



8

Job's Suffering

Key Themes

- God tests the faith and obedience of His children.
- God is sovereign over all things—even our sorrow and pain.

Key Passages

- Job 1:14–19, 1:21, 2:7

Lesson Focus

- God is sovereign over everything!



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Children will color the What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets to be used later during Activity 2.



Circle Time

Prayer—Using the Prayer page of the Flip Chart, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

God's Word—The account of Job proclaims the sovereignty and omnipotence of God over everything in our life—both good and bad. Job had faith and trust in God even when he was losing everything. We can find comfort in knowing that we are children of God, and He works everything in our lives according to His good purpose.

Song—Children will review the definition of sovereign by singing the three “God is Sovereign” songs. Then they will review the Memory Verse, Acts 17:26, by singing the song.



Activity 1: Job's Prayer

Children will roll a ball across the circle to each other as they recite Job's prayer: The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord (Job 1:21).



Activity 2: God Gave—God Took Away

Children will crawl through a tunnel and pick up pictures of the things God had given Job and then had taken away. They will tape the items to the board.



Memory Verse Review/ Snack

Children will review the memory verse while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite and/or repeat the memory verse.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



FOR THE TEACHER

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



COME ON IN

- Print the What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets from the Resource DVD-ROM. Print enough copies that each student has at least one illustration. All illustrations will be used again during Activity 2.

- What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets
- Crayons



CIRCLE TIME

- Bring a stuffed animal for prayer time.
- Practice the songs on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

- Stuffed animal
- Lesson Flip Chart
- Sticky notes



JOB'S PRAYER

- No special preparation is necessary for this activity. Bring in the necessary item.

- Inflatable beach ball or other medium-sized plastic ball



GOD GAVE—GOD TOOK AWAY

- Use the What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets from the Come on In activity.

- What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets
- A shoe box or container to put the coloring sheets into
- A large sheet or piece of fabric to make a “tunnel”
- Sticky tack or tape



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW/SNACK

- Prepare and bring snacks.

- Lesson Flip Chart for memory verse review
- Snacks



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Read the following passages to prepare your heart and mind for this week's lesson: Job 1:1–2:10, 38–42; James 5:11; Romans 8:28–31.

"Then the Lord said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?'" (Job 1:8). Thus begins this epic account of God's blameless servant turned over to the devices of Satan by God Himself. Oh, the sovereignty of God! It is too deep for any human to grasp—yet it is the very power that upholds all things in the universe (Hebrews 1:3).

God's sovereignty is the theme of the book of Job. The book opens allowing us a glimpse into the relationship between God and Satan. God controls Satan and uses him to accomplish His purposes on the earth. Satan can do only what God allows him to do—and in this account, God allowed Satan to test Job (Job 1:6, 1:8, 1:12, 2:6).

Job quickly discovered through his messengers that in one day he had lost his livestock, servants, and children (Job 1:13–19). And what a lesson we can learn from Job's faithful response as he tears his robe, shaves his head, falls to the ground, and worships the one who has taken every blessing from him in one day (Job 1:20). His worship and prayer in this desperate time provide a solid example of steadfast trust in the sovereign, almighty hand of God.

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

God was not finished with Job yet, and He permitted Satan to again afflict Job—this time in his body and health (Job 2:7). With grace that could only come from God Himself, Job stood true to His Creator as he responded to his wife who suggested Job curse God and die (Job 2:9). Job plainly understood God's sovereignty as he asked her, "Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" (Job 2:10).

Job's friends approached to comfort him, but they only served to confound him with their accusations that it was because of his iniquity against God that he was suffering in this way (Job 4:7–8). They insisted that if Job would only repent of his sins, God would remove his suffering (Job 11:13–19). But if he refused

to repent and continued in his wickedness, he would die (Job 11:20).

In chapter 19, we find Job clinging in his suffering and despair to the one thing he knows for sure—that his Redeemer lives! How Job yearned for what his heart knew to be true—that he would one day behold the Redeemer God with his very eyes (Job 19:25–27). Within the midst of this long Old Testament book, God gives us a foreshadowing of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and the gospel of forgiveness and redemption He would provide.

