



S3 SUMMER ENCORE

Perspective, Purpose & Praise

Talk About It

We're gonna take a look at suffering today. Not a happy topic for sure, but it is one we can all relate to in some way. What has been your biggest struggle, pain, or period of suffering?

Learn

The book of Job explores the issue of human suffering despite God's goodness and power. The questions of why people suffer and why evil continues have been the focus of intense thought throughout the ages. Job is the main Biblical testament of this issue.

Read Job 1:21 (ERV)

When I was born into this world, I was naked and had nothing. When I die and leave this world, I will be naked and have nothing. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. Praise the name of the LORD!

1. What stands out to you from this verse? Explain.

Read Job 1:1 -3 (ERV)

¹There was a man named Job who lived in the country of Uz. He was a good, honest man. He respected God and refused to do evil. ² Job had seven sons and three daughters. ³ He owned 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 1000 oxen, and 500 female donkeys. He had many servants. He was the richest man in the east.

2. What do we know about Job at this point? Discuss.

Read Job 1:6-12 (ERV)

⁶ Then the day came for the angels to meet with the Lord. Even Satan was there with them.

⁷ The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you been?"

Satan answered the Lord, "I have been roaming around the earth, going from place to place."

⁸ Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him. He is a good, faithful man. He respects God and refuses to do evil."

⁹ Satan answered the Lord, "But Job has a good reason to respect you. ¹⁰ You always protect him, his family, and everything he has. You have blessed him and made him successful in everything he does. He is so wealthy that his herds and flocks are all over the country. ¹¹ But if you were to destroy everything he has, I promise you that he would curse you to your face."

¹² The Lord said to Satan, "All right, do whatever you want with anything that he has, but don't hurt Job himself." Then Satan left the meeting.

3. How do you feel about the conversation between The Lord and Satan? Discuss.

Think about it: In the Bible we see that great temptation often follows great spiritual growth. Jesus was baptized and the Holy Spirit came to him, and immediately after He was led into the wilderness to be tempted for 40 days! When we are apathetic or lazy in our faith we often don't see the same level of persecution in our lives because the devil is satisfied with our apathy that separates us from God.

4. Discuss what you've learned here that impacts your understanding of Job's suffering.

Read Together: *The enemy is not fighting you because you're weak. He's fighting you because you're strong.*

5. How does that statement make you feel? Explain.

SUMMARY: After the upright Job suddenly lost family, health, and possessions, he and his friends dialogued at length about the reasons for his sufferings, but God alone had the final word and ultimately restored Job's losses.

Live

GOD'S MESSAGE IN JOB: THE PURPOSE

Job is the fullest development in Scripture of the issue referred to by theologians and philosophers as "the problem of evil" or "theodicy." Simply put, the matter is this: since humans, especially the seemingly innocent, suffer pain and evil, then what kind of God must there be?

Logic suggests one of three answers:

- (1) God is righteous, but He is not powerful enough to prevent suffering
- (2) God is all-powerful, but He is not truly good and has elements of evil in His nature
- (3) All pain and evil are in fact deserved by the sufferer and sent by God (the truly innocent do not suffer)

6. Do you find yourself agreeing with any of these answers?

The Biblical view finds these answers unacceptable. Job reveals a wider arena than humanity can observe. The conflict of the ages between God and Satan must in the end demonstrate both the righteousness and supremacy of God. He lets the innocent suffer to demonstrate that in His sovereignty, He receives glory even when His people suffer and persevere in faith without understanding why. From a merely human point of view, the answer is that there is no answer to the problem of evil. From a divine perspective, the answer is that God's glory is served even when evil is permitted.

7. How was God glorified in Job's suffering? Share your thoughts.

8. Discuss the importance of perspective during suffering.

9. In addition to accepting God's sovereignty, what are some other purposes served through suffering? Share and Discuss.

Lead

Yes, you will suffer for a short time. But after that, God will make everything right. He will make you strong. He will support you and keep you from falling. He is the God who gives all grace. He chose you to share in his glory in Christ. That glory will continue forever.
1 Peter 5:10 (ERV)

We have sufferings now, but these are nothing compared to the great glory that will be given to us. Romans 8:18 (ERV)

² My brothers and sisters, you will have many kinds of trouble. But this gives you a reason to be very happy. ³ You know that when your faith is tested, you learn to be patient in suffering. ⁴ If you let that patience work in you, the end result will be good. You will be mature and complete. You will be all that God wants you to be. James 1:2-4 (ERV)

10. The title of this lesson is “Perspective, Purpose, and Praise.” How do these relate to the story of Job? How will this impact your difficult situations? Explain.



**May we shift our gaze off of the *why* and onto the *Who!*
God is God and He is worthy of our praise...
No. Matter. What.**