

ENDURING TRIALS

A Daily Devotional Study Guide



**THE BOOK
OF JOB**

WEEK 1

“A Description of Godliness”

Study: Job 1:1-5

Reading: James 4:1-10, II Timothy 2:19-26

Memory: Job 1:20-22

Do you read the reviews before you purchase something online? Most of us do. Why? We want to know the experience of others before we buy something ourselves. Though there are times that reviews can't be trusted, in general, reviews are very helpful because they allow us to make informed decisions when buying products, deciding where to stay or what to do.

Today, we are going to read a review, but this review is about a person's life. We will read how the character of Job was given a great review by God.

What Does the Bible Say?

The book of Job contains some great mysteries and wonderful truths. One of those mysteries starts with the actual author of the book which deepens even more when we attempt to see when the book was written. The author is unknown though the two leading candidates are Moses and Solomon. The time period in which Job lived seems to be around the time of Abraham because of some of the references to things that are found in the book. Though knowing this information might be helpful, not knowing it doesn't change the truth found in the book.

Job lived in the land of Uz which is assumed to be somewhere close to the land of Edom between the land of Israel (though the nation of Israel probably didn't exist in Job's time) and the Arabian Peninsula.

The description given in Scripture describing the life of Job is simple, yet profound. This man was declared by God to be blameless and upright. This did not mean that he was perfect, but that the life of Job was characterized by doing right on a consistent regular basis. Even further than being godly in the eyes of the others, he was known for his fear of God. The “fear of God” described in the Old Testament was the idea of a person who showed ultimate respect for God and constantly stood in awe of His power, greatness and judgement. The result of this

respect was that He turned away from evil. He didn't flirt with it, participate in it or even enjoy watching it. Instead He tried to remove himself from it in all areas of his life (vs 1).

God had blessed Job abundantly with a large family and many possessions. There is not an actual way to compare the wealth of Job with the wealth of today, but we would have to assume that he would be considered a millionaire if not a billionaire in our society today. He was the wealthiest person in the region in which he lived. He was not only respected for his wealth, but was known for his outstanding character among all those whom he did business with in the region (vs 2-3).

The uprightness of Job is seen by the particular example given in verses 4 & 5. Job's children would gather together for a period of time and celebrate the main meal of the day in each other's houses. Though some have thought that these were evil parties, there is really no evidence of that. The fact that Job offered sacrifices in case his children sinned isn't meant to relay information about the wrongs of his children, but is meant to show the love and godly character of Job. As the father of the family, it was his responsibility to offer the sacrifices for his family and he wanted to make sure that even the unknown sins of his family were covered. Job was a man concerned about righteousness and it was evident in his family and to all who knew them (vs 4-5).

How Does this Apply to Me?

If someone was going to write a description of your life, could they describe it the way that Job's life was described? Would you be described as blameless and upright? That means that there is no unconfessed or regular sin or even questionable areas in your life. Would you be described as a person who respects God deeply? This means that you are constantly amazed and thrilled with God, and others see by your actions and by your words that you have a great trust in God. Would you be described as a person who flees from evil? Think about what you allow in your mind and the things that your life produces. Do you flee evil in these areas or do you flirt with evil. Let the description of Job's life be a challenge to you and choose to allow God to have control of your life so that the same description said of Job can be said about you.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Thank God for illustrations of Job to help encourage.*

Where was Job from (vs 1)?

What four characteristics about Job were given in verse 1.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

How are these four characteristics displayed in your life?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What are some areas where you need to change so that your life could be described like Job's life was?

How many children did Job have (vs 2)?

What does verse 3 reveal about the wealth of Job?

What would the children of Job do (vs 4)?

What would Job do once these feasts were over (vs 5)?

Why did Job do this (vs 5)?

What does this reveal about the godly character of Job?

How can you put the example from Job into practice in your daily life?

