

JOB

A PATH
THROUGH
SUFFERING

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 1 June 18, 2023

“Questions of Suffering”



OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come to you today asking for your guidance, wisdom, and support as we begin this session. Help us to engage in meaningful discussion; allow us to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of community. We pray this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Job 1:1-3, 8-22 (NIV)

In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. ²He had seven sons and three daughters, ³and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East.

⁸ Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.”

⁹ “Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. ¹⁰ “Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. ¹¹ But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.”

¹² The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.”

Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

¹³ One day when Job’s sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, ¹⁴ a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans attacked and made off with them. They put the

servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, “The fire of God fell from the heavens and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and made off with them. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

¹⁸ While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, “Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, ¹⁹ when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

²⁰ At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship ²¹ and said:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart.”

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.”

²² In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

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INTRODUCTION

No book in all of literature addresses the questions of suffering and evil with the spiritual wisdom of the book of Job. The book of Job shows us how the Christian approach to suffering differs from both cynical and moralistic viewpoints.

When going through seasons of suffering, Christians are called to hold onto the mystery and stay in a relationship with a God we cannot control but whose goodness we cannot doubt when we truly grasp the Gospel. The key to walking through times of suffering is understanding and trusting that God loves us. God demonstrated his love for us through the death of His Son, the innocent sufferer, on the cross.

QUESTIONS

1. What has been the most challenging trial in your life? What have you learned from it? How did it require patience?
2. How can we prepare for adversity in our lives? What kind of mindset does it take to keep moving when that adversity comes?
3. How might faith in God sustain you in the face of similar losses?
4. Why are we so quick to question God when suffering happens?
5. Read the scripture from Job on page 1. Why do you think God allowed Job's suffering?

FINAL APPLICATION

What hardships are causing you to want to give up right now? What faith response is God asking you to give in light of life's difficulties? What can this group do to help?