

3/86

# LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF JOB



SENIOR DIVISION  
THIRD QUARTER 1986

**Lesson Titles for This Quarter**

***LESSONS FROM THE  
BOOK OF JOB***

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# FOREWORD

As the title shows, the lessons for this quarter are based on the Book of Job, where we read about a God-fearing man who suffers total disaster. He loses all his property and his children, and, while his body is afflicted with a loathsome disease, his mind is oppressed by sorrow and doubts. In three cycles of speeches, Job and his friends discuss the problem of human suffering. Job's friends defend the standpoint that calamities are reserved only for the wicked; therefore, Job must be involved in some grievous sin. Job disagrees with his friends, appealing to undeniable facts, which show that the wicked often have prosperity, while innocent people often suffer adversity. For this reason, however, Job has serious questions concerning the justice of God's government of the world.

The problem with these good men is that, although they are not agreed among themselves, they all believe in righteousness by works. Before Job's condition is changed, it seems that he slowly finds the answer to the question, How should man be just with God? Though it is not directly stated, it should nevertheless be understood that Job comes to the conclusion that the just must live by faith.

Because of the copious repetitions contained in the three series of dialogues, and because many verses are hard to translate and cannot be clearly understood, only key verses have been taken for these lessons. The use of various translations of the Bible may be helpful to clarify the meaning of many obscure passages.

May the Lord bless teachers and students during this quarter!

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

**Thirteenth Sabbath Offering**  
**for**  
**EL SALVADOR**

El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated republic in Central America, with over three and a half million inhabitants. The official language spoken is Spanish. Roman Catholicism is the official religion. The capital city is San Salvador.

In Santa Ana, the second most important city, we have a group of over 30 members and more than 100 prospective members. With sacrifices on their part they purchased a piece of land in a very good location, where they hold their meetings under precarious conditions, in a temporary shed. They are now making plans to build a representative chapel, which will, of course, involve further sacrifices. As our brethren there are poor, they are hereby approaching our people in other parts of the world with an appeal for help.

The General Conference Council has decided to allot the 13th Sabbath offering of this quarter to El Salvador. Therefore, please remember the need of our Salvadoran brethren, plan ahead to add your share, and make a substantial contribution on September 27, according to your possibilities.

The Lord will certainly bless the cheerful giver.

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

## JOB

The prologue of the Book of Job introduces to the reader a very prosperous and God-fearing man—an Eastern chieftain called Job—who is well-known and highly respected in the land of Uz (probably near Edom).

**KEY TEXT:** “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil” (Job 1:1).

### *Non-Israelite Worshipers*

Sunday  
June 29

1. What evidence do we have that, in the days of Abraham, God had worshipers outside the patriarch's household? Genesis 14:18.
2. What other evidence shows that there were true worshipers of God outside the confines of Israel? Exodus 2:16; 18:1, 12, 24.

### *A Great Man in the Land of Uz*

Monday  
June 30

3. What was the name of the land where Job became a famous man, and where do you think that land was located? Job 1:1 (first part). What reason(s) do you have for believing that he was not an Israelite? What do some commentators, as well as Sister E. G. White, say about the authorship of the book of Job?

“The long years amid desert solitudes were not lost. Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but during this time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

“The earliest as well as the most sublime of poetic utterances known to man are found in the Scriptures. Before the oldest of the world's poets had sung, the shepherd of Midian recorded those words of God to Job [quoted Job 38:4–27, R.V.; 38:31, 32]—in their majesty unequalled, unapproached, by the loftiest productions of human genius.”—*Education*, p. 159.

4. What is stated about the character of this man? Job 1:1 (second part). What activities made him a respected social worker? Job 4:3, 4.

“Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interest of others.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

## *Job's Family, His Wealth, and His Influence*

Tuesday  
July 1

5. What is written about Job's wealth and influence? Job 1:3.

"God has given in His Word a picture of a prosperous man—one whose life was in the truest sense a success, a man whom both heaven and earth delighted to honor."—*Education*, p. 142.

6. How many sons and daughters did he have? Job 1:2.

## *Life Styles of Job's Children*

Wednesday  
July 2

7. What outlook did Job's children have on life and how did they spend much of their time? Job 1:4.

8. What parallel can be drawn between Job's children and many professed Christians today? Isaiah 22:12, 13. How are the antediluvian sins being repeated?

"The same sins that brought judgments upon the world in the days of Noah exist in our day. Men and women now carry their eating and drinking so far that it ends in gluttony and drunkenness."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 23.

## *Job's Great Concern*

Thursday  
July 3

9. As the patriarchal priest of the household, what did Job do for his children? Job 1:5 (first part).

10. Why was he deeply concerned about his sons and daughters? Job 1:5 (second part).

"It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. . . . He labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled lest his children should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

## *Recapitulation*

Friday  
July 4

- a. Give the names of two men of God who did not belong either to the household of Abraham or to the people of Israel.
- b. Where and when did Moses write the Book of Job?
- c. In what sense was Job's life a success?
- d. Why was Job not pleased with the life style of his children?
- e. Why and how did Job labor for the salvation of his family? ■

## JOB'S TRIALS

Satan appears before God and questions the principles of Job's spiritual life, suggesting that his religion may not be genuine. He may be serving the Lord only for a reward. The adversary then obtains permission to put Job to the test.

**KEY TEXT:** "So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (Job 2:7).

### *Satan Before God*

Sunday  
July 6

1. When the sons of God (cf. 1 Kings 22:19) appeared before the Almighty to give an account of their ministry, who also came among them? Job 1:6. What question did the Lord put to the unwelcome visitor and what was the answer? Job 1:7. What is Satan's objective in roaming around the earth?

"God alone can limit the power of Satan. He is going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it. He is not off his watch for a single moment, through fear of losing an opportunity to destroy souls. It is important that God's people understand this, that they may escape his snares."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 341.

2. What further questions and answers followed? Job 1:8–11. What special blessing, granted to the faithful children of God, is recognized even by Satan? Psalm 34:7.

"A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said: 'Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?'"—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 512, 513.

### *Job's First Trial*

Monday  
July 7

3. How did God permit the adversary to try Job? Job 1:12–19. Mention the names of a few other faithful men of God who also went through fiery trials.

"Those who closely connect with God may not be prosperous in the things of this life; they may often be sorely tried and afflicted. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, that chosen messenger of God,

was hunted like a beast of prey by his wicked enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true and unyielding in his allegiance to God. Job was deprived of his worldly possessions and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives and friends, yet he preserved his integrity and faithfulness to God. Jeremiah would speak the words which God had put into his mouth, and his plain testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. Stephen was stoned because he would preach Christ and Him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and finally put to death because he was a faithful messenger to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. The beloved John was banished to the Isle of Patmos 'for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.' These examples of human steadfastness, in the might of divine power, are a witness to the world of the faithfulness of God's promises—of His abiding presence and sustaining grace."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 525.

