

connect360

BIBLE TEACHING GUIDE

Praise Him in the Storm

WHEN LIFE FALLS APART

A STUDY OF JOB

Michael Davis • Craig West
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David Smith • Jimmy Hester
John Beck • Vivian Conrad



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Praise Him in the Storm: When Life Falls Apart (A Study of Job)
Connect 360 Bible Teaching Guide

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How to Make the Best Use of This *Teaching Guide*

Leading a class in studying the Bible is a sacred trust. This *Teaching Guide* has been prepared to help you as you give your best to this important task.

In each lesson, you will find first “Bible Comments” for teachers, to aid you in your study and preparation. The three sections of “Bible Comments” are “Understanding the Context,” “Interpreting the Scriptures,” and “Focusing on the Meaning.” “Understanding the Context” provides a summary overview of the entire background passage that also sets the passage in the context of the Bible book being studied. “Interpreting the Scriptures” provides verse-by-verse comments on the focal passage. “Focusing on the Meaning” offers help with the meaning and application of the focal text.

The second main part of each lesson is “Teaching Plans.” You’ll find two complete teaching plans in this section. The first is called the “Discovery Plan,” which emphasizes discovery learning techniques; and the second is called the “Discussion Plan,” which provides questions and suggestions for dialogue about the Scriptures. Choose the plan that best fits your class and your style of teaching. You may also use and adapt ideas from both. Each plan is intended to be practical, helpful, and immediately useful as you prepare to teach.

The major headings in each teaching plan are intended to help you sequence how you teach to follow the flow of how people tend to learn. The first major heading, “Connect With Life,” provides ideas that will help you begin the class session where your class is and draw your class into the study. The second major heading, “Guide Bible Study,” offers suggestions for helping your class engage the Scriptures actively and develop a greater understanding of this portion of the Bible’s message. The third major heading, “Encourage Application,” is meant to help participants focus on how to respond with their lives to this message.

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. You might use one or more of the following methods:

- 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 in their *Study Guides* and on the first page of each lesson.
- Make and post a chart that indicates the date on which each lesson will be studied.
- If all of 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 under the “Teacher Helps” tab.
- Develop a sticker with the lesson dates, and place it on the table of contents or on the back cover.

Here are some steps you can take to help you prepare well to teach each lesson and save time in doing so:

1. Start early in the week before your class meets.
2. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers meet for lesson overview and preparation, plan to participate. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers don’t have this planning time now, look for ways to begin. You, your fellow teachers, and your church will benefit from this mutual encouragement and preparation.
3. Overview the study in the *Study Guide*. Look at the table of contents and see where this lesson fits in the overall study. Then read or review the study introduction to the book that is being studied.
4. Consider carefully the suggested Main Idea, Question to Explore, and Teaching Aim. These can help you discover the main thrust of this particular lesson.

5. Use your Bible to read and consider prayerfully the Scripture passages for the lesson. Using your Bible in your study and in the class session can provide a positive model to class members to use their own Bibles and give more attention to Bible study themselves. (Each writer of the Bible comments in both the *Teaching Guide* and the *Study Guide* has chosen a favorite translation. You're free to use the Bible translation you prefer and compare it with the translations chosen, of course.)
6. After reading all the Scripture passages in your Bible, then read the Bible comments in the *Study Guide*. The Bible comments are intended to be an aid to your study of the Bible. Read also the small articles—"sidebars"—in each lesson. They are intended to provide additional, enrichment information and inspiration and to encourage thought and application. Try to answer for yourself the questions included in each lesson. They're intended to encourage further thought and application, and you can also use them in the class session itself. Continue your Bible study with the aid of the Bible comments included in this *Teaching Guide*.
7. Review the "Teaching Plans" in this *Teaching Guide*. Consider how these suggestions would help you teach this Bible passage in your class to accomplish the teaching aim.
8. Consider prayerfully the needs of your class and think about how to teach so you can help your class learn best.
9. Develop and follow a lesson plan based on the suggestions in this *Teaching Guide*, with alterations as needed for your class.
10. Enjoy leading your class in discovering the meaning of the Scripture passages and in applying these passages to their lives.

FREE! Downloadable teaching resource items for use in your class are available at www.gc2press.org. Watch for them in the "Teaching Plans" for each lesson. Then go online to www.gc2press.org and click on "Teaching Resource Items" under the "Teacher Helps" tab for this study. These items are selected from the "Teaching Plans." They are provided online to make lesson preparation easier for handouts and similar items. Permission is granted to download these teaching resource items, print them out, copy them as needed, and use them in your class.

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Praise Him in the Storm: When Life Falls Apart

A Study of Job

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We've Changed Our Name!

