

# **JOB - A TEACHER'S GUIDE**

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## **THE CENTRAL QUESTION:**

### **What does this book/story say to us about God?**

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
- b. Why did He record it for our study?

**“To be permitted to have a view of God is the highest privilege accorded to man. This privilege should be prized above all earthly distinction or honor.”** *ST, June 16, 1898*

1. Who do you think wrote the book of Job? Do you think Job ever knew that a book of the Bible was written about him? Did Job ever find out why all those things happened to him? Did he ever read or learn about the information in Job 1&2? Where did the information in those two chapters come from? What about the surprise ending in Job 42:7-10? Would you have trouble understanding the book if you had only the dialogue and the ending (Job 42) and did not know about Job 1&2?
2. How do you think a scholar would go about trying to date the book of Job? What evidence from the book might he consider? Conservative scholars have believed that Moses was the author of the book of Job. If so, why isn't Job mentioned somewhere in the books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy)? Is it easier to understand how Moses could be such a friend of God and speak so well of Him if he knew about the story of Job? On the other hand, knowing about Job, why would Moses write such things as: “If you are good, you will be blessed; but if you are bad, you will be cursed”? (See Deuteronomy 8:18-20; 27:1-28:68.)

Dating is an important matter for books of the Bible. It helps us to understand the context in which the events of a given book took place. It also raises other questions such as the ones posed above! For some of the reasons why it is dated as it is, see below. Perhaps Moses did not mention Job because he realized how few of those who were following him through the desert would understand the larger issues portrayed in that book. The words of Deuteronomy form a sort of prediction of what would happen to the children of Israel in the next 800 years. It was not so much a threat by God as a warning. Unfortunately, they did not seem to get the message, and they proceeded to fulfill what had been predicted about them with very little evidence that they had comprehended at all what God was saying.

As one reads through the entire Bible, there are many places where the views of Job's friends are supported. Why didn't those Bible writers realize the lesson of Job? **Even the Pharisees and Sadducees in Jesus's day believed that the good were always blessed and the bad were always punished. Therefore, if one was rich it was a proof that he/she was good and vice versa. This was their ultimate “proof” for believing that Jesus was a sinner and they were righteous!**

The book of Job does not reveal who wrote it. He was a profound thinker, dealing with some of the most troubling questions in human existence from a mature spiritual perspective. He was very eloquent in communicating his message. The book of Job is one of the most beautifully expressed books in the entire Old Testament. The author knew about “wisdom” (*hokmah*, Heb.) literature, about nature, and a lot about foreign cultures.

Two questions must be asked when trying to date the book of Job: 1) When did the events of the book take place? And 2) When was it written down?

It seems very likely that Job lived during the patriarchal period, probably about the time of Abraham (1950-1775 B.C.). This thinking is based on the following arguments:

- There is no reference to Israelite history or biblical law.
- Job apparently lived for at least 200 years. (See Job 42:16.) This is consistent with others who lived in Abraham's time.
- Job acted as priest for his own family which was prohibited later by Mosaic law, (Job 1:5; Numbers 3:5-13) and there is no mention of priesthood or sanctuary.
- Job's wealth was measured in terms of livestock. (See Job 1:3 and Job 42:12.) Compare Abraham and Jacob. (Genesis 12:16; 13:2; 30:43; 32:5)
- The Sabeans and Chaldeans were portrayed as nomadic raiders. (Job 1:15,17) In later years, they became settled nations.
- The Hebrew word for *piece of silver* (*qesita*) in Job 42:11 is mentioned elsewhere only in transactions from the patriarchal age. (See Genesis 33:19; Joshua 24:32.) This was no small offering because 100 *qesitas* purchased a sizable piece of property for Jacob.
- In the poetic sections of Job, there is a very strong preference for the use of *El Shaddai* instead of *Yahweh* as the name for God which was given to the children of Israel at the time of the exodus. (See Exodus 3:14-15; 6:2.)

**Exodus 6:2-3:** <sup>2</sup>God spoke to Moses and said to him, "I am the Lord. <sup>3</sup>I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as *El Shaddai*, but I did not make Myself known to them by My name YHWH [Yahweh]." (*Tanakh, the Holy Scriptures*)

Scholars disagree on when the book of Job was written down. Conservative Jewish and Christian scholars tend to believe it was written quite early. Others think that it was not written down until the days of Solomon or perhaps even later. Attempts have been made to date the book based on its language and vocabulary. But, these have proven inconclusive because of dissimilarities to other examples of classical Hebrew.

