

**connect 360**

**BIBLE STUDY GUIDE  
LARGE PRINT EDITION**

# **Praise Him in the Storm:**

## **WHEN LIFE FALLS APART**

A STUDY OF JOB

**Craig West  
Bennye Bryant  
Golden Davis  
Vivian Conrad**



Dallas, Texas

*Praise Him in the Storm: When Life Falls Apart—  
Connect 360 Bible Study Guide—Large Print Edition*

Copyright © 2022 by GC2® Press.

All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever  
without written permission except in the case of brief quotations.

For information, contact

GC2 PRESS, 7557 Rambler Road, Suite 1200, Dallas, TX 75231-2388.

GC2® is registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

CONNECT 360 ALL THE BIBLE FOR ALL OF LIFE®

is registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in Lessons 1-4 are taken  
from the Holy Bible, ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION®, ESV® Copyright 2001  
by Crossway Bibles. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in Lessons 5-7 are taken  
from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995,  
2020 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

NASB refers to this edition of the New American Standard Bible®.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in lessons 8-13 are taken  
from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright  
1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights  
reserved worldwide.

GC2® Press Leadership Team

Executive Director, BGCT: David Hardage

Associate Executive Director, BGCT: Craig Christina

Treasurer/CFO, BGCT: Ward Hayes

Director, Center for Church Health, BGCT: Phil Miller

Publisher, GC2® Press: Bob Billups

Marketing Coordinator, GC2® Press: Stan Granberry

Publishing Specialist, GC2® Press: Nancy Feaster

Production, Cover Design, and Printing: Randall House

First edition: March 2022

ISBN - 978-1-948618-53-3

# How to Make the Best Use of This Issue

Whether you're the teacher or a student—

1. Start early in the week before your class meets.
2. Overview the study. Review the table of contents and read the study introduction. Try to see how each lesson relates to the overall study.
3. Use your Bible to read and consider prayerfully the Scripture passages for the lesson. (You'll see that each writer has chosen a favorite translation for the lessons in this issue. You're free to use the Bible translation you prefer and compare it with the translation chosen for that unit, of course.)
4. After reading all the Scripture passages in your Bible, then read the writer's comments. The comments are intended to be an aid to your study of the Bible.
5. Read the small articles—"sidebars"—in each lesson. They are intended to provide additional, enrichment information and inspiration and to encourage thought and application.

6. Try to answer for yourself the questions included in each lesson. They're intended to encourage further thought and application, and they can also be used in the class session itself.

If you're the teacher—

Do all the things just mentioned, of course. As you begin the study with your class, be sure to find a way to help your class know the date on which each lesson will be studied. Here are some suggestions to guide your lesson preparation:

- A. In the first session of the study, briefly overview the study by identifying for your class the date on which each lesson will be studied. Lead your class to write the date in the table of contents on pages 8-9 and on the first page of each lesson.
  - Make and post a chart that indicates the date each lesson will be studied.
  - If all your class has e-mail, send them an e-mail with the dates the lessons will be studied.
  - Provide a bookmark with the lesson dates. You may want to include information about your church and then use the bookmark as an outreach tool, too. A model for a bookmark can be downloaded from [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org) under the "Teacher Helps" menu.
  - Develop a sticker with the lesson dates and place it on the table of contents or on the back cover.

- B. Get a copy of the *Teaching Guide*, a companion piece to this *Study Guide*. The *Teaching Guide* contains additional Bible comments plus two teaching plans. The teaching plans in the *Teaching Guide* are intended to provide practical, easy-to-use teaching suggestions that will work in your class.
- C. After you've studied the Bible passage, the lesson comments, and other material, use the teaching suggestions in the *Teaching Guide* to help you develop your plan for leading your class in studying each lesson.
- D. Teaching resource items for use as handouts are available free at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org) under the "Teacher Helps" tab.
- E. Enjoy leading your class in discovering the meaning of the Scripture passages and in applying these passages to their lives.
- F. You can receive the lesson preview each week by signing up for the Baptist Standard weekly newsletter at no cost. Sign up here. ([www.baptiststandard.com/subscription/email](http://www.baptiststandard.com/subscription/email)).