4. **What did Job do as a sign of mourning, and what did he say as he resigned himself to the providence of God? Job 1:20, 21 (cf. 1 Timothy 6:7). What lesson of resignation should we learn from Job?**

"Christ is our Guide and Comforter, who comforts us in all our tribulations. When He gives us a bitter draught to drink, He also holds a cup of blessing to our lips. He fills the heart with submission, with joy and peace in believing, and enables us to say submissively, Not my will, but Thy will, O Lord, be done. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord' (Job 1:21). With this submission hope is resurrected, and the hand of faith lays hold upon the hand of infinite power."—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 270.

### *Satan Comes Before God Again*

Tuesday  
July 8

5. **With what question did the Lord confront Satan, again, afterwards? Job 2:1, 2. What is Satan still doing today and what is our defense against his attacks? 1 Peter 5:8, 9.**

"Satan is busy every moment, going to and fro, walking up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour. But the earnest prayer of faith will baffle his strongest efforts."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 294.

6. **What did the Lord ask about Job and what did Satan say in reply? Job 2:3–5.**

### *Job's Second Trial*

Wednesday  
July 9

7. **What additional permission did Satan obtain regarding Job? Job 2:6–8; 30:30. What does the bitter experience of Job teach?**

"The history of Job had shown that suffering is inflicted by Satan, and is overruled by God for purposes of mercy."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 471.

8. **How did Job's wife try to destroy his faith? Job 2:9. How did his attitude show a notable contrast to hers? Job 2:10. Describe one of Sister White's dreams in which she saw a similar contrast.**



"I dreamed that I was attending an important meeting. . . . Many were bowed before God in earnest prayer. . . . Brother A was prostrated upon the floor, apparently in deep distress. His wife was sitting among a company of indifferent scorners. She looked as though she desired all to understand that she scorned those who were thus humiliating themselves."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 604.

### *Job's Friends Come*

Thursday  
July 10

9. Give the names of Job's friends who came to comfort him when they heard of his suffering. Job 2:11.
10. What shows that Job was greatly disfigured by his sickness and misery? When they recognized him, how did they express their sympathy for him? Job 2:12, 13.

### *Recapitulation*

Friday  
July 11

- a. What does even Satan recognize with reference to the ministry of God's angels?
- b. In the experience of Job, what submission was necessary before hope could be resurrected?
- c. What will baffle the strongest efforts of Satan?
- d. How does the experience of Job teach that suffering is used differently by Satan and by God?
- e. In the immediate reaction of his friends, what indicated to Job that he was in a serious condition? ■

### *Parents . . .*

"Our heavenly Father, in giving His word, did not overlook the children. In all that men have written, where can be found anything that has such a hold upon the heart, anything so well adapted to awaken the interest of the little ones, as the stories of the Bible?"—*Education*, p. 185.

## JOB'S FIRST SPEECH

In the prolonged silence of his bewildered friends, Job can see the extent of his own misery. And he begins to utter the gloomy thoughts that have been haunting his mind, hoping to receive true comfort from them. But he is greatly disappointed.

**KEY TEXT:** "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came" (Job 3:25, 26).

### *Job Curses His Day*

Sunday  
July 13

1. As Job has been brooding over his miserable condition, what does he finally allow to take the place of the resignation shown before (Job 2:10)? Job 3:1-10.
2. How else does he express his great bitterness of soul? Job 3:11-19; 10:19. How does Sister White describe the discouragements suffered by the pioneers?

"We acknowledge with humility of soul and with repentance that our faith and courage have been severely tried and that we have sometimes failed to trust wholly in Him who has appointed us our work. When we gather courage again, after sore disappointment and trials, we deeply regret that we ever distrusted God, gave way to human weaknesses, and permitted discouragement to cloud our faith and lessen our confidence in God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 260, 261.

### *In Despair Job Cries for Death*

Monday  
July 14

3. In which way does Job wish and expect to be relieved of his sufferings? Job 3:20-23.
4. How does he emphasize the reason why he wishes to die? Job 3:24-26. What experience does every servant of God undergo?

"Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement—days when sorrow is the portion, and it is hard to believe that God is still the kind benefactor of His earthborn children; days when troubles harass the soul, till death seems preferable to life."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 162.

## *Eliphaz Rebukes Job*

Tuesday

July 15

5. How does Eliphaz rebuke Job for his impatient complaints? Job 4:5, 6; 5:1, 2. How will a genuine Christian try to help suffering souls?

"If you work for souls with humble, trustful dependence upon God, if the radiance of His Spirit is reflected from you in a Christlike character, if sympathy, kindness, forbearance, and love are abiding principles in your life, you will be a blessing to all around you. You will not criticize others or manifest a harsh, denunciatory spirit toward them; you will not feel that their ideas must be made to meet your standard; but the love of Jesus and the peaceable fruits of righteousness will be revealed in you."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 650.

6. As Eliphaz believes that Job is suffering because of his sins, what does he say to him? Job 4:7–9; 5:6, 7. Why is his "comfort" useless?

"Many who suppose themselves to be righteous, become exasperating comforters; they deal harshly with these souls [who are subjected to suffering]. In manifesting this hardness of heart in offending and oppressing, they are doing the very same work which Satan delights in doing."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 350, 351.

## *Eliphaz Rejects Job's Plea*

Wednesday

July 16

7. On what ground does Eliphaz reject Job's plea of innocence? Job 4:17–19.
8. What does Eliphaz say about the bewildered condition into which sinners are brought through their crooked devices? Job 5:12–14.

## *Eliphaz's Advice to Job*

Thursday

July 17

9. What does Eliphaz advise Job to do in his afflictive situation? Job 5:8.
10. How does Eliphaz encourage Job to receive the blessedness of affliction and to regard it as a correction coming from the Lord? Job 5:17–21. How and for what purpose does the Lord permit affliction to come upon us?

"Life is disciplinary. While in the world, the Christian will meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If injuries and insults are meekly borne, if insulting words are responded to by gentle answers, and oppressive acts by kindness, this is evidence that the Spirit of Christ dwells in the heart, that sap from the living Vine is flowing to the branches. We are in the school of Christ in this life, where we are to learn to be meek and lowly of heart; and in the day of final accounts we shall see that all the obstacles we meet, all the hardships and annoyances that we are called to bear, are practical lessons in the application of principles of Christian life. If well endured, they develop the Christlike in the character and distinguish the Christian from the worldling."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 344.

