

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## JOB 1-3

Victor Hugo was a French author who wrote such classics as the *Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Les Miserables*. He won a Nobel Prize for Literature. Hugo once said, “The book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind.”

*Who* wrote the book, we’re not sure? Jewish tradition ascribes it to Moses

*How* the book was written is certain. It was inspired by God the Holy Spirit.

Job appears as the eighteenth book in our canon of Scripture, but it was probably the first biblical book written. *And this was no accident...*

The theme of Job is the most fundamental of all truths - *the sovereignty of God*.

Every other doctrine rests on the footings of God’s sovereignty. This is the first concept a human needs to grasp - *sadly, it’s the one most people never learn*.

God’s sovereignty is His absolute authority. He has no limits. The only rule that governs His action is His own prerogative. He does *whatever He wants – however He wants – whenever He wants – to whomever He wants...* Hey, **God is da boss**.

The book of Job lets us know upfront *who’s in charge...* and it ain’t us...

In the movie, Rudy is praying to get into Notre Dame. He asks his mentor, Father Cavanaugh, if there's anything else he can do to help his chances.

The old priest tells him, "Son, in 35 years of religious study, I have only come up with two hard incontrovertible facts - there is a God, and I'm not Him."

In short, that's the lesson we learn in the book of Job.

This fascinating book is structured in 4 sections...

Chapters 1-2 are the **prologue**. The **dialogue** between Job and his friends occurs in chapters 3-37. God's **monologue** and Job's reaction, occurs in chapters 38-41. And chapter 42 is the story's conclusion or **epilogue**.

Here's the outline: *prologue, dialogue, monologue, and epilogue.*

Verse 1 "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job..."

Dorothy journeyed to *the land of Oz*. Job lived in *the land of Uz*. The city of Uz was south of the Dead Sea – near Edom - what is today southern Jordan. Moses may've learned of Job while working as a shepherd among the tribes of Midian.

Apparently Job lived in the era of the Hebrew patriarchs – *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. Twice in Genesis – chapters 10 and 36 – it mentions the name "Jobab."

In Genesis 36 a "Jobab" is listed as one of the kings of Edom.

Whether or not that was the same man... this Job had quite

a reputation. We're told he was "blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil."

Note "blameless" doesn't mean "sinless." Like all men, Job had his faults, but none was so glaring that it soiled his reputation or cast doubt on his integrity.

From the outset the author is letting us know it was nothing Job did or said that caused the calamity that came upon him. Job sinned like all men - but he did nothing specific to warrant the horrible circumstances he had to endure.

Verse 2 "And seven sons and three daughters were born to him." *Some ladies in the crowd might feel like that's an even number of each...* Job had 10 kids.

*He had a big family AND a big farm.*

Verse 3 "Also, his possessions were 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and a very large household..."

In Job's day a man's wealth was measured in terms of livestock. This is another reason Bible scholars link him to the period of the Patriarchs.

"So... this man was the greatest of all the people of the East."

Author Don Baker pieces together a few references throughout the book to come up with this description of Job... "He was an honored judge - noted for his fairness, integrity, compassion, and... justness. The young men deferred to him. The old men stood in honor whenever he entered the room. Everyone listened when he spoke. In fact, it was generally

agreed by all in Uz that when Job spoke, there was nothing more to be said. Everyone spoke well of Job.

The widows in their loneliness were clothed and fed by his generosity...

The blind often felt the gentle touch of his strong hands as he led them in their darkness. The lame were never left to their helplessness when Job was present.

Even the strangers were welcomed by the greatness of this gracious gentleman. There was no man on all the earth like Job.”

And notice the role he plays in his family life. “Now his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day (perhaps their birthday – each person’s *appointed day*), and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.” Job’s sons and daughters were in the habit of partying together.

“So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did regularly.” Apparently, this was before the establishment of the Jewish Tabernacle and priesthood. Again, during the period of the patriarchs the father served as the priest of his family.

And Job was a loving father. He cared about his kids. What if the kids went overboard and all got drunk - what if their *partying* became *perverse*?

*Just in case...* Job offered blood sacrifices to atone for his children. He not only cared about his own standing with God, but also the salvation of his 10 kids.

In my opinion this is still the mark of a good parent.

*We want our kids to excel in all of life...* we provide music lessons, and batting cages, and private tutors, and soccer trainers... but sometimes we forget what's most important - their relationship with God. *Are they excelling spiritually?*

Parents, with everything you do for your kids make sure you **"sanctify them"** as Job did. Point them to God. In the long run nothing you do will be more important.

In verse 6 the scene abruptly shifts from earth to heaven...