## **Do you use a Kindle?**

This Connect 360 *Bible Study Guide*, along with several other studies, is available in a Kindle edition. The easiest way to find these materials is to search for "GC2 Press" or "BaptistWay" on your Kindle or go to [www.amazon.com/kindle](http://www.amazon.com/kindle) and do a search for "GC2 Press" or "Baptistway." The Kindle edition can be studied not only on a Kindle but also on your smartphone or tablet using the Kindle app available free from [amazon.com/kindle](http://amazon.com/kindle).

## Writers for this *Study Guide*

**Craig West wrote lessons one through four.** Dr. West holds post-graduate degrees from both Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He currently resides in West Monroe, Louisiana, with his family and serves as a hospice chaplain and bereavement coordinator. He is of the firm opinion that Dr Pepper will be on the heavenly banquet tables.

**Bennye Bryant wrote lessons five through seven.** Dr. Bryant graduated from Dallas Baptist University, receiving her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and serves as a Life and Organizational Coach. Dr. Bryant is also the Accounting Manager/Payroll Specialist and African American Women's Ministry Specialist for the Baptist General Convention of Texas. She has membership in several organizations and was recently elected to serve as President of the National Negro Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc. in the Garland chapter. She is married to Pastor Willie Bryant, and together they serve the Zion Hill Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Texas.

**Golden Davis wrote lessons eight through ten.** Dr. Davis has served on staff of "The Exciting" Singing Hills Baptist Church in Dallas as Pastor of Christian Education since

2012. He has been married to April since 1988 and they have six children and seven grandchildren. Golden has pastored in Texas and Kansas. A graduate of Criswell College in Dallas, he also holds a Doctorate of Ministry Education from Mid-western Baptist Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. He has preached nationally and internationally in the disciplines of Biblical Discipleship, Organizational Leadership, Stewardship, Church Development, Spiritual Gifting, and Christian Education.

**Vivian Conrad wrote lessons eleven through thirteen plus the online only Easter lesson.** Since returning to the United States after twenty-four years as missionaries in Asia, Vivian and her husband John have served as staff musicians at Clear Fork Baptist Church in Weatherford, Texas. Vivian also teaches at Weatherford Christian School. She is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.A.Th.) and Dallas Baptist University (B.A. in Christian Education). As parents of five, she and John have recently welcomed their fifteenth grandchild.



# Praise Him in the Storm:

## WHEN LIFE FALLS APART

<i>How to Make the Best Use of This Issue</i>	3
<i>Writers for This Study Guide</i>	7
<i>Introducing GC2 Press</i>	11
<i>Introducing Praise Him in the Storm</i>	12
DATE OF STUDY	
<b>LESSON 1</b> _____ <b>Living by Genuine Faith</b>	18
	JOB 1:1-12
<b>LESSON 2</b> _____ <b>When Everything Falls Apart</b>	32
	JOB 1:13-22
<b>LESSON 3</b> _____ <b>Life or Death?</b>	44
	JOB 2:1-10; 3:11, 20-26
<b>LESSON 4</b> _____ <b>When Friends Fail</b>	57
	JOB 2:11-13; 22:5-6, 9-11
<b>LESSON 5</b> _____ <b>Why Me Lord?</b>	70
	JOB 7:1-21
<b>LESSON 6</b> _____ <b>Even Faith Needs a Mediator</b>	81
	JOB 9:32-35
<b>LESSON 7</b> _____ <b>Hope on Display</b>	90
	JOB 13:15-16; 14:1-2, 14-17
<i>Ministry Promotions</i>	101