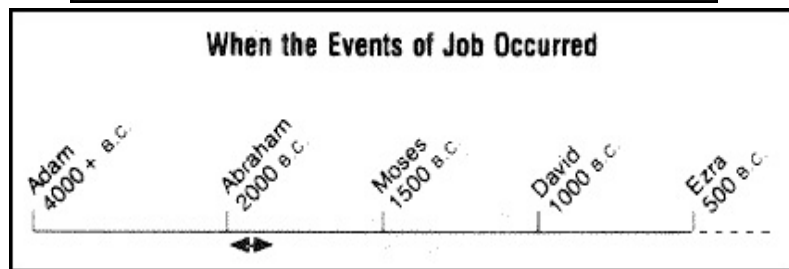
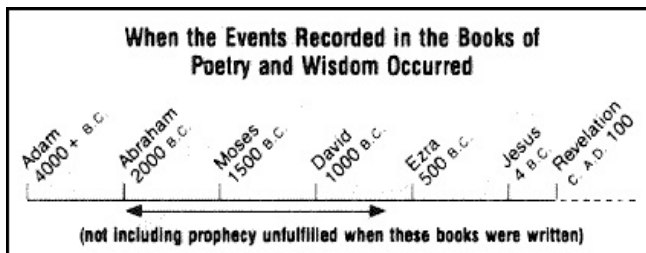
Why do you think we are told about the great character and wealth of Job?

“In Complete Control”

Study: Job 1:6-12

Reading: Isaiah 46:1-13, Daniel 10:10-21

Memory: Job 1:20-22



From Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts

What Does the Bible Say?

The book of Job gives us an insight into eternal events that open our mind and understanding to the sovereign control of God in all the events and circumstances that come into our lives. Though we can't fully explain some of the events, we get just a small glimpse into eternal affairs. This glimpse begins as we are told how the angels all came to present themselves before God to give account of what they had been doing. In this group was Satan, the angel that had fallen from heaven because of his pride. When it was Satan's turn, God asked him where he had been. Satan responded by explaining how he had been traveling up and down the earth, seeking those who feared God, attempting to get them to turn from God and reject God (I Peter 5:8). This passage sheds light on the power and limitations of angels. They have the ability to move swiftly, yet they aren't omnipresent and don't have the same power that God has (vs 6-7).

God then asked Satan if he had tried to attack Job in an attempt to discredit his faith. God told Satan that there was no one who lived on the

earth who expressed the great faith and trust in God as Job. When Satan heard this, he told God that the only reason Job lived godly was because Job knew that God had placed a hedge of protection around him so that he couldn't touch him. This response of Satan reveals that God is in complete control and He will not allow anything to happen to His followers that He doesn't want to happen (vs 8-10).

Satan was convinced that if God took His protecting hand off of Job that Job would deny God and curse Him because of all the calamity that would take place. God, knowing that Job would stand firm, told Satan that he could go and afflict Job in whatever way He desired. The only limitation that was placed on Satan was that he was not allowed to physically harm Job. Satan then left the presence of God with a plan and purpose which we will read about tomorrow (vs 11-12).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you find yourself looking at all the events and circumstances in your life from an earthly perspective? Many believers live much of their Christian lives just like the world because they think like the world. By the "world" I am not talking about outrageous sin and immorality, but I am referring to a walk that is by sight and not by faith. When you come face to face with the reality of what you read today, you realize that earthly thinking is totally different than the heavenly plans that God is making for you. It must be remembered as you read through this that Job knew nothing of the events that went on in heaven, just as you don't know what conversation God might be having about you right now. A full realization of this concept should drive you to follow God at all costs knowing that He is in complete control.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for giving you a glimpse into eternal matters.
- * Ask God to help you live with the right perspective.
- * Praise God because He is all-powerful.

Thought for the day

Who presented themselves before God (vs 6)?

Why do you think Satan was a part of this (vs 6)?

****This is quite a mystery to us today, but we just have to choose to believe what the Word of God states.*

What did God ask Satan (vs 7)?

What has Satan been doing (vs 7)?

In light of 1 Peter 5:8, what does this reveal to you about your enemy?

What did God ask (vs 8)?

Why do you think God would offer up Job?

What did Satan say about Job's faith (vs 9)? Why do you think he declared this?