BaptistWay Press **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.



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?

TEACHING AIM

To lead adults to understand there is a huge amount of spiritual warfare and spiritual activity going on around them that they cannot see



Bible Comments

Understanding the Context

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. Its 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 B.C.). 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 literature, 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.

The book is composed of three major divisions: a prologue of prose (Job 1–2), the poetic arguments (Job 3–41), and the closing or epilogue in prose (Job 42). The argument section consists of a retelling of the speeches of Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu. Jehovah closes the argument section, taking the last word. The book's central argument is whether or not those who suffer are guilty of sin, prompting the displeasure of God. The Apostle Peter helps us understand the importance of the book in light of the work of Satan. Christians are warned to "be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

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.

Interpreting the Scriptures

Job, A Blessed Man (1:1-3)

1:1. Although Job was most likely a "real" man, some believe he represented all humankind. Job's name, which translates to "object of enmity" or "the assailed," foreshadows the grand drama of the book. Job was a well-known and respected man in the land of Uz. The exact location of Uz is uncertain, though some suggest a site outside the desert near Canaan.

The book opens with a focus on the greatness and righteousness of Job. Job was "blameless and upright." First, blameless refers to "genuineness and authenticity," indicating that Job was not sinless. Still, he was who he said he was, and he practiced what he preached. Today, Job would be described as "a man of integrity." Second, "upright" shifts the focus from Job's personal life to how he treated others. Job was a man who "kept his word" in business deals and did not seek to cheat his customers.

Next, Job "feared God." Although most likely not Hebrew, Job had some knowledge of God and acted accordingly. He had piety and reverence for God and was a genuinely religious man. Finally, Job had "turned away from evil." Repentance was part of Job's daily practice. Jesus taught His followers, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). In the same way, Job lived daily, committed to following the God he knew. Job was a man of repentance and faith, the lifestyle of disciples today.

1:2. The Lord blessed Job with "seven sons and three daughters." Psalm 127:3-5 suggests that children are a blessing from the Lord and are part of a parent's heritage. The number seven symbolizes completeness, and combined with the number of Job's daughters, the number of his children speaks of an ideal family.

1:3. The sheer number of Job's possessions leads the writer to declare that Job was "the greatest of all the people of the east." Rather than living as a nomad, roaming in tents, Job and his family were farmers, living in houses (Job 1:4), farming the land, and raising herds.

Job, A Religious Man (1:4-5)

1:4. The children of Job must have enjoyed being together and sharing meals as a celebration. "On his day" may refer to an annual feast day, perhaps something akin to a birthday party. Job's three daughters must have been unmarried as there is no mention of their husbands attending the feasts. The context indicates a time of festivity but not a lifestyle of partying.

1:5. As a man who feared God and had turned away from evil, Job had great concern for the spiritual welfare of his children. He exercised priestly duties to "consecrate" his children and "offer burnt offerings" for each one. Burnt offerings were expensive, and to offer them was symbolic of the anger of God consuming the life of the sinner. Job was so concerned about the spiritual life of his children that he spared no effort or expense to guarantee their spiritual health. Job had reared his children to fear God. However, as most parents do, he worried they might have "sinned" and "cursed God in their hearts." He was concerned that his children might be guilty of praising the Lord outwardly while inwardly defaming Him. Outward piety is easily mistaken for inward obedience and submission to God and His Word.

God Questions Satan (1:6-8)

1:6. The story shifted from earth to heaven on "a day" when the "sons of God" came before the Lord. We are introduced to activities and beings of which Job had no knowledge. We learn here that untold numbers of spiritual beings are at work behind the scenes of human existence. "A day" indicates that this is another day from the day on earth. "The sons of God," likely angels or created beings, are members of the heavenly council chaired by God (Psalm 82:1, 6; Psalm 89:6-7). These council members have come to report and receive

orders from the Lord. Satan seems to serve the purpose of roaming the earth, accusing those who faithfully serve God.

1:7. Here it is natural to see a link to the question God asked Adam in the Garden after the fall; “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9). Here God asked Satan where he has been, knowing full well the answer. Satan admitted his activity of “going to and fro on the earth,” but omitted his goal of “seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8b). Some question the goodness of God in allowing Satan to participate in His purposes. One answer is that Satan serves somewhat like “Her majesty’s Loyal Opposition” in the government of Britain. Although he seeks to destroy the Kingdom of God, he only helps to strengthen it through his activities.

