

OUR QUESTIONS: SESSION ONE

A Study of the Book of Job

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we give You thanks that by the patient suffering and death of Your Son You rescued us from all faithlessness. By Your Word and Spirit, teach us to commend ourselves to You and to trust that in all things You work for our eternal good. Strengthen us to bear all crosses, adversities and trials with patience and fervent trust in You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Study

1. There are many circumstances in this life which can leave one with huge questions. What are some of the big questions you would ask God if you had the chance?

Answers will vary but may often focus around topics such as purpose and the meaning of life as well as the presence of evil and suffering in life. At the heart of a lot of these types of question is the question “why?” We wonder why things are the way they are. The book of Job revolves around “why?” questions as well. Suffering, both in this book of the Bible and in life, is often at the root of these “why?” questions.

Read Job 1 and 2.

2. How is Job described (Job 1:1–8)? What does he do in regards to his children to prove his character (Job 1:4–5)?

In verse 1, Job is described as blameless and upright, a man who fears God and turns away from evil. We also learn that Job has abundant material possessions. After Job’s children celebrate feasts, Job consecrates them and offers burnt offerings.

3. What is Satan’s accusation against Job (Job 1:9–10)?

Satan says that the reason for Job’s blamelessness is that the Lord has protected Job and blessed the work of his hands so that his possessions have increased.

4. What is Satan’s plan to cause Job to no longer fear God (Job 1:11)?

Satan tries to convince God to remove His protection. The devil believes that if Job loses what he has, he will curse God.

5. What things are taken away from Job (Job 1:13–19)?

First, enemies kill some of Job’s servants and livestock. Next, fire from heaven consumes more of Job’s servants and livestock. Then, another group of enemies kills even more of Job’s servants and livestock. Finally, Job hears that a great wind has caused his son’s home to collapse, killing all his children inside.

6. What is Job’s response (Job 1:20–21)? Is it the response you would have?

Job tears his robes and shaves his head, common signs of mourning in that day. He also bows down and worships God, saying, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” Answers will vary when it comes to people’s response to this kind of tragedy. However, it is likely people can see themselves mourning in such a situation, while it is less likely that people would be willing to bless the Lord.

7. Job 2 appears at first to be a repetition of Job 1. But what does Job lose this time (Job 2:7–8)?

Now Job loses his health. Not only does he suffer a physical ailment, but he also endures a great deal of pain.

8. What is Job's response (Job 2:9–10)? Is this the response you would have?

Still, Job does not sin against the Lord in what he says. This is even more remarkable considering that his wife mocks him for his integrity and for remaining faithful to the Lord. Answers will vary when it comes to people's responses. However, it should be acknowledged that when an individual has no encouragement to remain faithful (and even has somebody encouraging them and tempting them to sin), that person has a much harder time keeping himself from sin.

Read Job 3.

9. In Job 3, what does Job wish had happened long before his suffering began (Job 3:1ff)?

Job wishes that he had never been born or given life.

10. What question is at the heart of his laments (Job 2:20, 23)?

Job asks the question, "Why?" He clearly wonders if his life in this world is actually a good thing if it is going to involve this much suffering and pain. This question Job asks is a question that all people ask at various times in their lives. The answer to this question is the goal of this study on the book of Job. It will be tempting to give a quick answer to people's question, but this is not always the best thing to do. A quick answer can seem to discount pain and suffering. That must not be done. Instead, this study will bring us to the only place where we can find an answer to — and even a purpose for — suffering.

CLOSING PRAYER

Almighty God, You sustained Your servant Job even when Satan brought great suffering upon him. Sustain us through every trial and trouble. Give us faith to receive all things from Your hand, believing that You are loving and work all things together for good. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.