****It is easy to say you trust in God when everything goes well, but it is much harder to trust in God when you face trials and difficulties in life.*

What had God done for Job (vs 10)?

Why is it important to realize that God can do this for His children?

What did Satan say Job would do (vs 11)?

What did God say Satan could do (vs 12)?

What does this reveal about the safety that God provides?

What limitation was given to Satan (vs 12)?

Why do you think God gave this limitation?

What can you learn from this passage?

“Losing Everything”

Study: Job 1:13-22

Reading: I Corinthians 10:1-14, James 1:13-18

Memory: Job 1:20-22

Horatio Spafford lost many of his real estate investments in the great Chicago fire. In order to cheer up his family and to help D.L. Moody in his evangelistic campaign in England, he planned a family trip to Europe. Due to urgent business, Spafford was unable to go with his family, but sent them on ahead to Europe. Halfway across the Atlantic their boat hit another boat and sank, killing all four of his daughters. After his wife rejoined him, they decided to make the trip to Europe together. When over the spot where his daughters died, Spafford began to write the well-known hymn that is still a favorite today, entitled – “It Is Well With My Soul.” It is that type of faith that we will read about today as we see what Satan did to Job.

What Does the Bible Say?

As soon as Satan received permission from God to attack Job, he held nothing back, but orchestrated plans to attempt to discredit the faith of Job and cause him to curse God. The first thing he did was cause a group of men called the Sabeans to war against Job's territory. Not much is known about the Sabeans except from other references in the Scripture that describe them as a group of people from northern Africa (Is. 43:4, 45:15). These men attacked the servants who were plowing the fields with the oxen and donkeys, killing all the men but one. All of the animals were stolen by the Sabeans. As the only servant to survive rushed to tell Job about this horrific event, another servant came to Job to report something else that happened (vs 13-15).

This servant was one of the shepherds who was over Job's sheep and he reported how fire came down from heaven and burned up all of the sheep and killed the servants who were watching over the sheep. It is not clear what the fire from heaven was, though it could have been a lightning storm or actual fire. As if that wasn't bad enough, another servant came to Job and reported that the Chaldeans raided the men who were in charge of his camels and killed all the men while stealing the animals. He was the only one to survive. The region of Chaldea was the

area that became known as Babylon several years later (vs 16-17).

Terror and disbelief must have been building up in the heart of Job when the next servant came to him. This man reported that a great wind, probably a tornado, came up and demolished the house where Job's children were eating, killing all of them that were in the house. Job's family was the only thing that he had left and now that was taken away from him. In just a matter of minutes, Job lost everything (vs 18-19).

Greatly distressed and in tremendous sorrow, Job shaved his head and put on sackcloth and ashes (a traditional sign of mourning), but instead of blaming and getting upset at God, he worshiped God. He then boldly declared that it was the Lord who gave him all he had and it was the Lord that allowed it to be taken away. God's name was to be blessed and praised even in the midst of this most difficult circumstance. Through all this, Job's faith was strong and he didn't curse God as Satan thought he would (vs 20-22).

How Does this Apply to Me?

James 1:17 says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." From this passage it is clear that God didn't bring evil into the life of Job, but allowed Satan to use his great power to attack Job. Satan has some power over nature and people to accomplish his desires, but that power can only go so far as God allows. This means that God will not allow you to go through trials and difficulties that you will not be able to handle with His help (I Cor. 10:13). He allows things to happen to you for your good and for His glory.

Think of the last trial or difficult time that you faced in life. Did you worship God and thank Him for it? Did you get upset and bothered that God would allow it to happen? It is trials and difficulties that reveal how deep your faith and trust really are. Examine your life today to make sure that you are committed to a trust in Him no matter what the circumstances in life may bring about. He is completely worthy of your trust.

Thought for the day

What were Job's children doing (vs 13)?

What did the first messenger reveal (vs 14-15)?

Why do you think the Sabeans would have done this?

****In those days, it was very common for foreign invaders to attack for the purpose of stealing animals and possessions for their personal gain.*

Who came before the first servant finished explaining what had happened (vs 16)?

What happened to the sheep and to the shepherds (vs 16)?

