

# BIBLE 907

## BIBLICAL LITERATURE: JOB AND SUFFERING

### CONTENTS

<b>I. THE BOOK OF JOB</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Opening Scenes</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Great Debate</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Closing Scenes</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>II. THE ATTITUDES TOWARD SUFFERING</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>The Term <u>Suffer</u></b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>The World's Attitude</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>The Christian's Attitude</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>III. THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>His Life and Ministry</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>His Death and Resurrection</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>His Intercession and Consolation</b> .....	<b>32</b>

2018 Printing

The material in this book is the product of the Lord's blessing and many individuals working together on the teams, both at Alpha Omega Publications and Christian Light Publications.

Original material copyright ©1978 by Alpha Omega Publications  
All rights reserved. Revised by permission.

CLP Revision copyright ©1980

## **Christian Light Publications, Inc.**

Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802

Tel. 1-540-434-0768

Printed in USA

# BIBLICAL LITERATURE: JOB AND SUFFERING

Ever since Adam sinned and was expelled from the Garden of Eden, mankind has experienced pain and suffering. The growth of the human race upon the earth only compounded the problems of suffering. Each new generation has questioned why men, women, and children suffer unjustly or without purpose. Man's ability to comprehend the purpose behind his suffering is very limited. Those people who lived before the Scriptures were recorded had to rely upon their own perceptions when drawing conclusions about man's life on the earth.

The Book of Job offers a splendid example of the human mind trying to perceive and discern divine events in the affairs of men. The suffering

that Job was required to endure, both from his physical condition and from his friends, provides the basis for a greater understanding of this subject and its further revelation in the New Testament. Studying this LIGHTUNIT, you will become acquainted with the topic of suffering as Job understood it in his day, and you will learn how suffering was revealed more fully in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. You will also examine the world's attitudes toward suffering in contrast to the attitude of the Christian. Although no one likes the idea of suffering, only the Christian has the answer to why man suffers. We can look to God for the reason and for the comfort we need when we are in the midst of personal suffering.

## OBJECTIVES

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIGHTUNIT.

When you have finished this LIGHTUNIT, you should be able:

1. To tell about the tragedies that befell Job.
2. To relate the wrong concepts Job's friends had concerning the causes for suffering.
3. To state the correct views concerning suffering as it is related to God and Satan.
4. To describe how God rewarded Job at the end of his suffering.
5. To explain the various meanings of the word *suffer*.
6. To list the areas in which suffering can originate.
7. To describe the extent to which suffering may occur.
8. To define the world's attitudes toward suffering.
9. To describe the Christian's attitude toward suffering.
10. To describe aspects of suffering seen in Jesus' early life and ministry.
11. To tell how Jesus suffered prior to and during His crucifixion.
12. To list possible purposes for suffering in the Christian's life.
13. To state the outcome of suffering.

**Survey the LIGHTUNIT.** Ask yourself some questions about this study. Write your questions here.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## I. THE BOOK OF JOB

The Book of Job centers upon the person of Job, who was a patriarch living in the period before Moses. The word *patriarch* comes from two words. The first word means *father* and the second means *ruler*. A patriarch, therefore, was a *father-ruler*. The date of the writing of this book is uncertain, but it is generally accepted as being one of the earliest books of the Bible. The book deals with the problem of suffering and was written in a unique manner and style. The opening and concluding portions were written in prose, but the majority of the debate in the body is in poetic form.

The rich spiritual ideas contained within the

Book of Job have caused the greatest theologians and philosophers to study this text with interest. The vocabulary used in the writing is extensive. The content of the book reveals a vast resource of knowledge, a superbly forceful and expressive Hebrew writing style, a profound depth of thought, and an excellent command of the language. Some of the noblest ideas of high ethical and spiritual standards are expressed within its pages, and a deep recognition of God's creation is revealed in its contents.

In your study of this LIGHTUNIT, remember that a small percentage of the activities in Bible LIGHT-UNITs comes directly from the reading assignments.

### SECTION OBJECTIVES

**Read these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able:

1. To tell about the tragedies that befell Job.
2. To relate the wrong concepts Job's friends had concerning the causes for suffering.
3. To state the correct views concerning suffering as it is related to God and Satan.
4. To describe how God rewarded Job at the end of his suffering.