<b>LESSON 8</b>	<b>I Am Not Alone</b>	105
	JOB 19:13-19	
<b>LESSON 9</b>	<b>I Know That My Redeemer Lives</b>	116
	JOB 19:20-27	
<b>LESSON 10</b>	<b>The Wisdom of Youth</b>	126
	JOB 32:1-10; 33:2-4, 22-30; 35:9-10; 37:14-24	
<b>LESSON 11</b>	<b>Hearing God in the Storm</b>	139
	JOB 38:1-7; 40:1-5	
<b>LESSON 12</b>	<b>When Answers Are Not Enough</b>	151
	JOB 40:6-9, 15-19; 41:1-7, 10-11; 42:1-6	
<b>LESSON 13</b>	<b>Saving the Best for Last</b>	163
	JOB 42:5-17	
<b>BONUS EASTER LESSON</b>	<b>The God of Restoration</b>	Online Only (gc2press.org)
	JOHN 21:15-23	

<i>Prayer for This Study</i>	175
<i>Our Next New Study</i>	176
<i>How to Order More Bible Study Materials</i>	178

# Introducing GC2 Press

*BWP* **has now become GC2 Press.** The name change reflects the alignment with our state convention's (BGCT) recently updated mission statement. **GC2** is a movement of God's people to share Christ and show love. Our driving passion is to follow the Lord's call to fulfill the Great Commission "to share Christ" and the Great Commandment "to show love." The Great Commission and the Great Commandment form the two "GCs," or GC2.

**GC2 Press** will continue to publish the undated **CONNECT 360** quarterly Bible study curriculum. **Connect 360** has gained a reputation for solid biblical teaching and will continue to be published as an undated quarterly study available in book form and/or digital downloads. **Connect 360** is currently being distributed in 38 states and 16 countries and has been translated into seven different languages.

For more information, please go to our website at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org).



**GC2**  
**PRESS**

# Introducing

## Praise Him in the Storm *When Life Falls Apart*

A STUDY OF JOB

### Background

---

The book of Job is primarily a book of poetry bookended by sections of prose. Commentators throughout history have identified the book of Job as one of the most remarkable books known to humankind. It's 42 chapters tell the story of God at work in the life of one great man, Job, and Job's response to God's activities. The date of writing and the identity of the author is unknown. However, some scholars suggest that Job was most likely a contemporary of Abraham (2000 BC). For many, the uncertainty of the authorship and date of writing add to the book's value as issues of Hebrew history do not impact its readers.

Job is most often associated with the problem of suffering. The big question has been, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Generally, Old Testament wisdom litera-

ture, the genre of Job, leads to clear answers to some of life's most important questions. In Job's case, there is no clear solution to why good people suffer. Job does teach us how to suffer well, that is, how to suffer and not sin. Additionally, the writer of Job wants his readers to understand the sufficiency of God in times of distress. The tragic experiences of Job help us know that God can be trusted in every circumstance of life.

In the story of Job, contemporary believers may find encouragement when faced with unbearable suffering and loss. The Lord limited the power of Satan in his pursuit of God's "perfect man." So too, He has limited the power of the adversary in our world.

Dr. Michael Davis

## **The Book of Job in Our Day**

---

Job was a righteous man. He had great wealth. He had a wonderful family. At a gathering in Heaven, Satan alleged before God that the only reason Job served God was because he was so blessed. Satan charged that if Job lost it all, he would curse God to His face. God gave Satan permission to test his theory to demonstrate to Satan and all the angels, that Job's faith was real. Satan went to work, and Job suffered greatly but never lost his faith. In the end, God restored to Job everything he had lost and more.

The Bible says when you go through trials and tribulations; it is a testing of your faith. Since God already knows the quality of your faith, the testing of your faith is to show you what kind of *faith you have*. *Only real, genuine faith will sustain you* when life falls apart.

Is your faith strong enough to praise Him in the storm?

