

Job's Journey of Joy

Bible Study • Study Guide

When we hear the name “Job,” the word “joy” is not usually the first thing that pops into our heads. However, let’s take a look at the Book of Job and discover how it relates to joy.

Theme verses: *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing* (James 1:2–4).

Opening Prayer: Dear Holy Trinity, please guide us in our Bible study, and open our eyes to the benefits of suffering, so that we are better able to experience joy when we face trials and adversities. In the name of Jesus, who suffered for our joy. Amen.

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Excellent and Encouraging Example of Embracing Embittering Experiences (Eventually!)

- A. Just as Proverbs 31 portrays a model godly woman, the Book of Job is the story of a model godly man. He was blameless and upright, feared God, and turned away from evil. He is also described as a man of integrity. In addition, he was blessed with wealth and a wonderful family, and was esteemed and influential in his community.
 - B. Before Satan took away everything Job had, life was indeed joyful for him because he was wealthy, influential, and above all, was leading a godly life. It would have been easy to lose joy when he lost his wealth, children, and influence in the community because it is usually much easier to love and feel good about God when things are going well. However, Job maintained spiritual joy at this point and even praised God.
1. Read Job 1:20–23. These verses refer to the time period after Satan had taken everything away from Job.

[Job] fell on the ground and _____. And he said, “_____ be the name of the Lord.” In all this Job did not _____ or charge God with _____.

2. Read the following portions of Scripture that support praising, glorifying, and thanking God always, not just in the good times.

- a. Psalm 34:1,3: *I will bless the Lord at all _____; his praise shall _____ be in my mouth. Oh, _____ the Lord with me.*
- b. Habakkuk 3:18: *Yet I will _____ in the Lord; I will take _____ in the God _____ of my _____.*
- c. Acts 16:20–25: *After being beaten and put into _____, Paul and Silas were _____ and _____ to God.*
- d. 1 Peter 1:6–7: *In this you _____, ... if necessary, you have been grieved by various _____, so that the tested genuineness of your faith ... may be found to result in _____ and _____ and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

C. The following information helps fill in the gaps in Job's story and especially follows the progression of his spiritual growth and joy on his journey.

- 1. Praise did not come as readily after Job was afflicted with boils, and death seemed to be imminent. He took a step backward in the joy department, which can happen to all believers. Sometimes we go backward in order to move forward in an even greater way. God lovingly lets his children falter through adversity. Such was the case with Job in chapter 12. In his suffering, Job begins to sin by cursing God, saying he was innocent and God wasn't fair.
- 2. God does not send suffering because a person sins, although some hardships are consequences of sin. Job pleads with God to take away his pain and suffering. Chapter 29 describes Job's life before Satan's attack, as a joyful life — helping the poor, the widowed, the orphaned, the elderly, the blind, and the lame. In other words, he was reaching out and considering the needs of others before his own. Material possessions were not his greatest losses. Job pleaded with God to grant him purpose again.

Interspersed between the complaints and pleadings, the Book of Job provides some positive insights. Fill in the blanks with the following words: judgment, faith, slay, argue, abandon, hope, sin.

- a. The reason Job didn't _____ God, which Satan and Job's three friends didn't take into account, was that Job had a loving relationship with God and had _____ in Him. They didn't focus on God's love or a person's spiritual life, only on _____ and God's _____.
 - b. In Job 7:6, where Job is speaking to God, he says he has no _____. By the time Job speaks in Job 13:15, he has progressed to say, *Though he _____ me, I will hope in him.* In the same verse, however, he still wants to _____ with God.
 - c. In chapter 19, Job is still complaining and even cursing God for his suffering, yet he makes a profound declaration of faith that is one of the most well-known verses in the Bible. Having this assurance certainly contributed to his joy. To what future events was Job referring? Read Job 19:25–27. Who is the redeemer and what is Job looking forward to?
 - d. Read Job 27: 2–6 (the “you” in verse 5 is Bildad). Job even accuses God of his misery as well as his suffering: *the _____, who has made my soul _____.* Although God allowed Job to experience terrible tragedies, what does he say he would not put away? _____ To what does he say he will hold fast and not let go? _____
- D. To conclude our exploration of Job's Joyful Journey, read these Bible passages in addition to the theme verse (James 1:2–4) that are good examples of the benefits of suffering on our journey:**
1. Matthew 5:11–12a: _____ are you when others revile you and _____ you and utter all kinds of _____ against you falsely on my account. _____ and be glad, for your reward is great in _____.
 2. Romans 5:3–5: Why are we to rejoice in our sufferings? _____

 3. Hebrews 12:10–11: *For they disciplined us for a _____ as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share His _____. For the moment all discipline seems _____ rather than _____, but later it yields _____ to those who have been trained by it.*

- E. Eventually our earthly journeys and suffering will also end, but our joy will not! When we die or Jesus returns, whichever comes first, all believers will go to heaven where joy will never end — they will experience an eternal journey of joy!**

Closing Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank You for being the perfect example of suffering by enduring the cross for the joy set before You, so we might follow in Your steps. In Your Holy name. Amen.

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