What happened before the second servant finished his explanation (vs 17)?

What happened to the camels (vs 17)?

What happened to the sons and daughters (vs 18-19)?

How do you think you would respond if you found out all of this information in a matter of minutes?

How did Job respond (vs 20)?

How do you think He could worship God when all this just happened?

What did Job declare (vs 21)?

How does this reveal the incredible faith of Job?

What did Job not do (vs 22)?

Think of the last time you faced a difficulty. Explain how you responded like Job or how you didn't respond like Job?

How do you think you can develop faith like Job?

“God In The Bad Times”

Study: Job 2:1-10

Reading: II Corinthians 4:8-18, 12:1-10

Memory: Job 1:20-22

Years ago I faced a situation where I had to lead the church I pastored in disciplining one of my best friends and someone I love deeply out of the church. It broke my heart to see the unrepentant and rebellious spirit of this person, yet I knew that the church had to do the right thing regardless of how much I didn't want this to happen. The idea of church discipline is not popular among people today because they would rather think of God only as a God of blessing and prosperity.

Today, we will read how God allows us to suffer, but He will never leave us during our suffering. He will be there in the good times and the bad times and He wants us to trust in Him through both.

What Does the Bible Say?

Job had been afflicted with great mental anguish when he lost all that he had possessed in a matter of minutes. Yet, through this he didn't turn from God. This greatly bothered Satan. When the angels once again came to report of their work to God, Satan reported as well. The conversation was much like the first except that this time Satan had already afflicted Job and God had won. God pointed this out to Satan as He praised the character that Job displayed. Satan responded by telling God that God had only allowed him to scratch the surface to bring pain and suffering to Job because he was only allowed to remove things around Job and wasn't able to hurt him physically. Satan thought that if he was able to bring great physical pain on Job that Job would curse God and turn from Him. God gave Satan permission to do as he pleased, giving him only one restriction. Satan wasn't allowed to take the life of Job (vs 1-6).

Another glimpse into the great power of Satan can be seen in these verses as he not only had control over many events of nature and the hearts of many men, but he also has control over physical diseases and sicknesses. It must be remembered that this power is still under the

ultimate authority of God. Satan displayed this power when he left the presence of the Lord by causing Job to have sores over every part of his body. These sores were incredibly painful and Job found that one of the ways to relieve the pain a little was to use a piece of broken pottery to scrape the sores and open up the wounds, temporarily relieving the infectious pressure (vs 7-8).

Job's wife couldn't believe what was happening to Job and she had become upset at God for allowing this to happen. Her husband had lived uprightly and had displayed great character and integrity, yet God allowed this to happen. She became so bothered by it that she told Job just to curse God so that He would take his life. Job refused and told her that her thinking was foolish. He revealed to her that he understood that God was not only the God of the good times, but also the God of the bad times. He chose not to sin with his lips and speak against God because His faith and trust in God was so great (vs 9-10).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you respond when you suffer? Sometimes, you will suffer in life for doing what is wrong, but other times you will suffer when you are doing right or for doing right. It is easy to get down and discouraged when things don't go your way, but it is through those times that God works on you the most and where He is the most glorified. Praising Him during trials will be one of the greatest witnessing tools that you can ever have. People can hear you praise God during times of blessings, but they want to see how you react during times of pain and pressure. Those times reveal who you really are and what you are really trusting in. Choose today that you will whole-heartedly live for God no matter what the earthly outcome may be.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the suffering He allows into your life.*
- * *Ask God to help you trust in His strength and His character.*
- * *Praise God because He is fully trustworthy.*

Thought for the day

What did Satan do (vs 1)?

What did God ask (vs 2)?

Why do you think God asked this?

Where did Satan say he had been (vs 2)?

How did this parallel what happened in chapter 1?

What did God declare about Job (vs 3)?

How did Satan respond (vs 4)?

What do you think Satan meant in verse 4?

What did Satan say would happen (vs 5)?

What did God say Satan could do (vs 6)?

What did Satan do to Job (vs 7)?

How bad were his physical problems (vs 7)?

How did Job respond (vs 8)?