Job's suffering and the accusations of his friends continued. And finally, Job begged that the Almighty would answer him and reveal the purpose, wisdom, and reason behind his pain. In answer to Job's question, the Lord began a tirade of rhetorical questions—questions meant to humble Job by the demonstration of God's power, wisdom, knowledge, and greatness (Chapters 38–41).

In the end, God did not intend to answer Job's questions about the purpose of his suffering, but meant to draw Job's focus to Himself—the sovereign Ruler, Creator, and Sustainer of the entire universe. Job learned his lesson well when he answered the Lord by saying, "I know that you can do everything, and that no purpose of yours can be withheld from You" (Job 42:2).

Our God is in control. We know that all things work together for good to those who love God (Romans 8:28); that our God is in heaven and does all that He pleases (Psalm 115:3); that He works all things according to the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11); and that no one speaks and it will come to pass unless the Lord has commanded it. Both woe and well-being proceed from the mouth of the Most High (Lamentations 3:37–38).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Throughout this account Job continues to argue his innocence, and his friends continue to tell him he must be guilty because bad things don't happen to good people. This is a very popular misconception even today, and one that Jesus's disciples held to, but one that Jesus flatly rejected (see John 9:1–3; Luke 13:1–5).

Many today insist that a loving God would not let innocent people suffer. They have no concept of their own sinfulness nor do they understand the holiness of God—that He can't tolerate any disobedience against Him. Instead, these people make a god in their imaginations to suit their own desires and reject what the Bible clearly teaches—there are no innocent people

(Ecclesiastes 7:20); all of mankind has sinned (Romans 3:23); and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

But is the suffering we experience on earth the direct result of our sin? Is the suffering a manifestation of God's punishment? Scripture tells us that God disciplines His children. However, this discipline is exhibited out of the Lord's love for us—we are not perfect, and consequently we need training from our heavenly Father (Hebrews 12:5–7). Paul also explains that our suffering may be a consequence of a sinful decision, choice, or lifestyle—God is not mocked by our rebellion; we will reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7–8); our suffering and trials often test our faith and produce patience (James 1:2); we can be humbled by affliction brought on by God (2 Corinthians 12:7); and often our trials give us the wisdom and understanding to comfort others in their troubles (2 Corinthians 1:3).

We often will not be given a clear answer as to why we are suffering—just as Job's question was never answered by God. However, we must remember that God is our sovereign, holy God and He is able to work all things together for good for those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). His desire for His children is not to necessarily make us happy—but to make us holy (1 Peter 1:15) while conforming us throughout our lives to the image of His own Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The book of Job has often been praised as a masterpiece of literature.

Victor Hugo wrote, "Tomorrow, if all literature was to be destroyed and it was left to me to retain one work only, I should save Job." Alfred Lord Tennyson called Job "the greatest poem, whether of ancient or modern literature." Daniel Webster said that "the Book of Job taken as a mere work of literary genius is one of the most wonderful productions of any age or of any language." And Martin Luther said that this book is "more magnificent and sublime than any other book of Scripture."

When was the book of Job written and who is its author? Except for the first eleven chapters of Genesis,

the book of Job is probably the oldest book in the Bible. Most likely, Job himself was the original author (Job 19:23–24), writing down an account of his life after the restoration of his health and prosperity. He probably lived around the time of Abraham, and because there is no mention of the laws given by Moses or even of Israel—it is believed he definitely lived before Jacob.

Job was considered "the greatest of all the men of the East" (Job 1:3) and he "dwelt as a king in the army" (Job 29:25). Job lived in the land of Uz, which is believed to be the land of Edom (see Lamentations 4:21). Uz, who perhaps settled there first, was a grandson of Shem (Genesis 10:22–23).

Job is not a fictional character in a great dramatic poem, as many have suggested. He was a real man who served a real God, and as James said, a man who persevered and experienced the compassion and mercy of God: "You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11).