1:8. The Lord brought Job into the picture by asking Satan if he had “considered” Job? Literally, considered means “set your heart upon.” It seems God was saying, “Why don’t you take a look at my servant, Job?” The Lord backs up His suggestion by repeating the glowing description of Job in verse one. By “servant,” God indicates that He and Job are bound together through a covenant of faith.

God Challenges Satan (1:9-12)

1:9-10. Here Satan accused the Lord of playing favorites with Job. Apparently, Satan believed that Job had a good reason to serve God as, in so doing, he had been blessed. “For no reason” accused Job of serving God out of convenience rather than conscience. Satan went further by accusing (he is the accuser) God of placing a “hedge around him” and everything he had. God had “blessed the work of his hands,” and for that reason, Job had earned all that he had. Here is a clear description of the “prosperity gospel” of our day. Satan indicated there is no reason to serve God simply because He is God and worthy of our praise.

1:11. Satan challenged God. Satan told the Lord to use his “hand” to touch all that Job owned and cause it to disappear. Then Job would curse God. The “hand of God” is one way Scripture speaks of God acting in the lives of hu-

mans. Thus, Satan wanted the Lord to destroy all that Job had to expose Job's false faith. To "curse" God would cause Job to commit the same sin he feared his children might commit. In the end, was Job prosperous because of his faith, or did he have faith because he was prosperous?

1:12. The phrase "all that he has is in your hands" indicates the Lord had agreed to Satan's test of His servant Job. The only thing off-limits to Satan's destructive power was Job's life itself. Though it is difficult to understand why God allowed Satan's challenge to move forward, it is essential to remember that God is sovereign and seeks His glory in the universe. This verse closes with Satan doing what he does by going "out from the presence of the Lord."

Focus on the Meaning

Everything in life is not as it seems. As humans, we are limited in our knowledge and understanding of the "big picture." Job had no idea of Satan's challenge of God's goodness to him, yet his life was changed by it forever. Behind the scenes, there are hosts of heavenly beings at work. Our lives are impacted by the activities of good and evil forces. Christians must remember that "The glory of God is more important than your or my or Job's comfort."¹

Christians cannot expect to escape evil and adversity in life. Although Satan does have some power in the world, his ability is limited by the discretion of God. Job's faith was severely tested, yet he continued to be blameless, upright, fear God, and turn away from evil. Although we may not understand all that is happening in our lives, we can stand firm in our faith.

Our God cares for His own. With that said, our faith cannot be measured by the material possessions we own nor the family we cherish. When we buy into the false narrative of the prosperity gospel, we are guilty of defaming God. The Father is active in the lives of His people and seeks to have a relationship with all people (John 3:16).

The Lord created humans to glorify Him. God is glorified by our faithful service to Him and our fear of sinning against Him. Christians should follow the example of Job and focus on our spiritual health and that of our children.

NOTES

- ¹ Christopher Ash. *Job: The Wisdom of the Cross* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2014), 45.

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Teaching Plans

DISCOVERY PLAN

Connect With Life

1. As students arrive, have them consider the following statement (printed on paper or written on a board): “Something that makes me afraid is _____.” Invite students to share responses once all class members arrive.
2. Place student responses in one of two categories: “Known (Seen) Cause” and “Unknown (Unseen) Cause.”
 - Ask class members if one category elicits more fear than the other and briefly discuss.
 - Ask if they feel that God operates in one category more than the other and briefly discuss.
3. Have the Study Aim for this lesson read aloud, then lead the class in prayer.

Guide Bible Study

4. Read Job 1:1-5, then ask for responses to the following questions:
 - Which of Job’s character traits is presented first?
 - What might be the importance of the listed order of Job’s character qualities?
 - Job was richly blessed in his relationship with God. What blessings can you identify in your life that stem from your relationship with God?
5. Have students form pairs and consider the following questions. Allow a few minutes for discussion, then have selected pairs share responses.

- Compare Job 1:1 with Acts 24:16.
 - How can believers today accomplish these goals? What actions could be taken to achieve these goals?
6. Read Job 1:6-7 and then ask the following:
 - What do we learn about Satan in this passage? (Responses might include facts about Satan specifically, his intentions and plans, his relationship to God, etc.)
 - What is unique about the beings assembled on this day? (Responses might include the angels, the devil, they were presenting themselves before God, etc.)
 - What other Scripture reference can tell us about Satan's behavior (cf. Ephesians 6:10-13; 1 Peter 5:8)
 7. Have students compare the question that God asked of Satan (1:7) with the question He asked of Adam in Genesis 3:9. Discuss the rationale for both questions, and what implications they might have for us today.
 8. Direct class members to the sidebar, "Under Attack." Have them consider the courtroom image and respond to the following:
 - Who are/who is the prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, witnesses, judge?
 - What encouraging thing can you name about each person or position?
 9. Read 1 Peter 5:8 to the class. Ask for responses to the following questions:
 - If Peter is correct about Satan's goal, why would God direct the enemy to "consider" His servant?
 - Did God hand Job over to be attacked? Why do you think this way?
 10. Read Job 1:8-12. Have students return to their pairs and consider the following questions. Allow a few minutes for discussion, then have selected pairs share responses.