The possible allusion to Job in *Qoheleth* (Ecclesiastes 6:10,11) may echo familiarity with the folktale, and the recently discovered Targum (Aramaic translation) of Job from Qumran, dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E., suggests a considerably earlier date for the book of Job.—*Anchor Bible Dictionary*.

### **Who was Job?**

**Job** was a real person, as Ezekiel 14:14-20 and James 5:11 indicate. He was a native of the land of Uz (Job 1:1,19), which scholars have located either northeast of Palestine, near desert land, probably between the city of Damascus and the Euphrates River, or to the southeast, in the area of Edom. Job probably lived before or around the time of Abraham. (c. 2167-1992 B.C.) Some have suggested that Job was about 70 years old at the time of the events in Job (Job 42:16). He was very wealthy (Job 1:3,10); he and his sons were homeowners in a large city of the region (Job 1:4; 29:7); he was a respected and popular judge, and benefactor of his fellow citizens (Job 29:7-25). He was a righteous man in God's eyes (Job 1:1, 5, 8; 2:3; Ezek. 14:14-20; James 5:11). The events related in this book were initiated by God

(Job 1:6-8), for God did not allow Job's trials because of any sin in his life (Job 2:3).—*King James Version Study Bible*.

### **Where was Uz:**

No one knows the exact location of Job's homeland, the land of Uz (Job 1:1). However, the Bible states or suggests several things about Uz:

- It was located in the East (Job 1:3). This probably means somewhere east of the Jordan River.
- Job's friend Eliphaz came from Teman (Job 2:11), known to be in Edom (see Gen. 36:8; Jer. 49:20). Teman was the grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:11), and the region of Teman probably was named for him. It seems appropriate that Eliphaz was a Temanite, for apparently the Temanites had a reputation for wisdom (Jer. 49:7). "Temanite" could also refer to Tema in the Arabian Desert; compare Job 6:19.
- Uz was accessible to Sabean raiders (Job 1:15). The Sabeans were inhabitants of Sheba, probably located in the mountainous region of southwest Arabia (now Yemen).
- Uz was also accessible to Chaldean raiders (Job 1:17). Chaldea was the small territory of southern Babylon bordering the head of the Persian Gulf between the Arabian desert and the Euphrates delta.
- Jeremiah named Uz in a list of kingdoms and peoples including Judah, Egypt, Philistia, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Sidon, and others (Jer. 25:17-26).
- The Book of Lamentations seems to indicate that Edom and Uz were nearly the same (Lam. 4:21). The parallelism of the Hebrew poetry used provides perhaps the strongest indication that Edom and Uz were one and the same, or close to it.—*Word In Life Study Bible*.

Ellen White said:

As year after year passed by, and left the servant of God [Moses] still in his humble position, it would have seemed to one of less faith than he, as if God had forgotten him; as if his ability and experience were to be lost to the world. But as he wandered with his silent flocks in solitary places, the abject condition of his people was ever before him. **He recounted all God's dealings with the faithful in ages past, and his promises of future good,** and his soul went out toward God in behalf of his brethren in bondage, and his fervent prayers echoed amid the mountain caverns by day and by night. He was never weary of presenting before God the promises made to his people, and pleading with him for their deliverance.

Those prayers were heard. Could his eyes have been opened, he would have seen the messengers of God, pure, holy angels, bending lovingly over him, shedding their light around him, and preparing to bear his petition to the throne of the Highest. The long years amid desert solitudes were not lost. **Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but during this time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time.**—Ellen White, *ST* February 19, 1880, par. 13,14. Last few lines quoted:

*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, 1140.3. See also *Education* 159.1-160.0.  
[Bold type and content in brackets are added.]

Traditional Jewish sources also agree that Moses wrote the book of Job. However, it is not necessary that the original material in the book of Job, which may have been an oral tradition passed down from parent to child, be in written form. Very little was written down in Job's day or in the days of Moses. People's minds were probably better, or at least less overloaded than ours, and they remembered better. Writing in those days was also very cumbersome. Consider the following by Eugene Peterson in *The Message*:

**Job** - Job suffered. His name is synonymous with suffering. He asked, "Why?" He asked, "Why me?" And he put his questions to God. He asked his questions persistently, passionately, and eloquently. He refused to take silence for an answer. He refused to take clichés for an answer. He refused to let God off the hook.

Job did not take his sufferings quietly or piously. He disdained going for a second opinion to outside physicians or philosophers. Job took his stance before *God*, and there he protested his suffering, protested mightily.