BEFORE THE THRONE

Oh dear Lord, as I prepare for this week's lesson, I thank you for your sovereignty in all things. I thank you too, Lord, that you have given me the gift of faith—a faith that knows that you are in control of all that happens in my life. And as I journey through this life, I pray that even as the difficult times continue to come, I will be able to stand on the foundation of your Word, your sovereignty, and your omnipotence—knowing that through it all you are working for my good because I love you and I am called according to your purpose. Lord, please bring the tender hearts of my students to a faith that stands on the rock of your sovereignty and the truth of the gospel, so that as they encounter hardships they will do so knowing that your perfect plans are being worked out for their salvation.



COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will color the What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets. Collect these sheets from the children so they can be used again during Activity 2 today.

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the lesson pages from the Flip Chart. Remind the children of each lesson's focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Circle Time

In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs.

Bring your stuffed animal, Bible, Flip Chart, ball for activity, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.

PRAYER

This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets his/her turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.

We start our Bible Study with prayer. Let's pray. *Turn to the Prayer page in the Flip Chart. Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.*

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I'm sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

Today Adoration is suggested. You might proceed this way.

Today let's say prayers of adoration—He is a great and wonderful God. And He wants to know how much we love Him.

The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their own confidence in praying to God.

- Prior to making your transition to circle time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.
- Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the circle time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

I'll start. Dear God, you are so amazing, you are in control of everything, I want to praise you for . . . (enter personal prayer here).

Pass the stuffed animal around the circle giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer telling God they love Him.

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away and we'll get into God's Word.

GOD'S WORD

These first four questions will be repeated each week. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

➤ As you teach, refer often to the Flip Chart picture to keep the children engaged.

- ? Before we begin, what is this? Hold up your Bible. The Bible!
- ? What is in this Bible? God's holy Word!
- ? What does the Bible tell us? Everything we need to know!
- ? And all God's Words in this Bible are what? True!

God's Word is true. Today we are going to hear about a man named Job. He was a man who loved God. He had faith in God and he tried not to sin. God had blessed him with a lot of wonderful things. He had oxen, donkeys, servants, sheep, camels, and ten children—7 sons, and 3 daughters. He was quite rich and very happy. Refer to the Flip Chart. Open your Bible to Job. Show them the Word of God. Express again it is all true.

Job 1:14–15

But, then one day terrible things started to happen to Job. God allowed these terrible things to happen. God is in control of everything. Listen carefully to what God's true Word says. Read Job 1:14–15 emphasizing the oxen, donkeys, and the servants.

- ? Did you understand that? What happened to Job's oxen, donkeys, and servants? Allow for answers.

Someone came and stole his oxen and his donkeys. And they killed his servants. Put sticky notes over the oxen, donkey, and one servant on the Flip Chart. That's terrible.

Job 1:16

Now listen to this. Read Job 1:16 emphasizing the sheep.

- ? Now what happened? Did you hear? Allow for answers.

Some kind of fire came from the sky and all the sheep were burned up and the servants watching the sheep were also killed! Put sticky notes over the sheep and one servant. This is terrible.

Job 1:17

But God is not finished with Job yet! Listen to this! Read Job 1:17 emphasizing the camels.

- ? What happened this time to poor Job? Allow for answers.

Put sticky notes over the camel and the last servant. His camels were stolen and the servants were killed! What is going on here? Job loved God. And God is allowing all this to happen.

But that isn't all that happened to Job. Listen to this! *Read Job 1:18–19 emphasizing the great wind, the sons, and the daughters.*

Job 1:18–19

? What happened to Job's children? *Allow for discussion.*

Put sticky notes over Job's children. All his children were together in one house. A great wind came, blew down the house, and killed them all! This was so terrible for poor Job. He was so upset. But instead of getting mad at God, Job fell to the ground and prayed.

