

The Book of Job

Lesson 1: A Blameless Man and the Heavenly Wager -- Job 1:1-22

Picture a man at the height of a good life. The land of Uz spreads out around him, dotted with sheep and camels, oxen and donkeys, the slow wealth of the ancient East. His seven sons and three daughters gather in one another's homes, feast after feast, laughter spilling into the evening air. By every visible measure, Job is the greatest man of the east. And yet the very first thing God's word tells us about him is not his bank account but his heart: he was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. Hold on to that sentence, because the whole book hangs on it.

We meet Job early in the morning, rising while it is still dark to offer sacrifices for his children, just in case they had sinned and cursed God in their hearts. That is not the picture of a careless rich man. That is a father on his knees, a man who takes God seriously down to the corners of his household. He is not perfect (the Bible never calls anyone but Christ that), but he is genuine, tender toward God, and faithful when no one is watching. We are being introduced to a man we are meant to admire.

Then the camera lifts. We are taken up, past the rooftops of Uz, into a scene Job himself never sees: the sons of God present themselves before the Lord, and Satan comes among them. A conversation begins that Job will never overhear, a conversation about him. The accuser sneers that Job only serves God for the paycheck. Take away the blessings, he says, and watch the worship collapse. And God, for reasons He never fully explains, allows the test to begin. By sundown, Job has lost nearly everything.

We come to this book because we live in Uz too. We have watched good people buried far too young. We have prayed and still gotten the phone call. We have heard the cheerful voices insisting that if we just had enough faith, the trouble would lift, and we have felt the quiet cruelty in that promise. Job will not give us easy answers. But it will give us something better: a God who is sovereign over the storm, a sufferer who worships in the rubble, and a hope that nothing on earth can finally cancel. Let us read carefully, and let it form us.

Group Discussion: When you hear someone say, "If you really had faith, God would heal you and bless you," what is true in that statement, and where does the book of Job expose it as false?

Personal Reflection: Think back to a season when you lost something precious. As honestly as you can, did your worship of God depend on the gift, or did it rest on the Giver?

Read Job 1:1-22

Study Questions

1. What does Job 1:1–5 reveal about the kind of man Job was, and why does it matter that the writer establishes his blamelessness before any suffering begins?
2. Job rose early to offer sacrifices for his children in case they had sinned in their hearts (1:5). What does his quiet, behind-the-scenes faithfulness as a father stir in you about your own household?
3. In the heavenly scene (1:6–12), what do we learn about Satan's character, his access, and the limits placed on him?
4. Satan accused Job of serving God only for the blessings (1:9–11). When you examine your own heart, what reasons do you actually serve God for?
5. What does the rapid-fire arrival of the four messengers (1:13–19) teach us about the nature of catastrophe and the powers at work behind visible events?
6. When trouble lands in waves, as it did for Job in a single day, how do you tend to respond, and what would you want your first response to be?

7. Examine Job's reaction in 1:20–21. What does it mean that he tore his robe and shaved his head, yet fell down and worshiped?
8. Job said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return" (1:21). How does remembering that you brought nothing into the world and will carry nothing out reshape your grip on what you own?
9. How can God be sovereign over Job's suffering, setting and enforcing the limits on Satan, without God Himself being the author of evil or the one who sins against Job?
10. Looking back across this whole chapter, name one specific way the Lord Jesus is using Job's worship in the rubble ("the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord") to form your own heart right now.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: James 5:11, the patience of Job and the compassionate purpose of the Lord; Ecclesiastes 5:15, naked we come and naked we return; 1 Peter 5:8–9, the adversary who prowls and is to be resisted; Matthew 4:1–11, Jesus tempted yet faithful where Job's faith is foreshadowed and surpassed; Romans 8:28, God working all things for good to those who love Him

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