How do you think you would have responded?

What did Job's wife want Job to do (vs 9)?

Why do you think she declared this?

What did Job state about good and evil (vs 10)?

How do you think Job was able to respond this way?

Do you think you would be able to respond this way? Explain why or why not.

“Expressing Your Feelings”

Study: Job 2:11-3:26

Reading: —

Memory: Job 1:20-22

As a pastor who has dealt with many different people who have lost loved ones, I have found that one of the best things that I can do is just be there to listen. I find that grieving relatives will often talk about many things, and just need to express their feelings because of the deep emotional loss they have faced. In most cases, they aren't looking for advice, but are looking for comfort and a listening ear.

Today, we are going to read how Job began to express his grief over all that had happened to him.

What Does the Bible Say?

Job had three close friends named Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar who wanted to come and be a comfort to Job when they heard about the tragic things that happened to him. As they came close to Job with the purpose of showing love and comforting him, they could not recognize him because the physical wounds and suffering had taken a toll on his body. They sat with Job, began to weep out loud and joined Job in tearing their clothes and pouring ashes on their heads. They did this to show sympathy towards Job and to join in his mourning. They then sat on the ground with him for a solid week without saying a word because of the great pain and suffering Job was in (vs 11-13).

After the seven days, Job began to speak and basically began to express how he wished that he had never been born. As he spoke of the day that he was conceived and the day that he was born, he used several poetic and descriptive words in which he wished those days never had light in them. This is an expression used to describe how he wished those days had been completely blotted out of history because then he wouldn't have to experience the pain and suffering that he was going through at the present time.

A particularly interesting verse in this section is verse 8 which refers to Leviathan. According to the Bible Knowledge Commentary, “Job's

words, ‘May those who curse days curse that day, those who are ready to rouse Leviathan,’ refers to a custom of enchanters who claimed to make a day unfortunate (to curse it) by raising Leviathan (cf. 41:1; Ps. 74:14; 104:26; Isa. 27:1), a seven-headed sea monster of ancient Near Eastern mythology. When aroused, the dragon would cause an eclipse by swallowing the sun or moon. So if the daytime or nighttime luminary were gone, Job’s birthday would, in a sense, be missing. Job was not saying he believed in this mythology. He was probably doing nothing more than utilizing, for poetic purposes, a common notion his hearers would understand.”

Job continued on through the whole of chapter three describing how he desired to die so that he would be rid of the agony that he was going through. Here he displayed that though he was upright and pure in the sight of God, he was still an emotional person who wanted to express the deep pain and misery that he was experiencing (vs 1-26).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you respond when you go through trials and difficulties? It is easy for others to tell you how to respond, but they aren’t feeling the pain and emotional grief that you are feeling. Job didn’t speak until after a week of holding his emotions in and then he finally had to release them in an attempt to describe what he was feeling. Job is not the only Bible character to do this. The Scripture is full of men who lament over their condition of suffering on earth. David did it often in the Psalms as he was being chased by the many enemies that he faced throughout his life. It is easy to get the idea that as a Christian you should not mourn over a loss, but that is not the picture presented in the Bible. There is a time for mourning, but we will read at the end of the book that there was also a time to move on in faith and trust. You should feel free to express your feelings because you are human and you hurt, but ultimately you have to choose to trust that God is in control or risk rejecting Him altogether.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Thank God for being in complete control of your life.*

* *Ask God to help you trust in Him even through the tough times.*

Thought for the day

What did Job’s three friends make a point to do (vs 11)?

What was unique about the appearance of Job (vs 12)?

How long did they sit with Job without speaking (vs 13)? Why?

How would you sum up verses 1-10 of chapter 3?

Why do you think Job felt this way?

What does this reveal about a person’s emotions and feelings, even if they are a very godly individual?

What question was Job asking in verses 11-12?

Have you ever felt this way? Explain why.

Why did Job feel that he would have been better off being born dead (vs 13-19)?

What did Job express about how he was currently feeling (vs 20-22)?

What question did Job ask in verse 23?

What do you think He meant by asking this question?

What was Job experiencing (vs 24)?