**"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD..."** *"Sons of God"* in Hebrew is *"bene-elohim"* - it was a title used for angels. The angelic host had come to God to file their reports...

**"And Satan also came among them."** Satan also has access to God's throne.

**"And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."** A lot of people think Satan lives in hell, but hell is the last place Satan wants to visit. He's alive on planet earth stirring up mischief and grief.

The word **"devil"** means *"slanderer, false accuser."* Apparently, Satan's audiences before God are often used to accuse God's people – *even us.*

This is why we need an advocate before God - a Mediator. In fact, Job cries out for a Mediator in chapter 9... In chapter 19 he has faith that His Redeemer lives...

Ultimately, Jesus is Job's advocate *and ours* - the NT uses this exact language.

1 John 2:1, "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

1 Timothy 2:5, "there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom..." Our sin is now covered by the blood of Jesus and has become inadmissible evidence in the court of God.

Satan approaches the bench with exhibit A – a sleazy recording of your past perversions. You're thinking. "Case closed. He's right. I'm guilty as accused."

That's when Jesus shouts, "I object... on the grounds of My blood and God's full forgiveness." Time and time again, the Father replies, "Objection sustained!"

Today, Satan approaches God and tries to condemn us, but Jesus is our advocate - One day He'll be *barred from the bar* forever. Revelation 12:9 predicts the day when Satan is kicked out of heaven once and for all.

Here in verse 8 "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?" This is fascinating to me...

It's a rare privilege to eavesdrop in on what God is saying from His throne.

Remember God's throne in heaven is engulfed with praise. But God Himself praises His kids. Like a proud papa God brags on the piety of His servant Job.

In 1 Corinthians 4:9 Paul says we've become a spectacle to the angels.

And this is probably one more reason why Satan hates us... For him we're a reminder of what could've been. He's jealous. We're the object of God's favor.

And he knows the quickest way to hurt the Father is by messing with His kids.

**“So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"**

**Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side?"** Note this **“hedge.”** God plants a hedge of protection around each of His kids. God has installed a fail-proof security system in your life.

If you know Jesus you have **a Father-filter**. Nothing can get to you but that it doesn't first past through Him. Satan can't harm a hair on your head without first acquiring God's permission. *What a comfort!* Any trouble that strikes my life I can be certain that it comes attached with *God's permission* and *God's purpose*.

In verse 10 Satan gets cynical. He says, **“You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!”** Satan

accuses God of stacking the deck – of buying Job’s devotion with His blessing.

Satan is the world’s first behaviorist. He claims Job is like Pavlov’s dogs. He’s been conditioned to love God. The more he serves the more he gets, so *why not continue serving God?* Satan contends that God is nothing but Job’s meal ticket.

And he throws down the gauntlet, “*Nix the blessing and he’ll stop his devotion.*”

One author observes, “Some people love God the way a peasant loves a cow, for the butter and cheese it produces.” This was Satan’s argument. The only way to really find out if a person loves God is to cut off the butter and the cheese.

“So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD”

Let me reiterate, God and Satan are not in anyway equal. The universe isn’t Star Wars... the one force is divided into the good side and the dark side.

Even Satan is under God’s dominion.

Though God hates his rebellion, apparently God chooses to keep Satan around. He limits Satan’s power -and uses him to fulfill His divine purposes.

Tertullian, the early church father, referred to Satan as “God's ape.”

But when given the opportunity Satan plays mean and gets ugly...



Verse 13 “Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, when the Sabeans (desert thugs) raided them and took them away - indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" Must've stunned Job! In one afternoon his wealth is wiped out.

“While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" A lightning bolt set his pastures ablaze. Evidently, Satan can manipulate nature.

Remember the storm on the Sea of Galilee that almost sunk the Jesus boat. Jesus rebuked the wind and waves. You rebuke a demon. Perhaps Satan was behind the storm at sea – as he was the lightning storm that struck Job's herd.

“While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”

Job is having a really bad day... You wouldn't think it could get any worse...

But “While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, (And I can hear Job think...

*No, no, not my kids. Harm me if need be, but not my children.)*

This was the man who cared so much about his kids he offered sacrifices for them just in case... **“And suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!”** Even his 10 kids are now dead.

Job wakes up with the world by the tail. He goes to bed having lost it all...

Have you ever heard of *the stress factor index*? It's a set of numerical values that try to quantify the amount of stress produced by certain losses...