It is not only because Job suffered that he is important to us. It is because he suffered in the same ways that *we* suffer—in the vital areas of family, personal health, and material things. Job is also important to us because he searchingly questioned and boldly protested his suffering. Indeed, he went "to the top" with his questions.

It is not suffering as such that troubles us. It is undeserved suffering.

Almost all of us in our years of growing up have the experience of disobeying our parents and getting punished for it. When that discipline was connected with wrongdoing, it had a certain sense of justice to it: *When we do wrong, we get punished*.

One of the surprises as we get older, however, is that we come to see that there is no real correlation between the amount of wrong we commit and the amount of pain we experience. An even larger surprise is that very often there is something quite the opposite: We do right and get knocked down. We do the best we are capable of doing, and just as we are reaching out to receive our reward we are hit from the blind side and sent reeling.

*This* is the suffering that first bewilders and then outrages us. This is the kind of suffering that bewildered and outraged Job, for Job was doing everything right when suddenly everything went wrong. And it is this kind of suffering to which Job gives voice when he protests to God.

Job gives voice to his sufferings so well, so accurately and honestly, that anyone who has ever suffered—which includes every last one of us—can recognize his or her personal pain in the voice of Job. Job says boldly what some of us are too timid to say. He makes poetry out of what in many of us is only a tangle of confused whimpers. He shouts out to God what a lot of us mutter behind our sleeves. He refuses to accept the role of a defeated victim.

It is also important to note what Job does *not* do, lest we expect something from him that he does not intend. Job does not curse God as his wife

suggests he should do, getting rid of the problem by getting rid of God. But neither does Job *explain* suffering. He does not instruct us in how to live so that we can avoid suffering. Suffering is a mystery, and Job comes to respect the mystery.

In the course of facing, questioning, and respecting suffering, Job finds himself in an even larger mystery—the mystery of God. Perhaps the greatest mystery in suffering is how it can bring a person into the presence of God in a state of worship, full of wonder, love, and praise. Suffering does not inevitably do that, but it does it far more often than we would expect. It certainly did that for Job. Even in his answer to his wife he speaks the language of an uncharted irony, a dark and difficult kind of truth: “We take the good days from God—why not also the bad days?”

But there is more to the book of Job than Job. There are Job’s friends. The moment we find ourselves in trouble of any kind—sick in the hospital, bereaved by a friend’s death, dismissed from a job or relationship, depressed or bewildered—people start showing up telling us exactly what is wrong with us and what we must do to get better. Sufferers attract fixers the way roadkills attract vultures. At first we are impressed that they bother with us and amazed at their facility with answers. They know so much! How did they get to be such experts in living?

More often than not, these people use the Word of God frequently and loosely. They are full of spiritual diagnosis and prescription. It all sounds so hopeful. But then we begin to wonder, “Why is it that for all their apparent compassion we feel worse instead of better after they’ve said their piece?”

The book of Job is not only a witness to the dignity of suffering and God’s presence in our suffering but is also our primary biblical protest against religion that has been reduced to explanations or “answers.” Many of the answers that Job’s so-called friends give him are technically true. But it is the “technical” part that ruins them. They are answers without personal relationship, intellect without intimacy. The answers are slapped onto Job’s ravaged life like labels on a specimen bottle. Job rages against this secularized wisdom that has lost touch with the living realities of God.

In every generation there are men and women who pretend to be able to instruct us in a way of life that guarantees that we will be “healthy, wealthy, and wise.” According to the propaganda of these people, anyone who lives intelligently and morally is exempt from suffering. From their point of view, it is lucky for us that they are now at hand to provide the intelligent and moral answers we need.

On behalf of all of us who have been misled by the platitudes of the nice people who show up to tell us everything is going to be just all right if we simply think such-and-such and do such-and-such, Job issues an anguished rejoinder. He rejects the kind of advice and teaching that has God all figured out, that provides glib explanations for every circumstance. Job’s honest defiance continues to be the best defense against the clichés of positive thinkers and the prattle of religious small talk.

The honest, innocent Job is placed in a setting of immense suffering and then surrounded by the conventional religious wisdom of the day in the form of speeches by Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu. The contrast is unforgettable. The counselors methodically and pedantically recite their bookish precepts to Job. At first Job rages in pain and roars out his protests, but then he becomes silent in awestruck faith before God, who speaks from out of a storm—a “whirlwind” of Deity. Real faith cannot be reduced to spiritual bromides and merchandised in success stories. It is refined in the fires and the storms of pain.

The book of Job does not reject answers as such. There is content to biblical religion. It is the *secularization* of answers that is rejected—answers severed from their Source, the living God, the Word that both batters us and heals us. We cannot have truth *about* God divorced from the mind and heart *of* God.