Listen to what he said. *Read Job 1:21b. Emphasizing Lord gave, Lord took away, blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Job 1:21b

? Does it sound like Job is mad at God? *Allow discussion.*

No. Job knew that God had given him everything. And he knew that God was in control of everything. And he knew that God could take it away at any time. He said the Lord gave and the Lord took away. But then what did he say? *Reread Job 1:21b. Blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Right after Job lost everything he had, he prayed and said blessed be the name of the Lord. He praised God. He knew that God was in control of everything. He knew God was sovereign. Job trusted God through all these hard times.

But God had one more thing for Job and this was terrible! *Refer to the Flip Chart. Listen as I read. Read Job 2:7b.*

Job 2:7

? What happened to Job? *Allow answers.*

He was struck with painful boils all over his body. Do you know what that means? What do you think it is? *Allow discussion.*

Painful boils are terrible sores. Job was covered with sores, from head to foot.

This was terrible for poor Job. God had blessed him with good health and now he didn't have that anymore. He was in pain. But he continued to trust God. Job always believed that God was in control—God was sovereign—over all the things that happened to him. Job did not understand why God was doing all of this to him, but he believed that God was in control.

There are times things happen to us that don't make sense. It just doesn't seem right! Maybe a pet dies. Or a grandma or grandpa. Maybe someone loses a job or gets a new job and has to move away. Maybe you have to move to a new school or a new church. These are hard things to take. And things like this happen to everyone! But I want you to remember when something bad happens and it seems hard, that God is sovereign—He is

in control. He is good. And even when we don't understand, we can trust Him just like Job did.

SONG

► Musical instruments, marching, and motions can be added to this section to add interest and help learning.

We are going to sing three new songs today about God and His **sovereignty**. Lyrics to today's songs can be found on the Flip Chart song page and on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

? **Who can tell me what that means? When I say God is sovereign?** Allow for answers.

It means God is in control! Of everything. He was in control of all that happened to Job. Let's sing! Add some hand motions, marching, jumping, etc. to the songs to make them fun for the children. Move in a circle as you sing, switch directions. Have children move in and out and around the circle, etc.

OK. Good job. Now let's sing the "Acts 17:26 Memory Verse" song. Can anyone sing it without help? Allow children to try. Turn to the Memory Verse Song page in the Flip Chart. Sing with the children a few times. Add motions and marching as they learn.

Sit down. We are going to play ball!



Job's Prayer

? **OK. I have a ball here. We are going to use it to help us remember Job's prayer. Does anyone remember what he said?** Allow for answers. Give hints if necessary. Open your bible to Job 1:21 and read it again. *The Lord gave! The Lord took away! Blessed be the name of the Lord.*

MATERIALS

- Blow up beach ball or other larger round plastic ball.

INSTRUCTIONS

With the children sitting in their chairs, on the floor, or standing in a circle have them roll the ball across the circle to a classmate while they repeat Job's prayer and review the meaning of sovereignty. Use the script below for reference. Have the children repeat the words after you. They can say it loud, whisper it, speak it, roll the ball to a girl, roll the ball to a boy, to the teacher, to the helper, etc.

As the children roll the ball have them repeat after you.

The Lord gives!

The Lord takes away!

Blessed be the name of the Lord!

The Lord is sovereign!

He is in control! Continue as time allows and to help the children remember this important lesson.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God took all of Job's things away from him. Job did not understand what God was doing but Job still trusted God. Job believed that God was good. And we can believe that God is good—no matter what we go through even when we don't understand it at all.



God Gave—God Took Away

MATERIALS

- Large sheet or fabric to make a “tunnel” (you could use two rows of chairs and hang the sheet over the two rows)
- A shoe box or container with the What Did Job Lose? coloring sheets that were colored during the Come on In activity
- Tape

INSTRUCTIONS

Have the children crawl through the “tunnel” one at a time, open the box, take one picture from the box, bring it out of the “tunnel”, and tape it to the wall. You can have multiple copies of each item and allow the children to go through the tunnel more than once.

How many of you make camps at home? Today I am going to make something like a camp. It’s a tunnel. Inside the tunnel I am going to put this shoe box. It has your coloring sheets from earlier today.