For example, **"The death of a spouse equals 100... The death of a close family member 63... Fired from a job 47... A pregnancy 40 (for the wife. I think it's 100 for the husband.) A foreclosure 30... Enrolling in a new school 20... On it goes."**

The experts say 79% of those whose stress factor index hits 300-plus, suffer a major illness as a consequence. When I figured Job's stress factor index it added up to 650 – twice the danger level. Most folks would've cracked under the stress!

But not Job... he worshipped. **“Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped.”** *What would you have done?*

Rather than *crack-up*, he *looked-up*. Job fell to the ground and worshipped.

Job didn't whine, or complain, or file a grievance, or look for somewhere to affix blame, or curse God, or get mad – none

of these things! He worships God!

Round one in this cosmic contest goes to God and his servant Job!

In fact, Job offers one of the most stunning statements of faith in the Bible...

Verse 21 **"He said: "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."** It was obvious Job worshipped the *Giver* not His *gifts*.

Job believed that God is sovereign. He has the right to do as He pleases without getting my counsel or approval. It's God's right to both *give* and *take*...

What if one day God cut off the flow of blessing into your life?

Suddenly for you it no longer *"paid"* to serve God... the tangible benefits were gone. Would you still worship - simply because God is worthy to be worshipped?

Verse 22, **"In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong."**

Job teaches a heavy truth. You and I are caught up in a colossal battle – and our faith – our devotion – is the prize in this spiritual battle around us.

CS Lewis observed, **"There is no neutral ground in the universe: every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan."**

And they're fighting over our reactions.

Heaven is watching! How I respond to the fender bender - or rude waitress - or deal with an unfair grade - or handle the news of a terminal illness...

My reaction either brings glory to God, or it bolsters Satan's blasphemies.

God may be hanging His holy reputation on my reaction to the trial I face...

Here's the vital lesson - **the stress in my life may just be a test of my faith.**

Do we praise God only in happiness and blessing – or do we love Him *despite the pain and in the dark? God is grinning or Satan is gloating* – all because of us.

Chapter 2, “Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.” Satan is a sore loser. He comes back for more...

“And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?”

So Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.” 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? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

Notice the vindication of Job that falls from God's own lips - “without a cause.”

This sets up the rest of the story... Job's friends will later

insist that specific sins in Job's life caused his hideous problems, but just the opposite was true...

All that came upon Job was the result of a righteous life that pleased God - so much so, that God hung His reputation on Job's responses to his calamities.

Verse 4 "So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

Satan is cynical of human nature. He assumes every man has a price.

The devil asks God to let him take the gloves off... Satan has stripped Job of his wealth. If God lets him take his health, Job will "curse You to Your face!"

"And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life."

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes."

Satan strikes Job with painful, puss-filled, itching, inflamed lesions all over his body. He sits in the ashes, and madly scratches with a piece of broken pottery.

Scattered throughout the book are a list of Job's physical complications...

*Here's Job's medical chart... 3:24 loss of appetite - 3:24-25*

depression - 7:5 worms were in his boils - 7:5 hardened skin and running sores - 7:14 terrifying nightmares – 9:18 shortness of breath - 16:16 darkened eyelids – 19:17 foul breath – 19:20 loss of weight - 30:17 continual pain - 30:17 an erosion of the bones – 30:27 the inability to rest - 30:30 a high fever...

And our list doesn't even mention the social scorn and banishment that befell Job. He was ostracized from society. He lost his position and prominence.

Job became *"the Rodney Dangerfield of Uz"* – he got no respect.

*When a man is down it is so good to know he's got a wife he can count on for love and support...* But look at what Mrs. Job tells him, verse 9, **"Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!"** *Man, can you feel the love?*

This is why Satan didn't kill Job's wife along with his kids - she was more of a help alive than dead. She wants Job to toss in the towel for the Life Insurance.

Ladies, never underestimate the impact you have on your husband. Your words *build him up* or *tear him down* – in ways you'll never know.

Some wives constantly belittle their husbands - then complain he's not more of a man. They're blind to the correlation. Hey, a husband needs encouragement.

Verse 10 **"But (Job) said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from**

God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips." What a strong faith!

Job loses his *fortune, family, fitness, friends* - everything but his *faith*.

Whenever I study the book of Job I'm always reminded of an often overlooked fact - **Job never read the first two chapters of Job**. Job never learned the reason for his calamity. We're informed why Job suffered, but not Job.

God never told Job the reason for his agony... but that doesn't stop his friends from offering their opinions. And this is what happens for the next 35 chapters...

**"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place..."**

Notice with Job they made a foursome. I figure they were golfing buddies. They had a foursome that met every Saturday, and when Job didn't show up one weekend they knew something was wrong...

