

Comments About Job 1:1–5

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At this time, I want to began a series of brief articles to discuss the book of Job. There will be times when we talk about one chapter, and there will be times when we talk about a group of chapters. As we begin today, we will talk about only a portion of a chapter—Job 1:1-5.

I hope this project encourages you to review the valuable history and lessons found in the book of Job.

Two common misconceptions

It is my perspective that many religious people have two common misconceptions about the story of Job.

- First, many people say that Job’s trials occurred because he was a horrible person.

In fact, the opposite is true. Read Job 1:1.

- Second, many people say that Job had a wonderful reaction through his two trials. Such people base their conclusion upon Job 1:21-22 and Job 2:10.

If the book of Job ended after chapter 2, then we could conclude that Job’s reaction was exemplary. However, the book of Job has 42 chapters and an opportunity for Job to reveal his humanity.

Helps many people

In my experience as a church pastor, I have had the opportunity to use the book of Job to help many people who are going through intense trials. I have found that the story of Job helps many people to deal with heavy burdens.

Let me give you a few reasons why the story of Job helps many people.

- The two trials did not come upon Job because he was a bad person. In fact, the book of Job identifies him having wonderful qualities (Job 1:1, 8 and Job 2:3). This book helps to support the idea that “bad things happen to good people.”

- It was God’s idea for Job to learn through these two trials (Job 1:8 and Job 2:3). Someone might ask how that fact encourages people. It comforts people to believe that God is in charge.

- God allowed Satan to provide the details of the trials (Job 1:11 and Job 2:5), but God maintained restrictions about what Satan could do (Job 1:12 and Job 2:6).

- Job 1:10 supports the idea of God placing a “hedge” around people. In the two trials of Job, Bible students conclude that God pulled the hedge back a bit—but still protected Job within the limitations of the trial.
- In Job 3-31, we see glimpses of Job’s carnal reaction to his two trials. We see Job’s sins, and we see that God helped him through his bad reactions.

Not helpful to some

While I said earlier that I have had the opportunity to use the book of Job to help many people who are going through intense trials, I have discovered that the book of Job does not help everyone.

Let me give you a brief example of how the book of Job does not help everyone in a trial. Consider Job 42:13.

While the thought of God replacing the valuable items that were lost in the two trials, that action does not solve all the hurt.

I have heard people say: “Having new children is nice, but I would want my previous children back.”

If you can’t understand that sentiment, you are not fully capable of helping people.

First five verses

- Job had many fine qualities (Job 1:1).
- He and his wife had seven sons and three daughters (verse 2).
- This man was the “greatest of all the people in the East” (verse 3).
- After the children were feasting, Job would “sanctify” them and offer burnt offerings for them (verses 4-5). He did this regularly.