I’m going to put the box in the tunnel and I want you to go through the tunnel one at a

time. Take one sheet from the box, bring it out of the tunnel with you, tell us what it is, and tape it here on the board. OK? Let’s get started!

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

? What are all of these things we have taped on the wall? Does anyone remember? *Allow answers.*

Job with sores (health), camels, oxen, donkeys, sons, daughters, sheep, servants. These are the things the Lord gave to Job and then took away from him again.

God gives us everything we have. And God can take it away from us. Just like He did to Job. But we have to remember that God is good and God is in control—He is sovereign—even when things don’t make sense.



Memory Verse Review/Snack

Acts 17:26 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.

After thanking God for your snack, review the memory verse with the children while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite and/or repeat the memory verse.

Use the Memory Verse page in the Flip Chart. Explain the verse to the children as you go over the verse together. Say the verse and point at each picture several times. Ask the children if anyone wants to try and say it on their own.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Today's important lesson is that God is sovereign—He is in control of everything. We learned that God had blessed Job with a lot of things, lots of children, and good health. He was very happy. But just like God gives, He can take away—and God took everything away from Job. Job prayed to God when he lost his things. He knew that it is the Lord who gives; it is the Lord who takes away, and the Lord is always to be praised. *Present the Flip Chart again and summarize the lesson.*

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.

This is so important for all of us to remember. Someday something will happen that we won't understand all the way. We might think God is being mean and we might get mad at God. But we need to remember that God is not mean. And we should never get mad at Him. He is good. And He is the one who is in control of everything—He is sovereign. God will help us to understand things if we pray and turn to His true Word, the Bible.



Group Prayer Time

- Thank God that He is in control. He cares about us. And He knows what is going on.
- Ask God to help us to understand this amazing truth about Him so we can trust Him in all things.

Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring page, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.

Song Sheet

ACTS 17:26 MEMORY VERSE

(To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?")

And He has made,

(Are you sleeping?)

From one bloo-ood,

(Are you sleeping?)

Every nation, every nation.

(Brother John. Brother John.)

To dwell on all the ear-earth.

(Morning Bells are ringing!)

To dwell on all the ear-earth.

(Morning Bells are ringing!)

Acts Seventeen: Twenty six.

(Ding, ding, dong. Ding, ding, dong.)

GOD IS SOVEREIGN

(To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

God is sovereign, it is true,

(Mary had a little lamb,)

It is true, it is true.

(Little lamb, little lamb.)

God is sovereign, it is true,

(Mary had a little lamb,)

He's in charge of all things!

(Its fleece was white as snow.)

He controls all things for you,

(Everywhere that Mary went,)

Things for you, things for you.

(Mary went, Mary went;)

He controls all things for you,

(Everywhere that Mary went,)

And does them for your good!

(The lamb was sure to go)

GOD IS SOVEREIGN 2

(To the tune of "Jesus Loves Me")

God is sovereign, this is true;

(Jesus loves me this I know,)

He takes good care of me and you!

(For the Bible tells me so.)

He watches over everything,

(Little ones to Him belong,)

And is King above all kings.

(They are weak, but He is strong.)

Yes, God is sovereign.

(Yes, Jesus loves me!)

Yes, God is sovereign.

(Yes, Jesus loves me!)

Yes, God is sovereign.

(Yes, Jesus loves me!)

He reigns above all things!

(The Bible tells me so.)

GOD IS SOVEREIGN 3

(To the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

God is sovereign of the sea,

(Twinkle, Twinkle, little star,)

Move hands like waves.

Of the stars, and grass, and bees.

(How I wonder what you are!)

Point to sky, spread hands to floor, pretend to fly.

He controls the ants so small;

(Up above the world so high;)

Scrunch down really small.

And giraffes that stand so tall.

(Like a diamond in the sky.)

Stretch up tall.

God is sovereign, this is true.

(Twinkle, twinkle, little star,)

Look up and point up.

He's in charge of me and you!

(How I wonder what you are!)

Shout "you!"

