

Lessons from Job

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Job.
- B. This was probably the first book of the Bible ever written.
- C. Job strips away the illusions of life.
- D. The Bible challenges the phony thinking of the world around us.

II. Temptation and trouble comes from the devil.

- A. We are thrust into the focus of the enemy's attack.
- B. The most dangerous thing is that we forget the enemy is attacking.
- C. Life is not a Sunday school picture.
- D. We are not here to have a good time—good times come as a gift from God.
- E. Life is for learning something.

III. The nature of human evil.

- A. Evil comes from a deep root of self-sufficiency and pride in man.
- B. Pride comes out as murder, bigotry, pompousness, legalism, critical condemnation and vengeful actions.
- C. Human evil is present in every heart without exception.

IV. The nature of faith.

- A. Some people believe that they exercise great faith when they simply believe that God is there and that people should do good.
- B. This, however, is a weak faith—a faith that is conditional upon God's treatment of a person.
- C. Great faith is strong no matter what the circumstance.

V. The nature of fallen man.

- A. Job came to see himself as he really was—a self-deceived man believing that he had resources to handle life as he needed.

1. We believe this too like Peter who believed he could lay himself down for Christ but could not during the hour of temptation.

2. Out of Job's weakness came his strength.

B. Job was a lover of power and prestige until God took it away. We are motivated too by prestige before others.

VI. The reason for suffering.

A. Suffering is sent in order to bring justice.

B. Suffering is sometimes sent to awaken believers.

C. But suffering is also a way for God to demonstrate that Satan is a liar and a cheat as God showed through the suffering of Jesus.

1. Job teaches us that suffering can be a means by which He is vindicated in the face of evil.

2. Some Christians are called to this high and holy privilege—to share in the sufferings of Christ.

V. The character of God.

A. God is not cold and distance.

B. He is deeply concerned with us, patient, forgiving and ultimately responsible for everything that happens.

C. God is infinitely wise.

Application questions:

1. In light of the story of Job, how should we respond when we see a fellow believer suffering?

2. How does Job illustrate the wrong kind of faith? What circumstances have you found yourself in relying on your own sufficiency?

3. Who best exhibits character in the midst of suffering in your own life? What stands out to you about this person?