- a. According to Job, why is it often better to be in the grave than to be among the living?
- b. From time to time, how do we all, to some extent, share the experience of Job?
- c. As far as helping and comforting sufferers, show the difference between right and wrong attitudes.
- d. What cause does Eliphaz suggest for the calamity that has come upon Job and his family (Job 5:3-5)?
- e. In the school of discipline, what evidence shows that a believer is under the control of the Holy Spirit? ■

**“Seemingly forsaken of heaven and earth, yet holding fast his faith in God and his consciousness of integrity, in anguish and perplexity he cried:**

‘My soul is weary of my life.

O that Thou wouldest hide  
me in the grave,

That Thou wouldest keep me secret,  
until Thy wrath be past,

That Thou wouldest appoint me  
a set time, and remember me!’

Job 10:1; 14:13.”

—*Education*, p. 155.

**“Though weary of life, Job was not allowed to die. To him were pointed out the possibilities of the future, and there was given him the message of hope.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 163.**

## JOB'S FIRST SPEECH

*(continued)*

**Job resents the wrong conclusions of Eliphaz, because Eliphaz, without making any investigation, takes Job's guilt for granted. And the speech of Bildad, who agrees with Eliphaz, only serves to increase Job's suffering.**

**KEY TEXT:** "To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty" (Job 6:14).

*Job Disappointed and Discouraged*

Sunday  
July 20

1. How does Job renew and justify his complaints? Job 6:1-4; 7:2-5; 6:8-10. In what assurance should we find comfort when our prayers for restoration remain unanswered? Revelation 14:13.

"There are cases where God works decidedly by His divine power in the restoration of health. But not all the sick are healed. Many are laid away to sleep in Jesus. John on the Isle of Patmos was bidden to write: 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.' Revelation 14:13. From this we see that if persons are not raised to health, they should not on this account be judged as wanting in faith."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 230.

2. How does he complain of lack of sympathy and false conclusions on the part of his friends? Job 6:14, 15, 21. As they refuse to believe that he is innocent, with what challenge does he face them? Job 6:24.

*Job Complains to God*

Monday  
July 21

3. What complaint does Job express to God about the severity of his trial? Job 7:11-15. Under what circumstances do many begin to doubt the loving watchcare of God?

"Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement. . . . It is then that many lose their hold on God and are brought into the slavery of doubt, the bondage of unbelief."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 162.

4. Almost driven to regard God as the author of his troubles, what questions does he ask? Job 7:19-21. How do many professed Christians offend the Lord with their peevishness?

"If there was a cloud in sight, you seemed to forget that the sun ever shone; and clouds and darkness were ever about you. God sent you affliction; He removed your treasure from you that you might discern between prosperity and real sorrow. But you did not subdue your hearts before Him and repent of the great sin of ingratitude which had separated you from His love. Like Job, you felt that you had cause for grief, and would not be comforted. Was this reasonable?"—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 313.

*Bildad Agrees With Eliphaz*

Tuesday  
July 23

5. To what cause does Bildad ascribe the destruction of Job's children? Job 8:3, 4.
6. What advice does Bildad offer to Job? Job 8:5-7.

*Bildad Agrees With Eliphaz* (continued)

Wednesday  
July 23

7. According to Bildad, what lessons should be learned from the experiences of antiquity? Job 8:8-14, 20. In what sense do Bildad's words of "comfort" increase Job's suffering?

"Satan, the author of sin and all its results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God—as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin. Hence one upon whom some great affliction or calamity had fallen had the additional burden of being regarded as a great sinner."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 471.

8. What hope does Bildad, nevertheless, have for Job? Job 8:22, 21.

*Patience Under Affliction*

Thursday  
July 24

9. What did Jesus say to some who believed that calamities are consequent upon personal guilt? Luke 13:1-5.

"It is very natural for human beings to think that great calamities are a sure index of great crimes and enormous sins; but men often make a mistake in thus measuring character. We are not living in the time of retributive judgment. Good and evil are mingled, and calamities come upon all. Sometimes men do pass the boundary line beyond God's protecting care, and then Satan exercises his power upon them, and God does not interpose. Job was sorely afflicted, and his friends sought to make him acknowledge that his suffering was the result of sin, and cause him to feel under condemnation. They represented his case as that of a great sinner; but the Lord rebuked them for their judgment of His faithful servant."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

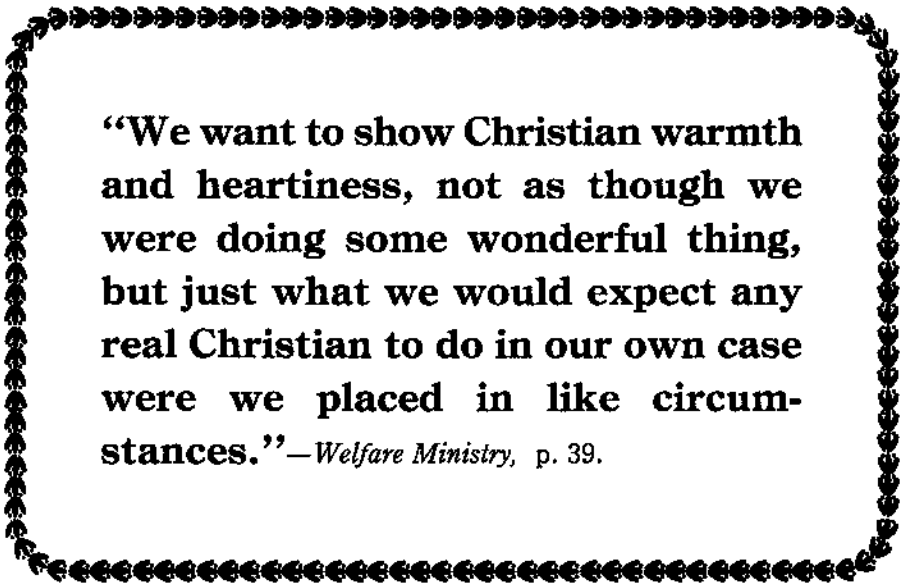
10. How should we respond when put to the test? James 5:7, 8, 10, 11. What cry will be answered before long?

“From India, from Africa, from China, from the islands of the sea, from the down-trodden millions of so-called Christian lands, the cry of human woe is ascending to God. That cry will not long be unanswered.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 179.