The author mentions their names, **"Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite."** And so far with Zophar its okay - but when he and his friends open their mouths they torture poor Job with erroneous counsel.

Let me go ahead and get this out of the way... Up until now the shortest man in the Bible was *Nee-high-miah*, but here's a man shorter...*Bildad the Shoe-height*...

There's also evidence his daughter was recently married - the name, **"Bill Dad."**

Here's one of the funniest lines in all 42 chapters, "For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him." Put "*comfort him*" in italics because Job's buddies do anything **but** *comfort* Job...

You've heard the old expression, "With friends like these who needs enemies."

Job's comforters are more his tormentors. They accuse him falsely. They even make up stuff. They tell lies. They do all they can to *pin a sin* on Job.

These three men try to prove that Job's sin is the cause of his calamity.

The bulk of the book consists of 3 rounds of dialogue... Eliphaz speaks – Job responds... Bildad accuses – Job answers... Zophar condemns – Job defends...

It cycles three times... Eliphaz is diplomatic... Bildad is blunt... Zophar is rude.

It's been said, "Pick your friends, but not to pieces." That would've been good advice for Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar... *the three musketeers of misery.*

Verse 12, "And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him..." They'd always seen Job on top of the world... His pitiful condition was such a shock... "They lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe (a sign of grief) and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven."

"So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights..."

At the time seven days and nights was the period of



mourning for a person who had died. In their minds Job was dead. These friends are attending a funeral.

“And no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.” To their credit this was a good approach to a person in Job’s condition.

Sometimes the best way to help a suffering person is to just be there.

Our words of wisdom can come across glib or trite – *until the time is right*. Our counsel can be misunderstood, but our presence speaks powerfully of our love.

As a Christian you need to know that God hasn’t promise everyone “a bed roses.” There are rainy days in every life. It was CS Lewis who once quipped, “Why should the righteous suffer? Why not! Only the righteous can handle it.”

Everyone who lives in a fallen world will experience some pain. A Christian’s advantage is that God has promised to go with us through the suffering.

This is why it’s wrong to conclude that just because a person suffers it means they’ve sinned – and just because all is well it means they’re righteous.

It’s ironic, but often golfing buddies make this mistake. They hit an errant shot into the woods – it caroms off a tree – and bounces into the center of the fairway.

Someone laughs and says to the guy who hit the shot, “Well, it looks like you’re living right.” As if holy living entitles you to favorable breaks - while unholy living leaves you in the rough. I wish life was always that straightforward, but it’s not.

Hey, this is false theology, yet it's the theology of 90% of the people I know. **Bad things happen to bad people – and good things happen to good people...**

Thus, when bad stuff happens I draw one of two conclusions - either **I've sinned** or **God failed**. And faith becomes shipwrecked by false theology.

This kind of simplistic, erroneous theology is lethal to a person's faith.

It backs you into a corner. When setbacks occur either God failed or I'm a failure – and most of us aren't going to accuse God, so we beat ourselves up.

Here's the message of Job... **there could be a reason hidden from view.**

Hardship, difficulty doesn't mean God has failed – nor does it mean I've sinned. Only heaven knows the whole story. Faith doesn't always get a reason.

Real faith *trusts God* even when it can't *trace Him*. It's not faith from the driver's seat – behind the steering wheel. It's not faith from the backseat where you can still see out the window. Faith begins when you're locked in the trunk – blind to what's happening – yet still believing God to take you in the right direction.

Job's friends have been sitting quietly with him for seven days... Finally Job breaks the silence. Chapter 3, **"After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth..."** The pain of his boils and trauma of his loss have settled in.

Job maintains his faith – and will throughout the book – but

pain begins to bore its way into his psyche. Never underestimate the suffering this man endured.

“And Job spoke, and said: "May the day perish on which I was born, and the night in which it was said, 'A male child is conceived.' May that day be darkness; may God above not seek it, nor the light shine upon it.” Job regrets being born.

He wished he'd never lived... than to live and lose so much.

“May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; may a cloud settle on it; may the blackness of the day terrify it. As for that night, may darkness seize it; may it not rejoice among the days of the year, may it not come into the number of the months.” His DOB should be blotted from the calendar – forever forgotten.

“Oh, may that night be barren! May no joyful shout come into it! May those curse it who curse the day, those who are ready to arouse Leviathan.”

The word “Leviathan” means “twisting serpent.”

There was a literal Leviathan – a physical animal. He's mentioned later in the book, and is used as an example of raw power – the explosiveness of nature.

Leviathan is the sea serpent. Sometimes he's depicted as a dragon.