## ***Praise Him in the Storm***

### ***When Life Falls Apart***

#### **A Study of Job**

---

Lesson 1	Living by Genuine Faith	Job 1:1-12
Lesson 2	When Everything Falls Apart	Job 1:13-22
Lesson 3	Life or Death?	Job 2:1-10; 3:11; 20-26
Lesson 4	When Friends Fail	Job 2:11-13; 22:5-6, 9-11
Lesson 5	Why Me Lord?	Job 7:1-21
Lesson 6	Even Faith Needs a Mediator	Job 9:32-35
Lesson 7	Hope on Display	Job 13:15-16; 14:1-2, 14-17
Lesson 8	I Am Not Alone	Job 19:13-19
Lesson 9	I Know That My Redeemer Lives	Job 19:20-27
Lesson 10	The Wisdom of Youth	Job 32:1-10; 33:2-4, 22-30; 35:9-10; 37:14-24

### *Praise Him in the Storm: When Life Falls Apart*

---

Lesson 11	Hearing God in the Storm	Job 38:1-7; 40:1-5
Lesson 12	When Answers Are Not Enough	Job 40:6-9, 15-19; 41:1-7, 10-11; 42:1-6
Lesson 13	Saving the Best for Last	Job 42:5-17
Easter	The God of Restoration (Online Only)	John 21:15-23

## Additional Resources for Studying the Book of Job<sup>1</sup>

---

Andersen, Francis I. *Job: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Volume 14). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008.

Davy, Tim J. *The Book of Job and the Mission of God*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2020.

Henry, Matthew. *Job: An Exposition, with Practical Observations, of the Book of Job*. Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.

Lees, Melissa. *The Book of Job Seeing God Through the Ashes*. Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016.

Lucado, Max. *Anxious for Nothing: Finding Calm in a Chaotic World*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2017.

McGee, J. Vernon. *Thru the Bible Vol. 16: Poetry (Job)*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1995.

Ross, Hugh. *Hidden Treasures in the Book of Job How the Oldest Book in the Bible Answers Today's Scientific Questions (Reasons to Believe)*. Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2014

Smick, Elmer B. *Job (The Expositor's Bible Commentary)*. Nashville, TN: Zondervan Academic, 2017.

Stedman, Ray C. *Let God Be God: Life-Changing Truths From the Book of Job*. Grand Rapids, MI: Our Daily Bread Publishing, 2007.



Swindoll, Charles R. *Great Lives: Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance (Great Lives from God's Word)*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009.

Walton, John H. *Job (The NIV Application Commentary)*. Nashville, TN: Zondervan Academic, 2012.

Wiersbe, Warren. *Be Patient (Job): Waiting on God in Difficult Times (The BE Series Commentary)*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 2009.

## NOTES

---

- <sup>1</sup> Listing a book does not imply full agreement by the writer or GC2 Press with all its comments.

# lesson 1



## Living by Genuine Faith

### MAIN IDEA

We are human beings, but the Bible teaches that there are an innumerable host of heavenly beings called angels that God has created, both good and bad.

### QUESTION TO EXPLORE

Why did God create me?

### STUDY AIM

To understand there is a huge amount of spiritual warfare, and spiritual activity going on around us that we cannot see

### QUICK READ

Job and his family had each other, good health, and an abundance of wealth. After God's conversation with Satan, the devil set out to prove Job only feared God because he had been so blessed.

## **Introduction**

---

In 2008, British pilot Jim O'Neill was halfway through a 350-mile solo flight from Scotland to England when he suddenly lost his sight. Unable to see the instruments, his first thought was that the sun had blinded him. He soon realized that it was much worse; at the height of 5,000 feet, Jim had suffered a stroke.

After fumbling about to find the radio, Jim issued a May-day alert and called for help. A Royal Air Force nearby received his distress call and dispatched the base's chief flying instructor, Wing Cmdr. Paul Gerrard, to provide assistance. Flying his own aircraft just 150 feet away, Gerrard spoke encouraging words for more than thirty minutes, guiding the blinded O'Neill through the process of safely landing the airplane.