*Recapitulation*

Friday  
July 25

- a. In spite of his discouraging complaints, with what thoughts did Job envisage the day of his death, which he expected to come soon?
- b. Why does the Lord deprive some believers of all their material prosperity, and how do they then take an unreasonable attitude?
- c. Bildad's counsel to Job: How can a good counsel be misapplied?
- d. From a causative standpoint, how did Bildad, along with the other two friends, look upon affliction or calamity?
- e. Why is it wrong to believe that calamities are a sure index of great sins? ■



**“We want to show Christian warmth and heartiness, not as though we were doing some wonderful thing, but just what we would expect any real Christian to do in our own case were we placed in like circumstances.”—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 39.**

## JOB'S FIRST SPEECH

*(concluded)*

**Job is in a fearful dilemma: He does not dare to gainsay the theology of his friends, that suffering is a punishment from God for some grave sin; yet he is conscious that God knows him to be innocent, and, at the same time, he admits that it is hopeless for him to defend himself before God.**

**KEY TEXT:** "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse" (Job 9:20).

*Man Cannot Argue With God*

Sunday  
July 27

1. What is Job's desire concerning his problem? Job 13:3. Although he can see that it is useless for him to try and argue with God (Job 9:3, 4, 20), what does he still wish to do? Job 10:2, 3. What question is continually tormenting his soul? Job 9:2.
2. How does Paul express the fact that, before God, no man can stand in his own righteousness? Romans 3:9, 10, 23; 11:32.

"The human family have all transgressed the law of God, and as transgressors of the law, man is hopelessly ruined; for he is the enemy of God, without strength to do any good thing. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' (Rom. 8:7). Looking into the moral mirror—God's holy law—man sees himself a sinner, and is convicted of his state of evil, his hopeless doom under the just penalty of the law. But he has not been left in a state of hopeless distress in which sin has plunged him; for it was to save the transgressor from ruin that He who was equal with God offered up His life on Calvary."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 321.

*Man, Before God, Can Only Plead for Mercy*

Monday  
July 28

3. What does Job say about a righteous man's attempt to stand before God in his own righteousness? Job 9:20, 21, 27, 28, 30, 31. For what two reasons does he see the impossibility for man to win an argument with God? Job 9:32, 33.



4. **Rather than arguing with God about his own righteousness, what mercy does Job entreat of the Lord? Job 9:15; 10:7, 15, 20, 21.**

*Man's Only Hope Before God*

Tuesday  
July 29

5. **Explain why the publican, and not the Pharisee, was justified. Luke 18:9-14.**

"The Pharisee felt no conviction of sin. The Holy Spirit could not work with him. His soul was encased in a self-righteous armor which the arrows of God, barbed and true—aimed by angel hands, failed to penetrate. It is only he who knows himself to be a sinner that Christ can save."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 158.

"The prayer of the publican was heard because it showed dependence reaching forth to lay hold upon Omnipotence. Self to the publican appeared nothing but shame. Thus it must be seen by all who seek God. By faith—faith that renounces all self-trust—the needy suppliant is to lay hold upon infinite power."—*Ibid.*, p. 159.

6. **What was Paul's experience before he reached complete peace with God? Romans 7:22-24; 8:7. What change took place in him after his full surrender to Christ? Romans 8:1, 3, 4; 5:1.**

"Through the plan of salvation the law holds its dignity in condemning the sinner, and the sinner can be saved through the propitiation of Christ for our sins."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1076.

"The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters."—*Ibid.*, p. 1074.

"The sinner cannot depend upon his own good works as a means of justification. He must come to the point where he will renounce all his sin, and embrace one degree of light after another as it shines upon his pathway. He simply grasps by faith the free and ample provision made in the blood of Christ. He believes the promises of God, which through Christ are made unto him sanctification and righteousness and redemption."—*Ibid.*, p. 1071.

*Zophar Agrees With Eliphaz and Bildad*

Wednesday  
July 30

7. **Because he dares to assert his innocence in his discussion with his friends, how is Job rebuked by Zophar? Job 11:3-6.**

"There is wickedness in our world, but all the suffering is not the result of a perverted course of life. Job is brought distinctly before us as a man whom the Lord allowed Satan to afflict. The enemy stripped him of all he possessed; his family ties were broken; his children were taken from him. For a time his body was covered with loathsome sores, and he suffered greatly. His friends came to comfort him, but they tried to make him see that he was responsible, by his sinful course, for his afflictions."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

8. **What advice does Zophar give to Job? Job 11:13, 14.**

9. According to Zophar, what hope is there for Job on condition of repentance? Job 11:13–19.
10. Why is man incompetent to gainsay God's actions? Job 11:7, 10; Romans 11:33, 34.

“Could men fully understand the ways and works of God, they would not then believe Him to be the infinite One. He is not to be comprehended by man in His wisdom, and reasons, and purposes. ‘His ways are past finding out’ [Rom. 11:33]. His love can never be explained upon natural principles. If this could be done, we would not feel that we could trust Him with the interests of our souls.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1141.

*Recapitulation*

Friday  
August 1

- a. What question, asked by Job, has tormented men down through the ages?
- b. What does Job now decide not to do before the Lord? What will he do from now on?
- c. What is the answer to Job's question (Job 9:2)?
- d. Why is Zophar wrong in the way he rebukes Job?
- e. What should finite man never expect to understand or explain? ■

*Dear Sabbath School Members:*

*Let us remember the appeal (January 11, 1985) for a special Sabbath school offering which is to be taken up next Sabbath. We should make the necessary sacrifice to help support and expand our Missions. We know that there are some who are already giving much to the work of God, but we also feel that many of our members can do much more than they have done until now. The time will soon come when there will be no more appeals for help because the work will have closed, but until then it is our duty and privilege to offer our cooperation and support in finishing the work which the Lord has given us to do. In closing this appeal, we wish you all the Lord's rich blessings.*

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

## JOB'S SECOND SPEECH

In an effort to controvert his friends' views, Job is tempted to find fault with the morality of the divine government of the world. He says that sometimes both the innocent and the guilty are destroyed indiscriminately, while the wicked are often left untouched and allowed to prosper. Obviously, it is not clear to him and his friends that Satan is the prince of this world (John 12:31). Yet his faith and hope in God remains unabated.

**KEY TEXT:** "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25).

### *A Mistaken Philosophy Refuted*

Sunday  
August 3

1. With what evidence does Job refute the mistaken philosophy of "sin-and-suffering/righteousness-and-prosperity" as defended by his friends? Job 9:22-24; 12:6.
2. How was king David troubled by this philosophy? Psalms 73:1-17; 77:1-13.

"The psalmist David in his experience had many changes of mind. At times, as he obtained views of God's will and ways, he was highly exalted. Then as he caught sight of the reverse of God's mercy and changeless love, everything seemed to be shrouded in a cloud of darkness. But through the darkness he obtained a view of the attributes of God, which gave him confidence and strengthened his faith. But when he meditated upon the difficulties and danger of life, they looked so forbidding that he thought himself abandoned by God because of his sins. . . .

