

The Book of Job

WHEN TRIALS COME

Bible Studies from the Book of Job Book 1



Seven Studies from the Book of Job

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Study 1

We never see the big picture. Job 1:1-2:10

1. When people have asked “Why do the innocent suffer?” what are the good and bad responses you have heard?

2. Read Job 1:1-5. How would you describe Job’s character?

3. Read Job 1:6-12. What does this heavenly assembly teach us about the spiritual realities behind the world we live in? Try to come up with at least 4 different observations!

4. What reason does this scene give us for the suffering experienced by Job? Is this the only reason the Bible gives for our suffering (see also 1 Cor 11:27-31, Heb 12:7-11)?

5. Read Job 1:13-19. What might Job’s neighbours have said is the cause of Job’s suffering? As readers, what information do we have that Job doesn’t have? How does this observation help us in coming to terms with our own suffering?

6. Read Job 1:20-2:10 and describe as many elements of Job's response to disaster as you can. Is there anything in Job's response that you might aspire to imitate?

7. Read Luke 22:31-22. What does Jesus reveal to Simon Peter in these verses? What do they teach us about remaining faithful in our suffering?

8. Based on today's study, what is one thing you wish to remember during your own trials?

9. Spend some time praying and strengthening one another to remain faithful to God.

Study 2

Is life worth living? Job 3:1-26

1. Is it ever ok for a Christian to long for death?
2. Read Job 3:1-10. What is the overriding feeling expressed by Job in these verses?
3. At what other point in the OT is *darkness* a significant image? (Hint: "In the beginning...") What is Job suggesting by using that image here?
4. Is Job's language here at odds with his response in chapters 1 & 2? Why or why not?
5. Read Job 3:11-19. What can Job's words teach us about death? How does Job pre-empt the NT teaching about the life to come? See also Matt 6:19-20, Phil 1:21-24, 1 Cor 15:51-55.
6. Read Job 3:20-26. Is Job suicidal? Which parts of the text have informed your answer?

7. Is Job's response to his losses a model that is common in your own culture? How is it the same, how is it different?

8. Discuss what these verses teach us about:

- the nature of grief
- the range of responses to grief that Christians can express.

9. Pray that a clear understanding of life after death might inform our seasons of grief, and that we might learn to support one another well during those seasons.

Study 3

How (not) to comfort the downcast. Job 4-6

1. When someone close to you is suffering, what kind of response are you most likely to give? Do you tend towards words or actions? Why might you have this tendency?

2. Read Eliphaz's words to Job in 4:3-5. What is Eliphaz suggesting here?

3. What does 4:6-9 reveal about how Eliphaz sees the world? What is he suggesting about Job?

4. Do you think that Eliphaz has a correct understanding of how the world works? How might the message of God's gracious forgiveness of sins challenge Eliphaz's worldview?

5. Read Job 5:8-27. How accurate are Eliphaz's words here?

6. What mark would you give Eliphaz as a counsellor? Give a reason for your mark.

7. How does Job respond to Eliphaz's advice? (6:14-17). In what way does Job disagree with Eliphaz? (6:24-30)

8. What can we learn from Eliphaz about what *not* to say to the grieving? What suggestions can the group make as to some *more helpful* things to say?

9. Pray that God might make us wise counsellors!

Study 4

Where deeper wisdom can be found. Job 28

1. Which subject do you wish you had complete knowledge about?

2. Read Job 28:1-11. What do we learn about mining in these verses? Try and list as many things as possible. Why might the Book of Job be speaking about mining all of a sudden?

3. Read Job 28:12-19. What images are used to explain the elusiveness of wisdom?

4. What comparison is being made between (i) the products of mining and (ii) wisdom and understanding?

5. What comfort might these verses bring those who feel they are lacking in wisdom or are failing to understand life?

6. Read Job 28:20-28. Who *is* wholly wise? What is the key to gaining wisdom ourselves?

7. What do you think it means to fear God (v 28)? Could you describe yourself as a “God-fearer?”

8. Look at 1 Corinthians 2:6-15. What good news is there for the Spirit-filled Christian with regard to accessing God’s wisdom? What is involved in accessing this wisdom? Is God’s wisdom appreciated or recognised by everyone?

9. Pray that we might be satisfied with the limits of our understanding, while eager to know that which God has revealed to us.