## VOCABULARY

**Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.**

**confound** (kon found'). To perplex with surprise, astonishment, or amazement.

**dialogue** (dī' u lôg). Interchange and discussion of ideas in a frank and open way.

**dumbfounded** (dum foun' dud). Made speechless with amazement.

**ironically** (ī ron' u kul lē). In a manner directly opposite to what is or might be expected.

**lament** (lu ment'). To mourn or grieve for; to feel or express deep sorrow.

**profanity** (pru fan' u tē). Language that is irreverent, full of contempt, or blasphemous.

**providence** (prov' u duns). Care or benevolent guidance of God.

**reconsecrated** (rē kon'su krā tud). Set apart or rededicated as holy again.

**restitution** (res tu tū' shun). The act of restoring to the rightful owner that which is lost or has been taken away.

**revile** (ri vīl'). To be reproachful or abusive in speech.

**sovereign** (sov' run). Above or superior to all others; supreme in authority.

**vindication** (vin du kā' shun). A clearing from criticism, censure, or suspicion.

**vulgarity** (vul gar' u tē). Coarse or crude language.

**Note:** All vocabulary words in this LIGHTUNIT appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

**Pronunciation Key:** hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ôrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rŭle; child; long; thin; /TH/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /u/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil, /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.



**Read Job, Chapters 1 through 21 and Ecclesiastes 12:13 and 14.**

### OPENING SCENES

To fully appreciate the great sorrow and suffering that befell God's servant, Job, let us first look at him in all his godliness and

prosperity. Then we shall turn our attention to the terrible tragedies that came upon him.



**Job Sacrifices to God**

**First Tragedy Befalls Job**

**Job Sorrows Before God**

**Job's prosperity.** Job lived in the land of Uz, which was a region located at the south of Edom and west of the great Arabian Desert. To understand Job, we must observe what the Scriptures have to say about the character of this truly great man of God, whose life has been a comfort to many who have found themselves in similar circumstances. Job was a good and upright man who feared, or revered, God and shunned evil. His righteousness made his life pleasing to the Lord, as he showed great respect for his Creator. Unknown to Job, the Lord Himself declared Job to be His servant, a godly man, and one of the finest men in all the earth. As the result of God's blessing, Job was one of the wealthiest cattlemen of his day. He had a family of seven sons and three daughters and owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 teams of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and many servants (Job 1:3). During Old Testament times, a large family and the accumulation of material goods, such as Job possessed, was often associated with God's approval or favoritism. Abraham and Joseph, for example, were viewed by their neighbors as blessed of God because of their prosperity (Genesis 39:1 through 6).

Job was a righteous man who acted as the patriarch and priest of his household. When his sons

and daughters feasted together, Job afterwards **reconsecrated** them by offering a burnt offering to the Lord on behalf of each of them. He made the offering in case his children had foolishly sinned and cursed God in their hearts (Job 1:5). Job was both faithful and regular in his priestly duties on behalf of his family and interceded for them continually.

**First tragedy.** Unknown to Job an important event was taking place in heaven. At an appointed time the angels, sometimes called the *sons of God* in the Old Testament (Job 1:6), were summoned to appear before the Lord God. Satan also came among them and was asked to give account of his actions on the earth. The **dialogue** between God and Satan is very important to the understanding of Job's suffering and trials (Job 1:6-12). God spoke to Satan, the accuser, of Job's goodness, because the Lord knew the gracious work He had done in Job's heart. God was going to use Job to exhibit the divine characteristics that can be found in every believer who trusts completely in the mercy and **providence** of God. Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of one of the greatest world empires, Babylon, expressed God's **sovereign** right to order all events, without question, among both the angels in heaven and the kings of the earth (Daniel 4:28-37). The Apostle Paul stated (Ephesians 3:1-11) that the intent

of God's dealings with the churches is to demonstrate His wisdom to principalities and powers in heavenly places. In I Corinthians 1:27-31 Paul wrote that God delights in using the foolish, weak, base, and despised things of the world to **confound** the wise and mighty. God would use His servant Job to confound the wisest and mightiest leader of the satanic principalities.

Satan accused Job of following the Lord only for materialistic gain. Satan stated that if these things were removed, Job would curse God. Although Satan attempted to have God tempt Job personally, the Lord placed Job in Satan's hands with specified limitations. The accuser immediately caused Job to lose not only all of his cattle and servants but also all of his sons and daughters in one evil blow. Satan was given the permission by God (Job 1:12) to work his way in the hearts of the Sabeans and Chaldeans. Satan was also granted the power to kill the sheep and herdsmen with lightning and **Job's children with a cyclone**. The Book of Job should be seen not only from the point of view of human suffering but also from the perspective of God's eternal purposes, which will bring glory to Himself and eternal rewards to His children.