What had come upon Job (vs 25)?

What did Job say he was continually experiencing (vs 26)?

Do you think it was wrong for Job to express this? Explain.

“A Wrong View of God”

Study: Job 4:1-21

Reading: II Corinthians 11:22-33

Memory: Job 1:20-22

Several years ago, I received an email from a person that was very concerning to me because of a few things that person mentioned. I talked to my wife about it and told her that I thought the email was sent because of something my wife had said. I was attempting to “read between the lines” about the purpose of the email. This caused my wife to feel bad and she sent an email responding to some of the supposed accusations. Come to find out, I didn’t have the correct view of what they said and I passed the wrong view down to my wife, causing a much bigger mess.

Today, we are going to see how important it is for us to have the proper view of God as we attempt to share Him with others. We will see how important it is to know the truth about the Word of God and to let that develop our true view of God.

What Does the Bible Say?

One of Job’s friends Eliphaz, who had sat with Job throughout this time, couldn’t help but respond to what Job had said. His message was not one of comfort though, but was one of rebuke. He was a little concerned that Job wouldn’t hear him, but he went ahead and opened his mouth. He started his conversation by reminding Job how he had helped many people in the past. Job had counseled others when they went through tough times and had encouraged them to trust in God, yet now, when he was going through the difficult time, he couldn’t follow his own advice. He began to question Job’s hope and trust in God because of Job’s emotional response to his great trials (vs 1-6).

It seems like Eliphaz was stabbing Job with these sharp cutting words, and then he proceeded to twist the knife as he told Job that people who were righteous didn’t suffer. Natural law revealed that a person reaps what they sow which was suggesting that Job was reaping the consequences for his actions. Eliphaz continued his thought by using descriptive language to describe how the judgement of God is harsh and

severe. His point was that Job must have done something wrong and had sinned in order to have all these terrible things happen to him (vs 7-11).

To add further proof and authority to what he was saying, Eliphaz brought up a vision that he had. He viewed this vision as being directly from God and nobody could tell him that it wasn’t because he knew what he experienced. This vision told him that not even angels can be right and holy before an almighty God. If God doesn’t care for the angels, he certainly wouldn’t hold sinful humans in high regard. Eliphaz pictured God as an angry God who was waiting to punish and crush those who didn’t do as He desired. He was a God who displayed no mercy but brought about fierce judgement (vs 12-21).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What is your view of God? Do you view God as a wimpy God, a loving God, or a judgmental God? Depending on how you grew up, and for many people, how they were treated by their father, your view of God will be affected by your life experiences. The view that Eliphaz had of God wasn’t based on truth, but on some experience that he had. Whenever people rely on their feelings or experience rather than the truth, they are headed for trouble. You need to allow your understanding of God to be established and changed by the Word of God as you read about His real character. The God that Eliphaz presented contained portions of the truth, but wasn’t the complete truth. As you study the Word of God daily, seek to know and understand who your God really is. Not by what you think or feel, but by what His Word says.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for revealing Himself to you in His Word.*
- * *Ask God to reveal Himself to you.*
- * *Praise God because He is a personal God.*

Thought for the day

What did Eliphaz say that he needed to do (vs 2)?

What did Eliphaz reveal about the character of Job (vs 3-4)?

What did Eliphaz accuse Job of (vs 5)?

What question did Eliphaz ask Job (vs 6)?

Why is it much easier to tell someone else what they should do when you are not experiencing the same trial that they are experiencing?

How have you found ways to be helpful rather than hurtful to those who are going through very difficult times?

What wrong thinking did Eliphaz present in verses 7-11?

How was this thinking wrong?

What did Eliphaz say he had experienced (vs 12-16)?

What did Eliphaz say this vision revealed about God (vs 17-18)?

How did God view men according to Eliphaz (vs 19)?

What do you think verse 20 meant?

****Eliphaz gave a fatal view of men declaring that we are just pawns for an angry God. We are here and then gone, forgotten forever.*

What did verse 21 express?

How was the view that Eliphaz expressed about God different than the view the Bible gives about God?

Describe how you have had a proper or improper view of God?