In our compassion, we don’t like to see people suffer. And so our instincts are aimed at preventing and alleviating suffering. No doubt that is a good impulse. But if we really want to reach out to others who are suffering, we should be careful not to be like Job’s friends, not to do our “helping” with the presumption that we can fix things, get rid of them, or make them “better.” We may look at our suffering friends and imagine how they could have better marriages, better-behaved children, better mental and emotional health. But when we rush in to fix suffering, we need to keep in mind several things.

First, no matter how insightful we may be, we don’t *really* understand the full nature of our friends’ problems. Second, our friends may not *want* our advice. Third, the ironic fact of the matter is that more often than not, people do not suffer *less* when they are committed to following God, but *more*. When these people go through suffering, their lives are often transformed, deepened, marked with beauty and holiness, in remarkable ways that could never have been anticipated before the suffering.

So, instead of continuing to focus on preventing suffering—which we simply won’t be very successful at anyway—perhaps we should begin *entering* the suffering, participating insofar as we are able—entering the mystery and looking around for God. In other words, we need to quit feeling sorry for people who suffer and instead look up to them, learn from them, and—if they will let us—join them in protest and prayer. Pity can be nearsighted and condescending; shared suffering can be dignifying and life-changing. As we look at Job’s suffering and praying and worshiping, we see that he has already blazed a trail of courage and integrity for us to follow.

But sometimes it’s hard to know just how to follow Job’s lead when we feel so alone in our suffering, unsure of what God wants us to do. What we must realize during those times of darkness is that the God who appeared to Job in the whirlwind is calling out to all of us. Although God may not appear to us in a vision, he makes himself known to us in all the many ways that he describes to Job—from the macro to the micro, from the wonders of the galaxies to the little things we take for granted. He is the Creator of the unfathomable universe all around us—and he is also the Creator of the universe inside of us. And so we gain hope—not from the darkness of our

suffering, not from pat answers in books, but from the God who sees our suffering and shares our pain.

Reading Job prayerfully and meditatively leads us to face the questions that arise when our lives don't turn out the way we expect them to. First we hear all the stock answers. Then we ask the questions again, with variations—and hear the answers again, with variations. Over and over and over. Every time we let Job give voice to our own questions, our suffering gains in dignity and we are brought a step closer to the threshold of the voice and mystery of God. Every time we persist with Job in rejecting the quick-fix counsel of people who see us and hear us but do not understand us, we deepen our availability and openness to the revelation that comes only out of the tempest. The mystery of God eclipses the darkness and the struggle. We realize that suffering calls *our* lives into question, not God's. The tables are turned: God-Alive is present to us. God is speaking to us. And so Job's experience is confirmed and repeated once again in our suffering and our vulnerable humanity.—Peterson, E. H. (2005). *The Message: the Bible in contemporary language* (Job). Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. [Italic type is in the source document.]

3. Notice all those who were gathered together to consider Job's case (DA 833.1-834.4). Was God being challenged before the entire universe in the case of Job?
4. Is it true that if anything goes wrong we are free to blame the Devil? What is suggested by James 1:13-15?! How much are we responsible for our own sins? If the Devil had never sinned, could sin have arisen somewhere else? Could sin arise again? Will we be free to rebel in heaven?
5. Why didn't God just eliminate Satan in the beginning? Wouldn't that be good management? Would it be safe for God to simply eliminate rebellion if it arises a second time? What would prevent us from serving Him out of fear? What might God do if sin was being entertained in the mind of one of His children sometime in eternity to come? Does God become angry when someone sins (breaks His rules)? The entire history of this earth and its rebellion will be preserved as a demonstration of what would happen if sin were to arise again! In the future would any of us want God to permit sin to arise again?
6. God has allowed this whole rebellion because He recognizes that this is the *only* way He can ultimately win trust and confidence. Trust can only be won! It can't be commanded! Won't everyone who gets there be so convinced about the truth that God will never have to worry about sin arising again? Compare *Education* 154,155. Job is described as doing what is right because it is right, not because he was being rewarded for something.
7. Would Adam and Eve have sinned without the Devil and the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Somehow Satan sinned! The Devil knew God very well but he still rebelled! How could he? Did God take a big risk in stating what He did about Job in Job 1 & 2? Did that remove Job's freedom? Has God ever tried this with someone else and it didn't work? What about Moses' sin at the rock? Moses had previously defended God's reputation wonderfully. But at the rock Moses let God down. Did Job come close to failing at the end? Job said, "I'll never ask another question!" (See Job 42:6) Was that why God stopped the experiment? The only Person for whom the experiment was not stopped was Jesus. Gabriel came to strengthen Him, but only to make it possible for Him to go out and go through it all over again! (DA 693.1-3)

