickedness, and it testifies that if we do it right, if we are good, if we are holy, if we are righteous, if we are good Christians, if we do not sin, if do not do this or that, then God will bless us and provide for us a hedge of protection from evil. But if we are not good, holy, righteous, a good Christian, and if we are given over to sin, and do this or that, then God will punish, judge, condemn us, and take away people and things from our lives, until we learn to obey, for God just wants us to obey Him.

“Trust and obey, for there’s no other way, to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.”⁵

This is the Satanic testimony of the if/then lie we discussed in the introduction.

We can be assured that all those if/then whisperings that have settled deep in our soul, which run rampant in the religion of Christianity, come from this Prince of Darkness. But take note, it is a lie. This entire Job narrative is purposed, in part, to drive a stake in the heart of the if/then lie.

It is no wonder however that the Satan feels this way and works feverously to make those in the household of God feel this way. After all, his sin, his rebellion, his apostasy was the end for him, and he was given no mercy and no grace—one and done. In the Satan’s experience, it is only if you do it right that God blesses you and protects you, and if you do it wrong, then He is merciless in His judgment and condemnation. Given his personal experience, it is no wonder that he promotes this lie to all of humanity. We can all be extremely thankful that God does not deal with mankind the way He has dealt with angels.

Hebrews 2:16

For assuredly He does not **now** choose to give help to angels, but He **now** chooses to give help to the descendant of Abraham.

When the Satan comes to us with the if/then lie, he does not communicate to us this distinction between how God deals with angels and how he deals with the sons of Abraham, which are all those who put their faith in God. He just whispers the lie and waits and watches as it sinks deep into our being. The result is that we become afraid, often very afraid, that when we do it wrong (which is all the time) that we will not be blessed and will be punished.

It is for this reason that religion, specifically the Religion of Christianity, has grown so prominently. It firmly codifies this lie, and its teachers teach and reinforce this lie. That is why almost everything in Christian teaching, at some point or another, comes down to the issue of sin. People seem to have forgotten that Jesus died to take away, remove, discard, the sins of the world and that He has thrown our sin as far as the east is from the west. Moreover, He does not deal with us based on our sins, and He does not remunerate us according to our iniquities.⁶ Yet even our translations of the scriptures, which largely refuse to apply the **Code**, seem to promote the lie all throughout. The Satan has been very busy ensuring that this lie becomes an underlying truth within the Religion of Christianity.

Then there are our feelings. This may be a generality, but it is probably safe to say that most of us do not readily accept the purposes of God’s discipline, and we by no means like God’s discipline. We have been deluded to feel as if we are doing good for God because that is our intention. So, when our king advances on our life as a conqueror, to kill and remove everything within us that does not want Him to be our **I AM**, our source for all things all the time, it sure feels as if this lie is true. Nevertheless, it is a lie.

⁵ Excerpt from the hymn written by John H. Sammis

⁶ **Psalm 103:8-12; Isaiah 53:5-6; Matthew 26:28; John 1:29, 3:16-17; 1 John 2:2**

Job 1:11

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

Let's read it again with an emphasis on the words of truth which declare **Yahweh's** majesty, words of humility spoken by a servant to his Master: "Your," "touch," "You," and "Your."

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

There might be no better description in all the scriptures of **Yahweh's** sovereignty and lordship over all the angelic hosts. **Yahweh** is the **Alpha**, He is the **First**, He is the **Beginning**, and nothing happens that He does not prescribe, and all the angelic hosts, even the Satan, are just tools in His hands. They have no independent authority, but they are agents who work on behalf of their Master, **Yahweh Sabaoth** (**Yahweh** of Heaven's armies,")

In the law of agency, the principal party (the one who employs the agent) is where the buck stops. The principal, and not the agent, is the one who bears ultimately responsibility and liability for all that the agents do. The agent just carries out the desires and instructions of the principal.

The Satan knows this to be true and declares it to be true. *"But put forth **Your** hand now and **touch** all that he has; he will surely curse **You** to **Your** face."*

This word that is translated "curse" is the Hebrew word "barak," which we discussed previously when talking about Job's concern that his sons might have cursed God in their hearts. "Barak" is a word which has a dual meaning, primarily to bless and secondarily to curse, it all depends upon the context. In a heavenly contest over Job's life, which will it be? It is like a heavenly game of roulette; the wheel is rotating, and the ball could land on red or black, the result could be cursing or blessing. We will see where it lands in Job's life.