But spiritually speaking, throughout the Bible, Leviathan is associated with Satan. The devil is the “twisting, tricky serpent of old” – author of confusion.

Here Job calls on the sorcerers – the evil people who

practice magic, and dabble in the occult, and conjure up Satan... to curse the day of his birth.

“May the stars of its morning be dark; may it look for light, but have none, and not see the dawning of the day; because it did not shut up the doors of my mother's womb, nor hide sorrow from my eyes.” Job is a little depressed.

“Why did I not die at birth? Why did I not perish when I came from the womb?” He wishes he was stillborn. It would've been better had he died at birth.

“Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?....

For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep; then I would have been at rest with kings and counselors of the earth, who built ruins for themselves, or with princes who had gold, who filled their houses with silver; or why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, like infants who never saw light?

Job is so full of pain he sees death as an escape - a welcomed relief.

“There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.

There the prisoners rest together; they do not hear the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master.”

Understand the Bible is the *Word of God*, but it's not always the *words of God*.

Someone asks, *“Is every single word in the Bible true?”* Well, it’s a true record of what was said, *but is what’s said always true?* No! Here’s a good example...

Job is not accurate. After death the wicked don’t “**cease from troubling**” – they may escape an earthly trial - but far greater trouble awaits them in the afterlife.

Pain has a terrible impact on a person’s theology. A hurting person will think and make statements about God, and life, and people that are simply not true.

This also occurs in some of the psalms, as well as other passages.

The Bible records these erroneous statements. Yet God knows we can learn from the struggles of spiritually-ignorant folks grappling to grasp God’s truth.

It’s a good rule of hermeneutics – or Bible interpretation - to recognize who it is who’s speaking and the condition of their soul when they speak... It’s a dangerous mistake to draw doctrine from the words of Job – yet many people have done so...

Sadly, groups like the Seventh Day Adventist have read Job’s comments about death and taken his words to teach “*soul sleep*.” When a person dies he or she doesn’t go to heaven, but remains asleep in the grave until the resurrection.

Obviously, the New Testament teaches us otherwise. The Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:8 “**to be absent from the body**” is to be “**present with the Lord.**”

Here’s why it’s unwise to develop doctrines from the

statements of Job - when God finally comes to Job at the end of the book He asks, “Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?” In other words, *who’s this guy who doesn’t know what he’s talking about...* Job is more a *dark cloud*, than he is a *ray of light*.

God is saying if you’ve listened only to Job you’re really confused.

Verse 20 "Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, who long for death, but it does not come, and search for it more than hidden treasures; who rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?"

Job regrets he was born. Wishes he was stillborn. And now he wants to die.

“Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in?” Here’s Job's most perplexing problem. Seven times in chapter 3 Job uses the biggest three letter word in the English language - "why" - if he just knew why...

Job calls himself “a man whose way is hidden.”

For seven days he’s been trying to figure out why God allowed his calamity. There has to be a reason - a purpose... he just doesn’t see it. And discovering why – making sense of his mess becomes the burning issue in Job’s life.

Without question, Job’s greatest grief was not caused by his material losses, or even the boils on his body. *Job’s most excruciating pain was not knowing why!*

Don Baker writes, “All Job wanted was an explanation. Even

the severest pain becomes somewhat tolerable with knowledge.” The best pain reliever is not Advil, or Percodan, or Morphine – *it’s an explanation*. If there’s a good purpose for our pain we’ll rise to the occasion, but how do we respond when we get no reason?

Job sums up his feelings in verse 24, “For my sighing comes before I eat, and my groanings pour out like water. For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, and what I dreaded has happened to me. I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes.” *What was it Job dreaded?*

Remember chapter 1, Job offered sacrifices for his children – *just in case they sinned*. The worst nightmare for Job was to fall out of God’s favor...

And now this appears to have happened. *Why has God turn against him?*

Of course, just the opposite was true. God loved Job. The fact, Job was God’s pride and joy is what set off this whole ordeal... It’s a credit to the man’s character that His standing before God was more important to Job than his own health.

One final point, verse 25, Job confesses, “For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me...” Some “word - faith” teachers – Joyce Meyers and Benny Hind and Eddie Long - suggest Job’s suffering was a result of a negative confession.

They teach the false notion that you create your own reality by the words you speak. *Job feared suffering – he verbalized his fears – it resulted in calamity.*

This is hogwash! Remember 2:10, “In all this Job did not sin

**with his lips.”** I believe God included that verse just to shoot down these false teachings.

The Jewish Talmud taught that you didn't speak at a funeral until the mourner first spoke. Job's words in chapter 3 are permission for his friends to speak up...