8. **To really understand Job one must read it right through from beginning to end—maybe several times in different translations.** Could it be that God has answered some questions in this book in such a way that we perhaps don't understand or don't agree with but the on-looking universe does. And over in Revelation after the experience of Calvary many of us are mystified, but the on-looking universe is saying, "God is holy, just, and right." (Revelation 15:54; 16:5) Unfortunately in many people's understanding of the book of Job these other beings are left out of their thinking but they are even specifically mentioned in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7.

9. **Read Job 1&2.** It is possible that the original dialogues that form the central part of the book may have been written down before Job 1&2 and Job 42. But, in any case, the book of Job now forms a very important complete story that tells us a great deal about God. Why do you suppose God gave us the book of Job? How many people down through the ages do you think were able to read and understand this book?

Considering the relationship that Job had with God as described in Job 29, don't you think that after the events described were over, God hastened to tell Job about why all that had happened to him?

10. What are we supposed to learn from the book of Job? Is Job unique in any way? What about the conflict that we see in Job 1&2? Is it true that God holds councils at which Satan actually appears to accuse us? Who are the "sons of God" or "heavenly beings" referred to in Job 1:6 and Job 2:1? If Adam had not sinned, would he have been one of these sons of God? (See Luke 3:38.) Are there other places in the Bible where we read about similar councils or conflicts? (See Daniel 7:9-13; Ephesians 6:12; what about 1 Kings 22:19-23 and 2 Chronicles 18:18-22?) In such situations, who is always the one accusing us? (See Revelation 12:10; Zechariah 3:1-5.)

Job is the only book in the Bible which clearly talks about the "behind-the-scenes" activities that took place in heaven as well as the events that took place here on planet earth. How frequently does God hold these councils in heaven? Do they often consider events taking place on planet earth?

Many Christians feel that God in His sovereignty determines how things are going to work out and that what we do or say has little or no effect on Him. They feel that God is so far above us and that He has so many responsibilities that, other than providing the plan of salvation for us as a human race, God has little time to concern Himself with what happens to us. This idea is called God's sovereignty.

Job 1&2 suggest something quite different from that. In the setting of the great controversy, each of us ultimately makes a choice as to whose side s/he will be on. God was willing to come and die in order for us to be saved; and now, He cares very much about the choices we make. Furthermore, our choices reflect back on God. He chooses to place Himself on trial before the universe to let each of us make up our own minds as to whether or not He can be trusted and whether or not He has won the great controversy. (See Romans 3:1-4 which is partially quoted from multiple versions in Item #259 below.)

11. If Job confessed with sacrifices just in case his children had done something wrong, (Job 1:4-5) why didn't he confess and offer a sacrifice for himself? Was he really sure that he had not done anything wrong? Can we be sure?

As you review Job's early arguments, in effect, he said that he may have done something wrong; and he asked God's forgiveness. (Job 6:24; 10:2; 13:20-24) But, later,

he stated clearly and repeatedly that he was not guilty of the really major sins that his “friends” believed he had committed. (Job 23:7,12; 27:5) Job had a good relationship with God, and he knew God as his Friend. He trusted God to show him any sins that were in his life. These friends who accused him of things that he knew he had not done, could not shake his faith. At the end when God initially spoke out and seemed to be supporting what the friends had said, Job was ready to confess. But, God finally ended the whole matter by confirming the truth about His friend Job, just as Job had spoken the truth about God. (Job 42:7-8)

12. The basic principle of Satan’s kingdom is selfishness. He wanted to have the best and the highest position for himself. If God were in the business of protecting Christians from every kind of suffering or pain or financial loss soon many people would become “rice Christians” just for the protection that it afforded. God is not interested in attracting people for selfish reasons.
13. As one reads through the book of Job, many of the statements even from Job seem to be wrong. How are we to pick out the correct statements from the errors? Was God’s comment about Job at the end wrong? Was everything that Job’s comforters said wrong? Is it important to consider who is talking in the book of Job before determining whether the statement is true? What about the statements from the Devil himself?
14. What do we know about the background of Job? Ellen White clearly suggests that the books of Genesis and Job were written by Moses during his years of shepherding (*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, 1140; *Education* 159) Is it possible that Moses met or even knew Job? Moses himself, while out there in the wilderness may have felt that he had suffered a lot of loss!