The Satan does not think much of humanity, for he is sure that Job, who is this amazing spectacle of humanity, will just collapse and apostatize his faith if God strikes all that Job has. The Satan believes that Job's righteousness comes as a response, as a convenience even, to being blessed and that his character is not something that is rooted in relationship, in knowing **Yahweh**.

This gives us some additional insight into the heavenly realms.

Lesson of the Heavenly Realms 3

The relationship between Yahweh and the angelic is not rooted in faith, hope, and love. It is not established on the incredible power of belief, but their relationship is based on authority, commandment, obedience, and duty. Therefore, the angelic cannot fully grasp the relationship of grace and mercy which God has established with humanity or the level of personal intimacy which He enjoys with the men and women of faith. According to 1 Peter 1:12, this is something in which they now long or now desire to look.

Job 1:12

Then **Yahweh** said to the Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only you are commanded, do not put forth your hand on him." So, the Satan departed from the face of **Yahweh**.

Yahweh places Job on center stage by asking the Satan whether in all his earthly wanderings, he has "considered" Job, if he has set Job in the center of his target. Once directed Job's way, it becomes clear that the Satan has already examined Job and is well aware of Job's life and his godly character.

However, the Satan has a fundamental flaw in how he thinks, for he sees humanity through the lens of the angelic, and he **projects** onto Job, and humanity at large, his own experience with **Yahweh**. This is a filter that limits his understanding and causes him to not entirely grasp that the relationships (**Yahweh** and the angelic, **Yahweh** and man) are not equivalent. The relationship between **Yahweh** and the angelic is a construct of Master/Servant; whereas the relationship between **Yahweh** and man is one that can be transformed from Master/Servant to that of friendship, which is an entirely different type of relational construct.

John 15:12-15

This **now** is My commandment, that you may **now** love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love **now** has no one than this, that one may lay down his life for his friends.

You **now** are My friends if you may **now** do what I **now** choose to command you. No longer do I **now** call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master **now** does; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

The Satan assumes that Job's relationship with God exists because God has protected Job, provided for him, and secured him on every side: an if/then transactional relationship. He believes that anyone would gladly worship and honor God if they were so wonderfully provided for and guarded, but that Job (and humanity at large), like him and his minions, are fickle, dissatisfied, and always want more and will do whatever it takes to get more. The Satan does not understand friendship, he does not understand relationship that is rooted in character and belief, he only sees life and relationship through the lens of give and take—the transactional cost and benefit of exchange.

The Satan puts forth the challenge to God saying Job will curse God if God puts forth His hand and touches all that Job has.

In response to this first challenge by the Satan, **Yahweh** released all protection from around Job's household, including all his possessions and belongings, and gave it over to the Satan to do as he sees fit, so long as he does not stretch out his hand and touch Job; and it is a command that the Satan must obey. His agency is limited by **Yahweh's** commands.

This is a stunning view of how the heavenly operates. For those of us who don't know the story, the Satan is going to afflict Job terribly. The Satan is going to wreak total havoc, chaos, and destruction on Job. However, the Satan ascribes all authority, sovereignty, and complete responsibility to **Yahweh** for the damage he is going to pour forth on Job's life: "*But put forth **Your** hand now and [implied you] **touch** all*

that he has.” What are we to learn from this exchange? The Satan is simply the agent authorized to act on the behalf of the principle, who is God. The Satan has no independent authority; everything begins with God, comes from God, and finishes with God.

Lesson of the Heavenly Realms 4

The Satan cannot do anything unless it is authorized and granted by Yahweh; and all that the Satan does is ascribed to the One who is in control of all things, rules all things, and sets into motion all things: Yahweh.

Romans 11:33-36

Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways! For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to choose to give him advice? And who has given him so much that he needs in the **future** to choose to pay it back? **For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.** To Him be the glory forever. Amen!

As amazing as this scripture sounds, it is so hard to believe it down into the depth of our being. For instance, I cannot tell you how many times I have heard people say with-one-breath that “God is sovereign,” or “Jesus is Lord,” and with-the-next that “He would never cause sickness or tragedy, that is Satan's doing. God is not responsible for the evil of this world.” Logically, how can Jesus be Lord or sovereign if He is not in control of all things all the time?