"But as he wept and prayed, he obtained a clearer view of the character and attributes of God, being educated by heavenly agencies, and he decided that his ideas of God's justice and severity were exaggerated."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1149.

### *Understanding the Problem of Suffering*

Monday  
August 4

3. Why do many people have no heart for those who suffer? Job 12:5. Why is Jesus the best helper of sufferers? Hebrews 2:18.

"Christ knows the strength of your temptations and the strength of your power to resist. His hand is always stretched out in pitying tenderness to every suffering child. To the tempted, discouraged one he says, Child for whom I suffered and died, cannot you trust Me? 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.'"—*Messages to Young People*, p. 98.

4. What advice does Job give to his friends because they never went through the same experience as he did? Job 13:4, 5, 9 (first part).

“Job’s professed friends were miserable comforters, making his case more bitter and unbearable, and Job was not guilty as they supposed. . . . The intense agony of the soul that has been overcome by Satan and is feeling worsted and helpless—how little is it comprehended by those who should meet the erring one with tender compassion!”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 350.

### *Job’s Trust in God*

□ Tuesday  
August 5

5. What is Job’s renewed petition to God? Job 13:20–22. As he prays to the Lord, what does he seek to know? Job 13:23. What is often the main cause of our troubles?

“When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. . . . But when we really believe that God loves us and means to do us good we shall cease to worry about the future. We shall trust God as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, for our will is swallowed up in the will of God.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 100, 101.

6. What does Job say about his trust in God and his determination to keep up his plea before Him? Job 13:15, 16. What hope encourages him to look beyond the tomb? Job 14:7–15.

“By bearing the penalty of sin, by going down into the grave, Christ has brightened the tomb for all who die in faith. God in human form has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In dying, Christ secured eternal life for all who believe in Him. In dying, He condemned the originator of sin and disloyalty to suffer the penalty of sin—eternal death.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 230, 231.

### *Eliphaz’s Answer*

□ Wednesday  
August 6

7. How does Eliphaz rehash his previous rebuke based on the concept that suffering must be the punishment of some sin? Job 15:2–6. In what spirit should we approach those who need our counsels?

“There are many who need our sympathy and advice, but not that advice which implies superiority in the giver and inferiority in the receiver. K needs the softening, melting love of God in her heart. The looks and tones of the voice should be modulated by thoughtful consideration and tender, respectful love. Every look and every tone of voice that implies, ‘I am superior,’ chills the atmosphere of her presence and is more like an icicle than a ray of light that gives warmth. . . . Assertions and advice which savor of a dictatorial spirit are not good fruit. You need the softening, melting love of Christ in your heart, which will be reflected in all your acts toward your family and to all who are brought under your influence.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 534, 535.

8. To whose authority does Eliphaz appeal in support of his argument? Job 15:10.

9. As Job denies the charge brought against him by his friends, what does he say to them? What would he do to them if the situation were reversed? Job 16:1-5. What complaint does he renew about the treatment received at the hands of friends and relatives? Job 19:13-17.

"He [Job] defended himself, and denied the charge, declaring, Miserable comforters are ye all. By seeking to make him guilty before God, and deserving of His punishment, they brought a grievous test upon him, and represented God in a false light."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

10. What is Job's hope as far as this world is concerned? Job 17:11-15. In whom does Job put his whole trust? Job 16:19; 19:25-27. What experience should help us share the faith of Job?

"The cross lifts you up from the lowlands of earth, and brings you into sweetest communion with God. Through bearing the cross your experience may be such that you can say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' and because He lives, I shall live also.' What an assurance is this!"—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1095.

*Recapitulation*

Friday  
August 8

- a. What mistaken belief, held by Job's friends, has troubled many minds?
- b. Why are Job's friends miserable comforters?
- c. By what provision is Job's hope inspired when he looks beyond the grave?
- d. In light of Sister White's advice, how would you evaluate the second rebuke administered by Eliphaz to Job?
- e. If we learn how to bear the cross, what will our experience enable us to say with Job? ■

*Remember last Sabbath's appeal for  
a special offering to be given today.  
Thank you.*

## JOB'S THIRD SPEECH

Job's friends are unable to extort a confession from him. He stands firm in the consciousness of his innocence, and begins to see that God is not punishing him for some grievous sin, but perfecting his character through affliction. He renews his covenant with the Lord.

**KEY TEXT:** "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

### *False Philosophy Again Refuted*

Sunday  
August 10

1. With what evidence does Job again refute the philosophy that worldly prosperity is a sign of favor with God? Job 21:7-13, 29, 30.
2. To what pitfall does this false philosophy lead, according to Malachi? Malachi 3:14, 15. Why does God favor some while He lets misfortune come upon others?

"Providence, though unseen, is ever at work in the affairs of men. God's hand can prosper or withhold, and He frequently withholds from one while He seems to prosper another. All this is to test and prove men and to reveal the heart. He lets misfortune overtake one brother while He prospers others to see if those whom He favors have His fear before their eyes and will perform the duty enjoined upon them in His word to love their neighbor as themselves and to help their poorer brother from a love to do good."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 547.

### *Eliphaz's Answer*

Monday  
August 11

3. As Job insists that he is innocent (Job 6:24; 10:7; 12:6; 19:4; 32:1; 33:8, 9), what acts of unrighteousness does Eliphaz suggest Job may have committed? Job 22:3-10.
4. As Eliphaz does not understand the problem, what advice does he give to Job? Job 22:23-30. What other advice, if given to Job, could have helped him?

"Often prayer is solicited for the afflicted, the sorrowful, the discouraged; and this is right. We should pray that God will shed light into the darkened mind and comfort the sorrowful heart. But God answers prayer for those who place themselves in the channel of His blessings. While we offer prayer for these sorrowful ones, we should

encourage them to try to help those more needy than themselves. The darkness will be dispelled from their own hearts as they try to help others. As we seek to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we are comforted, the blessing comes back to us.”  
—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 256.

### *Job's Confidence Strengthened*

Tuesday  
August 12

5. As Job begins to understand that he is not being punished, but that he is rather being tried and purified, what does he say? Job 23:10. What should a Christian understand when severely tried?

“When one is enabled to catch a glimpse of the character of God, he sees not in Him the heartless, vindictive spirit manifested by human agents; he sees that affliction and trial are God’s appointed means of disciplining His children, and teaching them His way, that they may lay hold of His grace. ‘Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.’ As the poor backsliding one is led to the river of God’s love, he exclaims, When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold purified. The suffering soul is made patient, trustful, triumphant in God under adverse circumstances.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 355.