The long years amid desert solitudes were not lost. Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but during this time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time (*ST* Feb. 19, 1880 par 14; *3BC* 1140.3)

15. Are we able to understand all the issues that were involved as God does? This book should help us to try, at least, to take a larger perspective, especially in matters relating to the conflict between the Devil and God. When Satan accuses God of not being fair in his dealings with Job, how does God respond? **Does God simply ignore the question, does He demand silence from the Devil, or does He provide evidence?**
16. Did Abraham (Genesis 18) and Moses (Exodus 32-34) ask questions because they thought of themselves as friends of God and trusted God, or because they didn’t? (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23; Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 34:10-12)
17. How long has Satan had access to the heavenly courts as suggested in Job 1 and 2? (See Zechariah 3:1-5; *Prophets and Kings* 582-592; *Great Controversy* 479-491) Isn’t it clear that Satan is still accusing us on a day-by-day basis? Heavenly communication being what it is, we don’t need to worry about the physical whereabouts of Satan. Wherever he is, he can accuse us and God will be able to hear him!
18. If Satan managed to make such a good case against God that one-third of the angels living in God’s very presence believed him, what kind of case can he make against us? When we arrive in heaven will our future neighbors and friends be doing everything they can to avoid us, or will they be there to welcome us? How would they dare? Does God have to

go through the “books” to review our cases because He is so old He is beginning to forget!? Or is He opening the records so our future friends can ask any questions they may have before we arrive?

19. Job lost his entire family and estate in Job 1! Then he lost his health in Job 2! But Job’s real test seemed to come when four well-meaning, caring, friendly “theologians” arrive to explain why he was suffering! Because they believed that God blesses good people and thus makes them wealthy, while He curses bad people thus making them poor, it was very clear to them that Job had done something very bad! Wasn’t this thinking prominent even in the time of Christ? What about now?
20. Job’s friends seemed so humble and submissive, and so pious! Much of what they said appeared to be true! They were so dedicated to obedience and submission, like a well-trained and obedient dog!
21. Is it a sin to ask God why? Is it wrong to cry out to God? What about Jesus on the cross? (Matthew 27:46) How do you compare Job and Jesus? What about David in Psalms 77:10? Or do real saints say, “No problem! I trust God no matter what happens!”
22. Will Job ask God for an explanation of what happened when they meet in the hereafter? Do we have any evidence that Job ever read Job 1 & 2? Did he ever know why all that happened to him? When Job’s communication with God resumed, don’t you think that God hurried to explain to Job why all that happened? How should a saint behave when he has lost everything?
23. When Job cries out because God is not talking to him any longer, (Job 10:1-2; 6:8; 13:3; 29:2-5; 19:25-27; 30:20) is he being disrespectful, or is he honoring God by that cry?
24. What would it have been like to have travelled home with the four friends of Job? Did they learn anything from that experience? Or were they just baffled by it all? God told them quite clearly, twice, that they had not told the truth about Him as Job had, when they were so sure that they were right and Job was wrong! What did they think when God said, “I want this ‘heretic’ to pray for you!”? (See Job 42:7-8)
25. Do you believe that the real subject of the book of Job is God? If you had a beautiful young daughter whom you left alone and she was taken by evil men and abused, wouldn’t you be tried for child abandonment? When Job asks God why all that happened will God say, “don’t blame Me?” Or will God ultimately take full responsibility for all that happened? Did God allow Job to be tested more than he was able to bear? (See 1 Corinthians 10:13) What does this tell us about Job?
26. Does Job’s experience teach us anything about what it means to be sealed?

“Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come.” (MS 173, 1902; *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1161)

**The truth that we must be settled into is the truth about God! Especially how He treats people that are not safe to save! What is the basis for the trust that God asks of us?**