Well, technically, the Satan is the one who does evil and influences mankind with his ways, for God never does evil.⁷ But as we read here in **Romans** and in **Job**, God and God alone is responsible for all things that occur in our lives. He even unabashedly claims such responsibility. He takes complete ownership with no excuses, and the Satan ascribes to Him all responsibility.

Think of it as if God is holding a hammer that drives the nail into the wood. If we are the wood, then the nail represents those who bring pain and affliction into our lives. The hammer represents the demonic who is doing the evil and driving the nail into our lives. The nail represents the instrument through which our pain comes, be it friends, family, enemies, institutions, etc. But God always holds the hammer. The hammer cannot choose on its own to drive a nail into the wood. The hammer has no independent authority. It can only act as it is wielded. God always holds the hammer, but He does not strike the nail without the hammer in hand.

This is shocking to our sensibilities and our sense of right and wrong. But even though the Satan is the one who physically comes against Job, the Satan points the finger at **Yahweh**: “*But put forth **Your** hand now and **touch** all that he has.*” The Satan correctly ascribes full responsibility to **Yahweh** for all that is going to happen to Job at the hand of the Satan and his minions, and **Yahweh** makes no reply to the contrary because it is the rock-solid truth.

Let's bring this discussion closer to home. Despite all the acclamations of Jesus being “the Lord,” that

⁷ **James 1:13; 1 John 1:5**

word “Lord” has taken on a different definition to most Christians than what the scriptures declare. The scriptures are clear, Jesus is the absolute despot, the commander of all, the dictator, if you may, the monarch of all that takes place in heaven and earth. He is the Lord!

However, given the evil and terror that takes place in this world, the evil and terror that takes place in our own lives, most of us have a hard time reconciling this truth with the fact that God is love.⁸ Therefore, we have, whether intentionally or unintentionally, watered down the meaning of “Lord.” In so doing, we have taken away from **Yahweh’s** majesty, a supreme majesty which even the Satan acknowledges. We have stripped meaning and authority away from the word “sovereign” such that very few Christians ascribe responsibility for all that takes place in our world, all the horrors and tragedies, to the now living God.

All this brings up that age old question, “If God is all powerful (the absolute sovereign), then how can He be all loving?” The implication is that He cannot be all loving, given the terrors, traumas, and downright evil that overwhelms our lives.

The Satan views life through this lens of doubt and consternation, those in the world (those who are not in the household of God) see things through this same lens, and unfortunately, it is how far too many so-called Christians see things. The average Christian finds that he or she cannot admit to this truth and still try to convince people that they need Jesus, so they change the truth about God’s sovereignty and ascribe to the Satan, to the demonic, a level of power and majesty that they just do not possess. They ascribe responsibility to the hammer and not to the one who wields the hammer.

This story of Job will force us to come face-to-face with what we believe about God’s character, nature, and authority.

Keep in mind, the Satan did not say, “But **allow** me to put forth my hand and I will touch all that he has.” Yet, this is how many Bible teachers address the issue of evil in our lives, and in so doing they water down the truth and reduce, ever so slightly, **Yahweh’s** majesty and authority.

The scriptures do not make this concession!

The Satan does not make this concession!

The Satan directly connects the “**touch**” (the terrible tragedies that will take place in Job’s life) with **Yahweh’s** hand, the one who holds and wields the hammer. The Satan understands that he is just an intermediary, a tool, and though he will drive the nail into the wood, the only one who can claim true responsibility and accountability for what he is going to do to Job is **Yahweh**. This is a truth that extends beyond this silly notion that “God allows” all things. The truth is that all things are from Him, through Him, and to Him, or for His glory.⁹

Lesson of the Heavenly Realms 5

Yahweh, and Yahweh alone, is solely and exclusively responsible for all things that occur in our lives. For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. He directs our steps from the first one to

⁸ 1 John 4:8

⁹ Romans 11:36

the last one we take.¹⁰

What happens next is unthinkable. This is as terrible as terrible can be—like a nightmare that one fears but never thinks could be possible. Again, keep in mind, Job had no forewarning of anything that was coming toward him.

Let's stop here and we will pick up again with the unthinkable.

I am glad you tuned in and have been ready to listen!

¹⁰ See *Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 16:9, 20:24*