

S T U D Y G U I D E

THE



BOOK

OF

DEREK W.H.
THOMAS

JOB

S T U D Y G U I D E

The Book of Job

Derek W. H. Thomas



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Job, Satan, & God

INTRODUCTION

The book of Job begins by introducing us to its three most significant characters: Job, Satan, and God. In this lesson, Dr. Thomas explores the difficulty of Job's suffering, Satan's involvement, and God's sovereignty.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce the book of Job and its primary characters
2. To introduce the nature of God's sovereignty over suffering

SCRIPTURE READING

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

—Job 1:1

The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

—Job 1:21

LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The book of Job revolves around the suffering of its protagonist—Job.
 1. Job was a historical person who was righteous and very blessed.
 - a. He was from the land of Uz, lived at the time of Abraham, and is treated as a historical person in Ezekiel 14:14.
 - b. He is declared “blameless and upright” three times in the opening chapters—once by the author and twice by God (Job 1:1, 1:8, 2:3).
 - c. He was wealthy and had a wife and ten children.
 2. Job is presented as blameless and upright so that we know his suffering is not a punishment for some measure of ungodliness.

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- a. The book of Job asks difficult questions about the nature of suffering and God, such as, “Why are the godly permitted to suffer?”
 - b. The book of Job wrestles with the problem of evil and is considered a theodicy—a justification of the ways of God.
3. Job was innocent, though he was not sinless.
 - a. He is insistent that he is innocent and undeserving of punishment, but that does not mean Job was sinless.
 - b. There is no direct connection between any particular sin and his suffering, a principle also seen in John 9:1–3.
 4. Job’s innocence exacerbates the problem of suffering.
 - a. He seemingly loses everything in a single day, and his innocence only increases the difficulty of questions about suffering and God’s sovereignty.
 - b. We can identify with Job in our own inexplicable sufferings, so it is no wonder that the Bible addresses these questions in one of the earliest canonical books.
- B. The book of Job presents Satan as its central antagonist.
1. Satan is introduced very early but is not mentioned in Job’s conversations with his friends and is only possibly alluded to by God in connection with Leviathan and Behemoth.
 2. Satan is introduced as a drifter without a home who gives an account before God.
 - a. The fact that he must give an account to God shows that he is in no way equal with God.
 - b. Therefore, dualism is not a sufficient reason for suffering—there is not an equal power of good and evil at war in the universe.
 3. Satan is directly connected to Job’s suffering, but his involvement is not a sufficient explanation for Job’s suffering.
 - a. God draws Satan’s attention to Job, so God’s sovereignty must be considered when we ask questions about suffering (Job 1:8).
 - b. God permits and restrains Satan to test Job, so Satan doesn’t have ultimate control.
 - c. Nevertheless, Satan exists and is in direct opposition to God.
- C. The book of Job is ultimately about God and His sovereignty over suffering.
1. God’s sovereignty over suffering is the main concern of the book of Job.
 - a. Job forces us to ask the question, “Since God is all-powerful, why doesn’t He prevent our suffering?”
 - b. C.S. Lewis calls this the problem of pain, and it can even be called the problem of God, but classically it is known as the problem of evil.
 2. God’s sovereignty is Job’s comfort.
 - a. Job finds rest in the sovereignty of God: “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (Job 1:21).

- b. We can have rest, comfort, and peace by trusting in the sovereignty of God in the midst of our suffering.
3. God's sovereignty isn't always easy to understand.
 - a. Job will eventually begin to question God as the reality of his suffering becomes harsher and he descends into darker places.
 - b. The circumstances of our own suffering can sometimes lead us to despair as we contemplate suffering's continual presence.
4. God's sovereignty should be our comfort in the face of suffering.
 - a. We should respond to suffering the way Job first responded to the calamity in his life, "Blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21).
 - b. We must rest in His sovereignty, knowing His love and the reality that nothing ever happens to us outside of His gracious purposes.