27. Job is no bedtime story! This is a book for adults! Everything he prayed for he lost! If in the investigative, pre-advent judgment you were able to hear God say about you, “this person has said of Me what is right!” how would you feel?
28. Read Job 1:6-12,21-22; 2:1-10; and *Great Controversy* 493-504. When studying Job it is particularly important to have more than one version open in front of you, and at least one of them should have the speakers clearly labeled. A footnote in the *Good News Bible* says: “SATAN: A supernatural being whose name indicates he was regarded as the opponent of human beings.” (See Job 1:6)
29. Did God really need to ask Satan what he had been doing? (Job 1:7) Or was this just a rhetorical question? Compare Genesis 3:9; 18:20-21.
30. How would you like to hear God describe you as He described Job? How do you feel about Satan’s implied accusation that God was bribing Job? If you started having terrible experiences like those of Job, would you stop paying tithe, going to church, etc?
31. Was Job right in stating that God had taken away everything? (Job 1:21-22; 2:9-10) Compare different translations - *GNB* “...said nothing against God”. *NEB* “...did not utter one sinful word”. *Berkeley* “...Job did not sin with his lips.”) In what way was God responsible for Job’s suffering? How much protection does God give us on a day-by-day basis? What would happen to us if God were not protecting us? (*GC* 517.2; 591.1; *1SG* 123.1; *5T* 599.1)
32. How much of what Job said was right and how much was wrong? Do all Christians agree? What did all this discussion mean to the angels and the inhabitants of the other worlds? Their real question wasn’t about human suffering but the accusations that Satan was making against God! Could you trust God if Satan’s charges are true? Why does God conduct an investigative pre-advent judgment instead of just posting a list of names on the bulletin board?
33. But would you want to add something to the statement about Satan and Job? Is it important to serve God for the right reason? (*COL* 97.3)
34. How do you expect the experience of Job to compare with the experience of the righteous at the end of time? Satan hated Job because Job was a living example that serving God was not an impossibility. Throughout history there have been many who have proved Satan wrong by relying totally upon their relationship to God. At the end of time the righteous will be living that kind of lives on the earth just before Jesus comes (see Revelation 14:1-5; 15:2.) They too will stir up Satan’s wrath, and he will do all he can to destroy them.

Unselfishness, the principle of God’s kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God’s principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan’s claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name.—Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 154.3.

35. Which part of the attacks on Job wore him down the most? Was it the first two chapters that caused Job’s biggest problems? Look also at *Desire of Ages* 471.

It was generally believed by the Jews that sin is punished in this life. Every affliction was regarded as the penalty of some wrongdoing, either of the sufferer himself or of his parents. It is true that all suffering results from the

transgression of God's law, but this truth had become perverted. Satan, the author of sin and all its results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God,—as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin. Hence one upon whom some great affliction or calamity had fallen had the additional burden of being regarded as a great sinner.

Thus the way was prepared for the Jews to reject Jesus. He who "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" was looked upon by the Jews as "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" and they hid their faces from Him. Isaiah 53:4,3.

**God had given a lesson designed to prevent this. The history of Job had shown that suffering is inflicted by Satan, and is overruled by God for purposes of mercy. But Israel did not understand the lesson. The same error for which God had reproved the friends of Job was repeated by the Jews in their rejection of Christ.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 471.1-3.

36. Notice how Ellen White uses Isaiah 53 in this context! Ellen White goes on to say that the Jews had not understood the book of Job! In fact, "The same error for which God had reproved the friends of Job was repeated by the Jews in their rejection of Christ." This is not just a question about one man's suffering! This is a basic question in the great controversy!
37. Could this be part of what will trouble the people of God in the end?
38. What is implied about the Devil and his powers by the stories of Job 1 & 2? He brings down fire from heaven; he controls the weather; he even brings disease on people!
39. How should we deal with places in the Bible that seem to suggest that God causes evil? (Isaiah 45:7) Satan implied that God's bestowal of temporal blessings on Job was a bribe intended to gain his loyalty. This charge slighted both God's character and Job's.

A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power [513] of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" Job 1:9-10.—Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy*, p. 512.2-513.0.

40. Are Christians in greater danger than others? How did Job survive this test? Didn't the Devil complain that God was sustaining Job? Why didn't the Devil complain that that was not fair? How did Jesus maintain His faith on the cross?

Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours **He had relied upon the evidence of His Father's acceptance heretofore given Him.** He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father's favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 756.3.

41. Christ depended on the evidence previously given Him! But then who is the One who brings truth back to our memories? Who is the One who settles us into the truth? Was the Holy Spirit quietly working behind the scenes to sustain Job, but keeping His work hidden

from the Devil? Was the Holy Spirit helping Job to remember his reasons for trusting God? Or does Job's suggestion that God is not speaking to him during his trials mean that the Holy Spirit has left him? Does Satan recognize and understand the way the Holy Spirit works?