6. Why does his conscience convince him that his trial is not a punishment? Job 23:11, 12, 14–16.

“He [God] permitted affliction to come upon Job, but He did not forsake him. . . . God permits trials to assail His people, that by their constancy and obedience they themselves may be spiritually enriched, and that their example may be a source of strength to others. . . .

“God has always tried His people in the furnace of affliction. It is in the heat of the furnace that the dross is separated from the true gold of the Christian character.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 129.

### *Innocence Does Not Necessarily Free From Suffering*

Wednesday  
August 13

7. How does Job refute the false concept (maintained by his friends) that innocent people do not have to suffer? How do they suffer at the hands of the wicked? Job 24:4–10.

“God does not prevent the plottings of wicked men, but He causes their devices to work for good to those who in trial and conflict maintain their faith and loyalty. Often the gospel laborer carries on his work amid storms of persecution, bitter opposition, and unjust reproach. At such times let him remember that the experience to be gained in the furnace of trial and affliction is worth all the pain it costs. Thus God brings His children near to Him, that He may show them their weakness and His strength. He teaches them to lean on Him. Thus He prepares them to meet emergencies, to fill positions of trust, and to accomplish the great purpose for which their powers were given them.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 574, 575.

8. What does James say on this point? James 5:4–6.

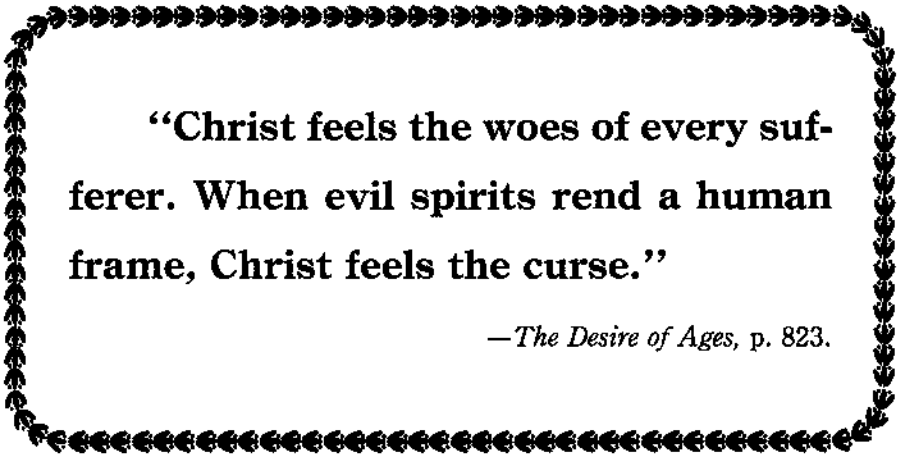
9. What doctrine concerning the righteousness and insignificance of man is held by Bildad? Job 25:4-6.
10. Since Job is resigned to his fate, as God may have determined it, what commitment does he renew before the Almighty? Job 27:2-6. What is the most consistent course that sufferers should take?

“The consistent course is to commit our desires to our all-wise heavenly Father, and then, in perfect confidence, trust all to Him. We know that God hears us if we ask according to His will. But to press our petitions without a submissive spirit is not right; our prayers must take the form, not of command, but of intercession.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 230.

*Recapitulation*

Friday  
August 15

- a. How does God test men, sometimes through prosperity, sometimes through adversity?
- b. What benefit shall we receive by comforting others?
- c. Mention the two main purposes for which God permits trials to assail His people.
- d. What plan does God have for his children as He brings them closer to Himself in the furnace of affliction?
- e. In what spirit, and under what condition, should we press our petitions before God? ■



**“Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend a human frame, Christ feels the curse.”**

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 823.



## THE MYSTERY OF DIVINE WISDOM

The wisdom that God reveals in the government of the world is a mystery which He keeps to Himself. The wisdom which God is willing to share with man lies in fearing the Lord and departing from evil.

**KEY TEXT:** "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from the evil is understanding" (Job 28:28).

### *A Lesson From Ancient Mining Practices*

Sunday  
August 17

1. Where does man dig in order to obtain gold, silver, and iron ores? Job 28:1, 2.
2. How do miners work to extract precious metals from the soil? Job 28:9-11.

### *The Most Precious Treasure*

Monday  
August 18

3. What question does Job ask with reference to the source of the most precious of all treasures (cf. Job 28:18; Proverbs 4:7)? Proverbs 28:12, 20.

"The heart that is surrendered to God, loves the truth of God's word; for through the truth the soul is regenerated. The carnal mind finds no pleasure in contemplating the word of God, but he who is renewed in the spirit of his mind, sees new charms in the living oracles; for divine beauty and celestial light seem to shine in every passage. That which was to the carnal mind a desolate wilderness, to the spiritual mind becomes a land of living streams. . . .

"Though inestimable treasures are in the Bible, and it is like a mine full of precious ore, it is not valued, it is not searched, and its riches are not discovered."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 182.

4. What does he say about the way that leads to this treasure? Job 28:13, 14, 21.

"The treasures of the gospel are said to be hidden. By those who are wise in their own estimation, who are puffed up by the teaching of vain philosophy, the beauty and power and mystery of the plan of redemption are not perceived. Many have eyes, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; they have intellect, but they discern not the hidden treasure."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 104.

5. To whom do we have to turn for directions to get to the mine of all true values? Job 28:23; James 1:5; John 14:6. What effort is necessary for the acquirement of divine wisdom? Proverbs 2:3-5.

"God is the source of all wisdom. He is infinitely wise and just and good. Apart from Christ, the wisest men that ever lived cannot comprehend Him. They may profess to be wise; they may glory in their attainments; but mere intellectual knowledge, aside from the great truths that center in Christ, is as nothingness."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 66.

"There must be earnest study and close investigation. Sharp, clear perceptions of truth will never be the reward of indolence. No earthly blessing can be obtained without earnest, patient, persevering effort. If men attain success in business, they must have a will to do and a faith to look for results. And we cannot expect to gain spiritual knowledge without earnest toil. Those who desire to find the treasures of truth must dig for them as the miner digs for the treasure hidden in the earth."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 111.

6. Since God is the source of all true wisdom, why does not He bestow it bountifully and equally upon all men? Job 12:24, 25; Proverbs 17:16; Romans 1:21, 22. To whom does He give it? Matthew 11:25, 26; Colossians 1:4-6, 9.

"He that makes God his wisdom, that grows up in the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, will stand before kings, before the so-called great men of the world, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into His marvelous light. Science and literature cannot bring into the darkened mind of men the light which the glorious gospel of the Son of God can bring. The Son of God alone can do the great work of illuminating the soul."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 199, 200.