Can you relate to the feeling of flying blind? Perhaps not in midair, but have you been faced with a shocking change that occurred mid-semester, mid-career, or mid-life? It might not have been a stroke, but perhaps you know the shock and fear accompanying divorce papers, a diagnosis of inoperable cancer, or the crippling grip of enormous debt.

It took Jim O'Neill eight attempts before he safely landed his airplane; Paul Gerrard never stopped speaking to him. Through this study of the book of Job, it is my prayer that your faith will be strengthened to persevere when life falls apart. When the unseen difficulties of life bring you to a

season of suffering, be encouraged...God has not stopped speaking to His people.

## Job 1:1-12

<sup>1</sup> There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. <sup>2</sup> There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. <sup>3</sup> He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. <sup>4</sup> His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. <sup>5</sup> And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

<sup>6</sup> Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. <sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." <sup>8</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" <sup>9</sup> Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? <sup>10</sup> Have you not put a hedge around 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 in

the land. <sup>11</sup> But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." <sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

### **A Man of Prosperity (1:1-5)**

I love a great story; what about you? I feel the best ones stick with you long after the last page is read. Memorable stories include elements of mystery and revelation, action and dialogue, peaks and troughs. A great story has all of the above, but also has relatable characters. After all, why would you remember a story, if you could not see yourself in the narrative? The book of Job has each of those elements, but also something more: a place for the reader to enter the story.

The author of the book of Job is unknown, but the events it records appear to have occurred during the "Patriarchal period" (between the lives of Noah and Moses, 3000-2000 B.C.). There are no allusions to Mosaic Law in the text, but there is a mention of a flood (22:16). Job serves in a priestly role for his family (1:5), much like Abraham (Genesis 12:7-8). Job's longevity is also typical of this period (42:16; cf. Genesis 11:22-26, 32).

This book is not primarily an accounting of one man's suffering, nor is Job's problem one based upon financial, relational, or social misbehaving. The central problem in the

Book of Job is theological: Job must deal with the fact that Almighty God does not act as one thinks He should.

The narrative begins with an introduction to our protagonist Job, a resident of “the land of Uz” (verse 1). Uz is a place of uncertain location, but likely near Edom, southeast of the Dead Sea (Jeremiah 25:20-21; Lamentations 4:21). During this time where a person’s worth was measured by their possessions and the size of their family, Job stood above his contemporaries (1:2-4). Compare Job’s life with Proverbs 10:22, and it is easily evident that he was enjoying the favor of Yahweh. It’s interesting to note that Job’s genealogy is not presented here, like most major Old Testament persons. His piety, or moral character, is the focus of the text (1:1, 5).

Job is described as being “blameless and upright” (1:1, 8; 2:3), and even made sacrifices on behalf of his children, just in case they might have sinned in a moment of thoughtlessness (1:5). This is not to say that Job was perfect; Job was sinful, just like you and me (Romans 3:23). Sin is connected to a vertical relationship; blameless to a horizontal one. Job enjoyed a good reputation among those in his neighborhood.

Job appeared to possess a high, holy understanding of God, and separated himself from evil by choice. He seemed to understand that true godliness originates from the heart, and it involves the heart (Proverbs 4:23). Yahweh commended his behavior among all the inhabitants of the land (1:8).

## **A Menace to Humanity (1:6-7)**

---

As the scene rises from earth to the throne room of heaven, new characters appear (1:6). The phrase “sons of God” describes angels surrounding their Creator (Genesis 6:1-4; Job 38:7). In the midst of presenting themselves before Him, they are joined by the antagonist of this story, Satan. It seems his presence was not a usual occurrence, for the Lord asked for an account of his activity (1:7). The sarcastic response given was essentially, “nowhere in particular and everywhere in general.”