STUDY QUESTIONS

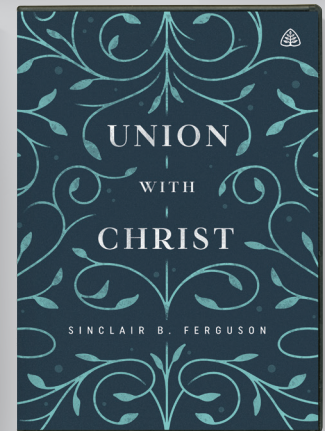
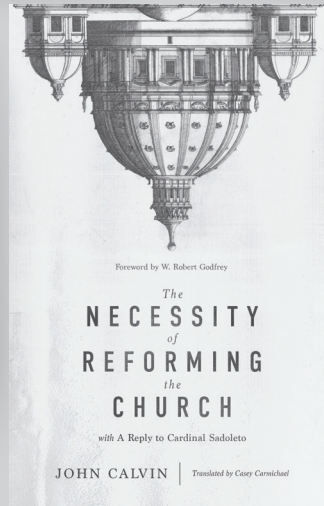
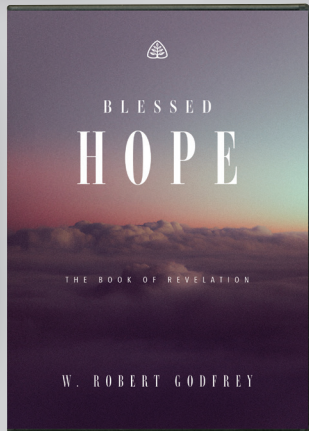
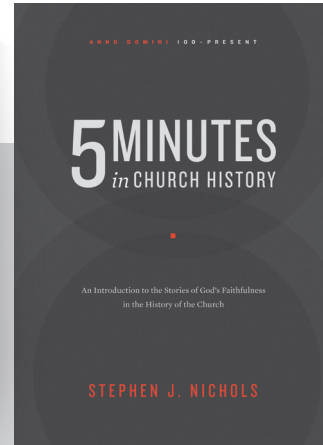
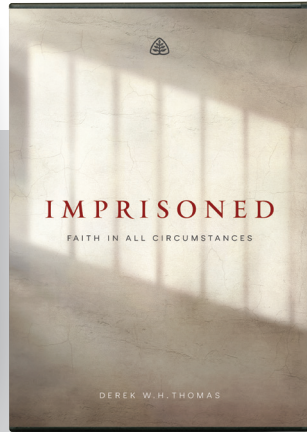
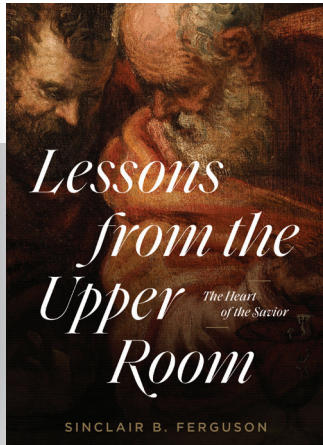
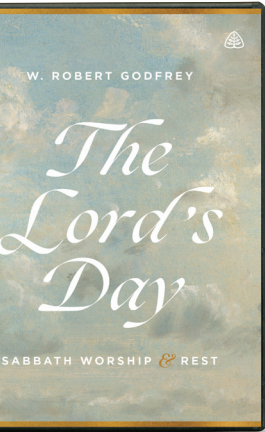
1. Job is presented as sinless.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. A _____ is a justification of the ways of God.
 - a. Theocracy
 - b. Theodicy
 - c. Teleology
 - d. Cosmology
3. Job was probably a contemporary of _____.
 - a. Abraham
 - b. Jacob
 - c. Moses
 - d. David
4. Satan is a frequent character throughout the book of Job.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. Job lost _____ children in one day.
 - a. Two
 - b. Four
 - c. Eight
 - d. Ten

6. C.S. Lewis called the tension created by the existence of suffering and the sovereignty of God the problem of _____ .
- Suffering
 - Pain
 - God
 - Evil

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why does suffering often make us question God's sovereignty?
- Do you find God's sovereignty over suffering to be encouraging? Why or why not?
- Job's initial response to his suffering was "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). What do you find significant about Job's response?
- How have you seen the graciousness of God work through your suffering?

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