### *What Is True Wisdom?*

Wednesday  
August 20

7. According to Job and Solomon, what is the definition of wisdom? Job 28:28 (first part); Proverbs 9:10.

"The greatest wisdom, and most essential, is the knowledge of God. Self sinks into insignificance as it contemplates God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. The Bible must be made the foundation for all study."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 451.

8. What does true wisdom include? Job 28:28 (second part); Proverbs 11:2; James 3:17.

"Humility is a characteristic of those who have true wisdom, and no matter what may be their attainments, they will not be self-confident and boastful."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 13.

### *A Great Responsibility*

Thursday  
August 21

9. With the wisdom that was entrusted to them, how were the people of Israel to enlighten the other nations? Deuteronomy 4:5, 6.

**10. What must happen to those who reject divine wisdom? Hosea 4:6; Romans 1:28-32.**

“Some who have been channels of light, whose hearts have been made glad by the precious light of truth, have denied that truth by assimilating to the world. They have thus lost the spirit of self-sacrifice and the power of the truth, and have depended for happiness upon unstable things of earth. They are in great peril. Having once rejoiced in the light, they will be left in total darkness unless they speedily gather up the rays that are still shining upon them and return to the Lord with repentance and confession.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 278.

“Those who have great light and who have not walked in it will have darkness corresponding to the light they have despised.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 163.

*Recapitulation*

Friday  
August 22

- a. What lesson from ancient mining practices has an application in our spiritual experience?
- b. Why are the treasures of God's Word said to be hidden?
- c. From what source, alone, can the human soul obtain enlightenment?
- d. What is the essence of true wisdom and what are its characteristics?
- e. How does God want us to make proper use of the spiritual treasures entrusted to us? ■

**“Because they cannot fathom all its mysteries, the skeptic and the infidel reject God's word; and not all who profess to believe the Bible are secure from temptation on this point.”**

—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 701.

## JOB'S PAST GREATNESS AND PRESENT MISERY

With his past condition, when he was respected, prosperous and happy, Job contrasts his present situation, when despicable people hold him in contempt. Now he is in pain, and sorrow, and disgrace. He does not fully understand the purpose of God in trying him.

**KEY TEXT:** "And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me" (Job 30:16).

*Job Misinterprets God's Dealings With Men*

Sunday  
August 24

1. What does Job say as he mournfully recalls the days of God's favor? Job 29:1-5.
2. What shows that, at least for some time, he had a mistaken idea about God's attitude toward him? Job 13:24; 33:10. Point out right and wrong views concerning God.

"The Jews held that God loved those who served Him—according to their view, those who fulfilled the requirements of the rabbis—and that all the rest of the world lay under His frown and curse. Not so, said Jesus; the whole world, the evil and the good, lies in the sunshine of His love."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 74.

"There are persons with diseased imaginations who do not rightly represent the religion of Christ; such have not the pure religion of the Bible. Some are scourging themselves all through life because of their sins; all they can see is an offended God of justice."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 501.

"God would not have His children, for whom so great salvation has been provided, act as if He were a hard, exacting taskmaster. He is their best friend; and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them, to bless and comfort them, filling their hearts with joy and love."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 103.

*The Purpose of Trials*

Monday  
August 25

3. What exhortation, if received from the very beginning, could have alleviated the sufferings of Job? Hebrews 12:5-8.

"They [His chosen ones] walk in narrow paths on earth; they are purified in the furnace of affliction. They follow Christ through sore conflicts; they endure self-denial and experience bitter disappointments; but their painful experience teaches them the guilt and woe of sin, and they look upon it with abhorrence. Being partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are destined to be partakers of His glory."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 31.

4. What else would have helped him if he had understood it from the beginning? Hebrews 12:10, 11. What admonition, sent to a brother, is applicable to many of us?

"God led you through affliction and trials that you might have more perfect trust and confidence in Him, and that you might think less of your own judgment. You can bear adversity better than prosperity. The all-seeing eye of Jehovah detected in you much dross that you considered gold and too valuable to throw away. The enemy's power over you had at times been direct and very strong. The delusions of spiritualism had entangled your faith, perverted your judgment, and confused your experience. God in His providence would try you, to purify you, as the sons of Levi, that you might offer to Him an offering in righteousness."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 416, 417.

### *Job's Former Prosperity and Honor*

Tuesday  
August 26

5. What does Job say about the days of prosperity that he once enjoyed? Job 29:6. What moral distinction must be made between riches and riches?

"The Bible condemns no man for being rich if he has acquired his riches honestly. It is the selfish love of money wrongfully employed that is the root of all evil. Wealth will prove a blessing if we regard it as the Lord's, to be received with thankfulness and with thankfulness returned to the Giver."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 452, 453.

6. How does he describe the position of honor and authority that he once occupied among the elders of Uz? Job 29:7–11, 21–25.

### *Job's Former Self-Confidence*

Wednesday  
August 27

7. What was one of the main reasons why he was highly respected? Job 29:16, 17.

8. What dreams did he have about his future? Job 29:18–20. Why does God often permit frustrations to come upon His servants?

"What lessons of humility and faith may we not learn as we trace the dealings of God with His creatures. The Lord can do but little for the children of men, because they are so full of pride and vainglory. They exalt self, magnifying their own strength, learning, and wisdom. It is necessary for God to disappoint their hopes and frustrate their plans, that they may learn to trust in Him alone."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1141.

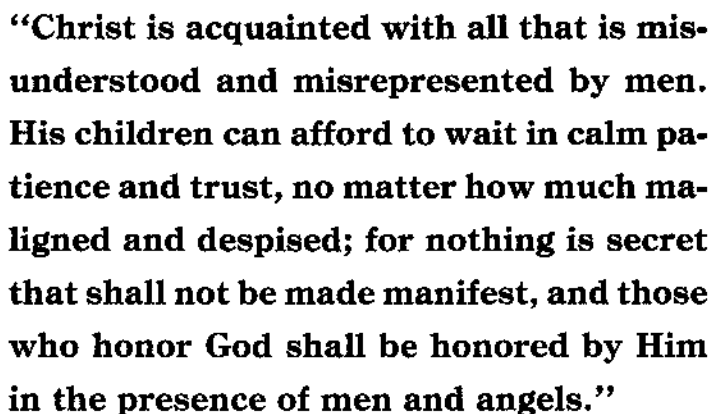
9. As a beggared outcast, how does Job contrast his present misery with his past condition? Job 30:1-10, 16.
10. In what sense do faithful Christians often have to share the afflictions of Job? Matthew 5:10-12. What history repeats itself? Hebrews 11:36-40.

"God's chosen servants should meet with courage and patience the trials and sufferings that befall them through reproach, neglect, and misrepresentation. They should continue to discharge faithfully the work God has given them to do, ever remembering that the prophets of old and the Saviour of mankind and His apostles also endured abuse and persecution for the word's sake."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 437.