**Second tragedy.** Satan failed to destroy Job's faith in God in the first tragedy. In his following appearance before the Lord, the accuser tried to discredit Job's righteousness by stating that material losses were not as effective as would be touching Job's health. Satan attempted to get God to afflict Job with sickness, but the Lord placed him in Satan's hands instead, warning the enemy (Job 2:6) not to take his life. Satan was given the power to afflict Job with horrible boils from his head to his feet. The boils



### Second Tragedy Befalls Job

were so severe that he was almost unrecognizable when his friends saw him. Job's wife added to his sufferings by accusing God directly for her husband's condition. She then urged him to curse God and die.

So great was Job's agony that his friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, sat **dumbfounded** with Job for seven days before they dared speak to him. Yet in all his sufferings Job did not sin or **revile** God with his voice, but instead he blessed the name of the Lord. In these tragedies, Job was completely unaware of the prior events in heaven, of Satan's role in his suffering, and of the divine purpose God planned for His servant after all his trials. The specific purposes of our suffering today may not be fully understood until God reveals them to us here or in eternity.



#### Complete these statements.

- 1.1 Job lived in the land of a. \_\_\_\_\_, a region at the south of b. \_\_\_\_\_ and west of the great c. \_\_\_\_\_ Desert.
- 1.2 Job was a a. \_\_\_\_\_ or b. \_\_\_\_\_ who acted as a c. \_\_\_\_\_ for his household.
- 1.3 Job had a family of a. \_\_\_\_\_ sons and b. \_\_\_\_\_ daughters.
- 1.4 Job was a wealthy cattleman, owning a. \_\_\_\_\_ sheep, b. \_\_\_\_\_ camels, c. \_\_\_\_\_ teams of oxen, d. \_\_\_\_\_ female donkeys, and many servants.
- 1.5 Job was concerned that his children might have \_\_\_\_\_ God in their hearts.



**Answer true or false.**

- 1.6 \_\_\_\_\_ The Book of Job is one of the earliest Bible books written.
- 1.7 \_\_\_\_\_ The majority of the debate section in the Book of Job is in prose form.
- 1.8 \_\_\_\_\_ The vocabulary in the Book of Job is very limited.
- 1.9 \_\_\_\_\_ A genuine love for God’s creation is revealed in the content of Job.
- 1.10 \_\_\_\_\_ The content of Job reveals a vast resource of knowledge.



**Complete these activities.**

- 1.11 List four factors concerning the style revealed in the content of Job.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.12 List three aspects of God’s appraisal of His servant Job.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.13 List three things guarded by God’s “hedge of protection,” according to Satan’s accusation.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.14 List two ways in which God’s favor was bestowed on Job.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.15 Describe briefly the four calamities that came upon Job’s family and possessions as a result of Satan’s first attack.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.16 List five things Job did when he heard the disastrous news.
 

a. _____	d. _____
b. _____	e. _____
c. _____	



**Complete these statements.**

- 1.17 Of Job's servants only \_\_\_\_\_ escaped to tell him about the tragic events of one day.
- 1.18 Satan accused Job before God of following the Lord only for \_\_\_\_\_ gain.
- 1.19 In the midst of all this trouble, Job did not a. \_\_\_\_\_, nor charge God foolishly, but rather b. \_\_\_\_\_ the name of the Lord.
- 1.20 The Book of Job should be viewed not only from the aspect of human a. \_\_\_\_\_, but from the perspective of God's eternal b. \_\_\_\_\_, which will bring c. \_\_\_\_\_ to Himself and eternal d. \_\_\_\_\_ to His children.



**Complete these activities.**

- 1.21 State an aspect added to God's original appraisal of Job after the first tragedy had struck.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.22 Give the names of Job's three friends who visited him in his grief.  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.23 List four things they did to show their concern for Job.  
a. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. \_\_\_\_\_



**Write the correct letter and answer on each line.**

- 1.24 Satan was instructed by God to save Job's \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. family      b. wife      c. life      d. flesh
- 1.25 Job was smitten with sore \_\_\_\_\_ from head to foot.  
a. cuts      b. bruises      c. scrapes      d. boils
- 1.26 Job's wife caused him further suffering by telling him to \_\_\_\_\_ God and die.  
a. renounce      b. curse      c. reject      d. bless
- 1.27 Job's friends came to mourn with him and to \_\_\_\_\_ him.  
a. satisfy      b. pray      c. encourage      d. comfort
- 1.28 Job's friends did not say a word to him, sitting in silence for \_\_\_\_\_ days and nights, because his grief was very great.  
a. seven      b. ten      c. twelve      d. fourteen



**Read Job, Chapters 22 through 42 and I John 4:16 through 18.**