The Hebrew word translated *satan* means “adversary,” and it’s an apt name. He stood before the Lord, having been “walking up and down” on the earth, seeking out someone to destroy (1 Peter 5:8-10). The Old Testament books of Ezekiel and Isaiah describe him as once being a welcomed, esteemed member of God’s court, now separated from their ranks by arrogance and pride (Ezekiel 28:11-18; Isaiah 14). Today, the adversary questions God’s Truth (Genesis 3:1, 4-5), resists God’s rule (Revelation 12:9; 20:2, 7-8), and seeks to lead God’s people to destruction (Luke 22:31).

Appearing with other created beings, Satan’s status and level of importance are made clear. He is not a being equal with God, caught in some eternal struggle of good versus evil. Throughout history, culture has tried to give more weight and substance to this fallen angel; the Book of Job makes it crystal clear that Satan is a mere creature, and as such, is subject to the rule of the Sovereign Lord of Heaven.

## Under Attack

The Hebrew noun (satan) means “adversary” or “accuser.” If the dialogue in verses 6-12 were likened to a courtroom, then Satan would be the prosecuting attorney, or the one who accuses a person of having committed a crime. Satan is always looking for a weakened soul to devour (1 Peter 5:8), and his methods seek out weak spots in our spiritual defenses (Ephesians 6:10-13).

The term appears in Job 1–2 as a title of an adversarial being in the heavenly court (Job 1:6-9, 12; 2:1-7; cf. Zechariah 3:1). By the time of the New Testament’s writing, this Hebrew word had come into Greek as (Sātan), a name for the Devil (e.g., Luke 13:16).

This enemy of God moves about the earth, is in the spiritual realms (Job 1:7; 1 Peter 5:8), and is working to deceive the world (John 12:31; Ephesians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 4:4) before his time of judgment arrives (Revelation 20:10ff).

In the New Testament, Paul told the church at Ephesus that the battle we face as followers of God is a struggle “against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12b). Earlier in the same letter, he cautioned the church to “give no opportunity to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27). We allow the adversary to find weak spots in our lives and cause destruction when we: hold grudges against one another, speak lies or exaggerated statements about fellow believers, withhold forgiveness, and nurse our anger and bit-



terness. I have been unfortunate enough to have attended churches whose members did not protect the unity of the local Body (Ephesians 4:1-3), but by their actions and statements, invited the enemy into their midst!

### **A Challenge of Adversity (1:8-12)**

Responding to Satan's vague answer, the Lord asked, "Have you set your heart on anyone?" (1:8a). Answering His own query, the Lord gave the enemy a target by stating that Job was unique among all other men (1:8b). Mirroring the description given in verse 1, the Lord stated that Job was a "blameless and upright man," and he "turns away from evil" (1:8b). God was not comparing Job's righteousness to His own, but to others on the earth. Perhaps it is the uniqueness of Job's status as a wealthy landowner coupled with his righteous actions that set him apart. Regardless, the Lord allowed Job to be Satan's next target.

Notice that the Lord made this declaration of approval not in private, but before the entire host of His angels, the assembly of the sons of God (1:6). This public acknowledgment of Job was the equivalent of the public affirmation of Jesus at the time of His baptism when the Father declared He was pleased with His Son (Matthew 3:17). I once heard a sermon where the speaker commented, "A faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted." During this heavenly conversation, it wasn't the adversary who called out Job's name;

God initiated this dialogue. That is a clue to the reader that God had a plan to both silence the enemy and honor Himself through Job's life. Yahweh was certain of Job's faithfulness; He knew that Job could be trusted.

Now Satan asked a question of immense importance (1:9); this question can be considered the heart of the Book of Job. Satan ultimately asked if God was worthy to be worshiped. Does Yahweh receive praise because of His character, or because He "buys" His worshipers' affection through bribing them with gifts and blessings? This question is beneficial in evaluating one's own faith: would I fear God if there were no blessings to be received from Him?

Satan all but slandered Job and the Lord of Heaven with his words, and he pressed the point in verse 10: "Sure, Job loves you. Haven't you protected his family, blessed his work, and given him possessions? Who wouldn't love you?" It's almost as if the enemy tried to get to Job but failed because of God's supernatural protection over Job's life. Here is an incredibly encouraging truth! God is the protector of His people (cf. Psalm 91; 121; 1 Corinthians 10:13). He continues to watch over and protect His children as they live out their days before Him (John 10:27-30).