*Recapitulation*

Friday  
August 29

- a. What evidences show that, although our heavenly Father sends us trials, He is our best Friend?
- b. Again: For what purpose does God lead us through afflictions?
- c. Why was Job not condemned for being rich? Under what circumstances is the acquisition of riches condemned?
- d. Why does God often disappoint the hopes and frustrate the plans of His servants?
- e. With what attitude should God's servants meet the afflictions that come upon them through misrepresentation and unjustified reproach? ■



"Christ is acquainted with all that is misunderstood and misrepresented by men. His children can afford to wait in calm patience and trust, no matter how much maligned and despised; for nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, and those who honor God shall be honored by Him in the presence of men and angels."

—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 32.

## JOB ASSERTS HIS INTEGRITY

Protesting the integrity of his past conduct, Job is not afraid to be brought to court for trial. With a bold assertion of his innocence, he even entreats God to answer him and to write down the charges against him. Elihu then emphasizes that Job's affliction must be designed to purify him from some unsuspected wrongs (evil companions? scoffing? hypocrisy? pride? vanity?).

**KEY TEXT:** "He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression" (Job 36:15).

*Blameless Family Life*

☐ Sunday  
August 31

1. In what sense has Job resolved to keep a guard over his eyes? Job 31:1. What covenant did David make with his eyes? Psalm 101:3. What relationship exists between our eyes and our mind? Proverbs 4:23, 25.

"This is an age when corruption is teeming everywhere. The lust of the eye and corrupt passions are aroused by beholding and by reading. The heart is corrupted through the imagination. The mind takes pleasure in contemplating scenes which awaken the lower and baser passions. These vile images, seen through defiled imagination, corrupt the morals and prepare the deluded, infatuated beings to give loose rein to lustful passions. Then follow sins and crimes which drag beings formed in the image of God down to a level with the beasts, sinking them at last in perdition."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 408.

2. What testimony does Job's conscience give about his moral conduct? Job 31:7–11. What lesson does the moral integrity of Job contain for us?

"There is no safety for any man, young or old, unless he feels the necessity of seeking God for counsel at every step. Those only who maintain close communion with God will learn to place His estimate upon men, to reverence the pure, the good, the humble, and the meek. The heart must be garrisoned as was that of Joseph. Then temptations to depart from integrity will be met with decision: 'How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. No matter how severe the pressure brought to bear upon you, sin is your own act. The seat of the difficulty is the unrenewed heart.

"In view of the dangers of this time, shall not we, as God's commandment-keeping people, put away from among us all sin, all iniquity, all perverseness? Shall not the women professing the truth keep strict guard over themselves, lest the least encouragement be given to unwarrantable familiarity? They may close many a door of temptation if they will observe at all times strict reserve and propriety of deportment."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 331.

## *Consideration for the Poor and Weak*

Monday  
September 1

3. How has Job always stood up against the sins of oppression? Job 31:13, 14. What is our Christian duty in this regard? Isaiah 58:6.

"In placing among us the poor and the suffering, the Lord is testing us to reveal to us what is in our hearts. We cannot with safety swerve from principle, we cannot violate justice, we cannot neglect mercy. When we see a brother falling into decay we are not to pass him by on the other side, but are to make decided and immediate efforts to fulfill the word of God by helping him. . . .

"It should be written upon the conscience as with a pen of iron upon a rock, that he who disregards mercy, compassion, and righteousness, he who neglects the poor, who ignores the needs of suffering humanity, who is not kind and courteous, is so conducting himself that God cannot cooperate with him in the development of character."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 261, 262.

4. How has he always looked after the needs of the poor? Job 29:12–16; 31:16–22, 32. How is our duty in this sense clearly pointed out? Isaiah 58:7.

"There are many who complain of God because the world is so full of want and suffering; but God never meant that this misery should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others cry for bread. The Lord is a God of benevolence. He has made ample provision for the wants of all, and through His representatives, to whom He has entrusted His goods, He designs that the needs of all His creatures shall be supplied."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 273.

"It is God's purpose that the rich and the poor shall be closely bound together by the ties of sympathy and helpfulness. He bids us interest ourselves in every case of suffering and need that shall come to our knowledge."—*Ibid.*, p. 279.

## *Modesty Concerning Wealth/Pure Religion*

Tuesday  
September 2

5. In what has Job never put his confidence? Job 31:24, 25. How dangerous is it to put one's trust in earthly treasures? Psalms 52:7; 5:7; Mark 10:24. What blessings are above worldly riches?

"A strong, clear sense of eternal things, and a heart willing to yield all to Christ, are blessings of more value than all the riches and pleasures and glories of this world."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 576.

6. From what form of idolatry, very common in those days (cf. Ezekiel 8:16; Jeremiah 44:17), has he always abstained? Job 31:26–28.

## *Honesty and Justice*

Wednesday  
September 3

7. What does Job say as he protests the absence of vindictive feelings in his life? Job 31:29, 30. How did Christ set forth more clearly the principle of forgiveness followed by Job? Luke 17:3.



“Too often when wrongs are committed again and again, and the wrongdoer confesses his fault, the injured one becomes weary, and thinks he has forgiven quite enough. But the Saviour has plainly told us how to deal with the erring: ‘If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.’ Luke 17:3. Do not hold him off as unworthy of your confidence. Consider ‘thyself, lest thou also be tempted.’ Gal. 6:1.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 249.

8. What does he say about his fearless honesty and just dealings? Job 31:5, 6, 33–40.

### *Suffering as Discipline*

Thursday  
September 4

9. While Eliphaz only suggested that suffering may be a form of discipline (Job 5:17, 18), what conclusion does Elihu bring home to Job? Job 33:13–19; 36:15 (second part); 37:10–13.
10. How and for what purpose did God allow the apostle Paul to experience the discipline of suffering? 2 Corinthians 11:24–27; 12:7–10. According to Peter, how will Christians benefit by the discipline of suffering? 1 Peter 5:10.

“While the Lord has not promised His people exemption from trials, He has promised that which is far better. He has said, ‘As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ ‘My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Deuteronomy 33:25; 2 Corinthians 12:9. If you are called to go through the fiery furnace for His sake, Jesus will be by your side even as He was with the faithful three in Babylon.”  
—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 30.

### *Recapitulation*

Friday  
September 5

- a. Under what condition, only, can a person preserve his moral integrity?
- b. For what purpose does the Lord place the poor and the suffering among us?
- c. What was Job’s attitude concerning his wealth?
- d. How do we know that Job held high principles of justice and honesty?
- e. What has God promised us that is better than exemption from trials? ■