- How does Satan's accusation disparage both God and Job?
- What can we learn about God from His handling of Satan's accusation?
- Why do you think God gave permission to Satan to attack Job?
- Would you consider Job's cause of suffering to be Known or Unknown? Why did you choose that option?

(A copy of this assignment is available in "Teaching Resource Items" for this study at www.gc2press.org.)

Encourage Application

11. Based upon the evidence (1:1, 8; 2:3), God chose His champion well.
 - What actions can be undertaken by believers today to allow us to be protected in a fashion similar to Job? (Have learners read Psalms 91 and 121, as well as 1 Corinthians 10:13.)
12. Direct students to the sidebar, "Is Opportunity Knocking?" Give them a few moments to consider the challenge it contains regarding removing opportunities for the enemy to attack in their lives.
13. Refer back to the categories of Causes in Step 2. Ask for responses to the following questions:
 - When causes of suffering are Known, how should we respond?
 - When causes of suffering are Unknown, how should we respond?
 - What hope or encouragement can we find in this lesson when we are faced with Unknown causes of suffering? (Hint: refer to 1:6)
14. Close the lesson in prayer, praising God for His sovereignty over all things, both seen and unseen.

DISCUSSION PLAN

Connect With Life

1. As students arrive, direct their attention to this statement on paper or on a board: “Prosperity can become Adversity in the blink of an eye.” As class begins, ask for responses that illustrate the statement. (Responses might include medical diagnoses, financial issues, natural disasters, etc.)
2. Briefly summarize the introduction to this study found in the *Study Guide*, then read the lesson Study Aim aloud. Lead the class in prayer, asking for God to grant wisdom to believers as they face moments of suffering in their lives.

Guide Bible Study

3. Read Job 1:1-5. Ask students to respond to the following questions:
 - What unique quality did Job possess?
 - What is the difference between being sinless and being blameless? (Use the *Teaching Guide “Bible Comments”* to help frame the discussion.)
 - *Is wealth an indication that God is pleased with one’s life? Why or why not?*
 - *How do Job’s attitudes about his children’s behavior compare with today’s societal attitudes toward religious activity?*
4. Read 1 John 4:18 and compare it with Job 1:1. Ask class members for responses:
 - What does it mean to “fear God?”
 - Are the fear of God and the love of God consistent or inconsistent with one another? Why is this your answer?
 - What are ways you can fear God today?

5. Read Job 1:6-7. Using information from the *Study Guide* and *Teaching Guide* “Bible Comments,” comment upon the actions of the “accuser” and the importance of the heavenly gathering. (See also Matthew 4:1-11; 1 Chronicles 21:1; Zechariah 3:1-2.)
6. Ask students to evaluate their belief of Satan’s existence on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 = “Not at all” and 10 = “Absolutely”). Ask for suggestions on how to respond in a Christ-like manner to someone whose belief is different from their own.
7. Read Job 1:8-12. Have class members answer the following questions:
 - What is God’s purpose in suggesting Job to Satan?
 - Why couldn’t Satan have attacked Job at this point?
 - What was Satan’s response to the good qualities God saw in Job?
 - How did Job’s devotions prepare him for what would happen to him?
 - What blessings can you see in your life that are connected to your relationship with God (even if they are not identical to Job’s)?

(A copy of this assignment is available in “Teaching Resource Items” for this study at www.gc2press.org).
8. What similarities can you find between Job and Jesus? (Responses might include being blameless and upright, an innocent sufferer, God’s plan that was not known to those around them, etc.) What encouragement can you find today in these two examples?

Encourage Application

9. Read Ephesians 6:10-13. Ask the class members to share their responses:
 - What bearing do Paul’s comments have on Job’s life?
 - What about our lives today?
 - What hope or encouragement can we find in this lesson when we are faced with unknown causes of suffering? (Hint: refer to 1:6)

10. Encourage students to recall a recent moment of suffering in their life. Then have them respond to the following questions:
 - How did your response in the suffering reflect God's sovereignty?
 - If the suffering were not the consequence of personal sin, what would you change about how you responded to better reflect your trust in God's unseen actions?
11. Close in prayer, asking God to help us remember He is sovereign when we face moments of suffering that come into our lives.