Satan challenged God to remove the protection from Job's life and then see what would happen.

Much like a child complains to a parent about unfairness with a sibling, Satan told the Lord that Job's actions would be different without God's influence (1:11). Satan believed Job's piety to be skin-deep, and not an authentic representa-

tion of the man. The piety Job exhibited would turn to apathy if God's blessings were removed.

Satan's purpose was to disprove God's claim that Job was a true servant; God's purpose was to show that Job's devotion remained steadfast. This confirmation can only be accomplished through testing, so God granted permission for the adversary to test Job's devotion (1:12). This response is monumental in its restriction: Satan can do whatever he wants up to a point. Satan is powerful, but God is sovereign. Jesus indicated to Peter that Satan wanted to harm Peter much more than God would allow because of a similar type of protection (Luke 22:31-32). There is a limit to the damage that can be done to God's people, and whatever we encounter will be used for His glory and our transformation (Romans 8:29).

Satan went out from the presence of the Lord with malicious intent; God allowed him to bring about something altogether different. This heavenly scene reveals to us what James meant when he commented upon the "steadfastness of Job," and "the purpose of the Lord" (James 5:11). God used one man's life as an object lesson to instruct the angels about the wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10-11). The spiritual warfare shown in Job 1-2 would ultimately find its resolution at the Cross of Calvary (John 19:30; Colossians 2:9-15).

Sometimes the trials we face are a direct result of our sinful, prideful actions. There are times, however, when a challenging event is allowed to come into our lives for a heavenly purpose. It is in this moment that suffering is not a con-

sequence of sinful acts, nor a correction for righteousness' sake. God may exercise His divine prerogative to test our devotion to verify its genuineness.

### **Is Opportunity Knocking?**

Ephesians 4:27 admonishes Christians to “not give the devil an opportunity” to get a foothold in their lives. Job lived out this principle by choosing to move away from evil during his time.

Evaluate your spiritual health by checking to see if you might be allowing the enemy an opportunity to attack in these areas:

- Home
- Social Media
- Language
- Work
- Friendships
- Finances
- School
- Internet History
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What things did you identify? Commit to remove these things by the end of this study.

## **Implications and Actions**

---

Do you remember when I said earlier that the reader can enter the story of Job? We enter Job's story during the painful moments of life. How God's people respond when suffering is of vital importance for believers today. It's quite possible that we allow our cries and laments during those moments to drown out an important reality: God is still sovereign! Nothing takes Him by surprise, and nothing is beyond His reach.

I believe it is perfectly fine during those painful moments to ask God, "Why is this happening?"

I think He welcomes such questions, for they do not question His character or assign blame to Him. Job's repetitive godly actions laid a strong foundation of faith, so when the unthinkable storm occurred, he stood on solid ground.

When we face hardship or struggle, are we rooted in God's Word and communication with Him so deeply that it can sustain us and allow our faith to be seen? As a part of God's creation, I can be assured that the Creator is aware of my pain, and orchestrates events behind the scenes, even allowing painful events to bring glory to Himself and for my benefit (Romans 8:28).

## Questions

---

1. In what ways did Satan's accusation disparage both Job and God?
2. What can you learn from God's handling of Satan's charges? Why do you think God didn't just kick the adversary out of the throne room?
3. Describe in your own words the attitudes (toward self, God, circumstances) you feel Job displayed in 1:20-22. When facing adverse situations in life, how do your attitudes compare to Job's?
4. What could you change this month to better align your attitudes with those that honor God?

5. Suppose you had a friend who was in a season of suffering. Would it be a good thing to sit silently with them to sympathize with them? Why or why not?
  
6. Who do you know that is presently ill or bereaved? Name two things you can do that would help comfort that person this week.