42. Does the Holy Spirit protect our minds by "fortifying" us with the truth? (GC 593.2) If some time later we remember that truth and it "strengthens" us again, does the Holy Spirit have to be there doing some "magic" to bring about the "strengthening"? Would we "miss" the presence of the Holy Spirit?
43. What was Job's greatest trial? Was it the loss of his children? His wealth? His health? (That all happened in a few verses. See Job 1:13-19; 2:7.) Or, was it the accusations (bad theology) of his friends? Those friends spoke with great authority, but they were wrong! (See Job 34:34-36, *TLB*; Job 37:20, *GNB*. Contrast Job 42:7-9.) In the last days, God's people will go through the "time of trouble." (Matthew 24:21-22) We often suggest that the greatest trial will be the loss of our material possessions, our friends, and the physical suffering we will go through. But, if Job is a "type" of these people, could our greatest trial be, like Job's, the statements of our well-meaning, but misinformed, friends?

Often, the worst trials come from unexpected sources. Did Job have any idea of the accusations he would face when his friends arrived and sat down to mourn his condition for a full seven days? (Job 2:13) Our friends get the closest to us and, thus, can wound the greatest. Many times, it is harder to deal with the errors of those who profess to believe what we believe and who think that we should believe just like they do than to deal with those whom we know are from different churches or religions. When we expect to be different from someone, it is not such a shock when they speak out in opposition to what we believe. But, when we expect people to believe like we do and they, in turn, expect us to believe like they do, it can be a real problem if there is sincere disagreement.

It must have been a real trial for Job to hear his friends suggesting that even his children got what they deserved! (See *GNB* on Job 8:4; compare Job 11:6; 34:11; 36:17; contrast Job 42:8.) Like Job, we must learn to put our trust in God alone.

44. Does it help one to be told that one has brought his disease upon himself?
45. When Satan brought his accusations against God and against Job did God say, "I say Job is okay. You leave him alone!" No, God always goes the route of evidence. God allowed Satan to do anything to Job except kill him! But Job still speaks with confidence. Then some time seems to pass, and Job's attitude appears to have changed.

**Curse God.** Job's wife tries to persuade Job to do what Satan wanted him to do. She says in effect, "What good is your virtue doing you? You might as well curse God and take the consequences." The *LXX* greatly enlarges the speech of Job's wife: "And when much time had passed, his wife said to him, How long wilt thou hold out, saying, Behold, I wait yet a little while, expecting the hope of my deliverance? for, behold, thy memorial is abolished from the earth, even thy sons and daughters, the pangs and pains of my womb which I bore in vain with sorrows; and thou thyself sittest down to spend the nights in the open air among the corruption of worms, and I am a wanderer and a servant from place to place and house to house, waiting for the setting of the sun, that I may rest from my labours and my pangs which now beset me: but say some word against the Lord, and die."

The origin of the above statement is uncertain. It is not in any Hebrew manuscript now extant, and there are reasons for doubting whether it was in

the earliest manuscripts of the *LXX*.—Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1977). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Vol. 3, pp. 503–504). Review and Herald Publishing Association.

46. What seemed to trouble Job the most? Was it his losses? Or the fact that God no longer was speaking to him?
47. Should our attitude toward suffering always be like Job's in Job 1:21? Why does his lament in Job 3 sound so different? Is there a danger in holding up Job 1:21 as the ideal response to all tragedy? What do you think of the following:

We certainly do not have the whole story of Job if we stop with the first two chapters, though that is apparently what happened in the minds of many people. The silent and submissive Job of the prologue acts much differently throughout most of the book, beginning already in chapter 3... Resignation, giving up, and turning it all over to God may be highly desirable as a way of dealing with suffering. Some people can move directly to that response. Most persons, however, need a process of... expressing their pain and anger and frustration, before they are ready to accept the inevitable for some dignity and grace. Job, it seems to me, needed time to lament... When his friends showed through their presence, weeping and sitting with him for seven days, that they wanted to understand what was happening to him, he dared to open up with a lament (Job 3).—Simundson, *The Message of Job*, pages 43,44.

48. Is it wrong to cry out as Job did? When a mother has just lost a child in the hospital, should she just say, "No problem!" What about Asaph's cry in Psalms 77:1-20, especially 77:10! Or Jeremiah in Jeremiah 20:14-18? At first even Asaph's thoughts of God didn't seem to help. But later he thought of God in a different way and the problem seemed to fade. Did he stop because he fell asleep at the end?
49. Why do the footnotes in some versions suggest that the Hebrew in Psalms 77:10 is "unclear" or "unintelligible"? Is it because they really don't understand the Hebrew text, or that they can't believe that what it says is what the author meant!? The footnote of *The Living Bible* says, "literally, that the right hand of the Most High has changed." *Moffitt* suggests, "Yes, this is my grief that the Most High no longer has the strength that he had." *Revised English Bible*, "Has His right hand grown weak? Has the right hand of the Most High changed?" Do we have a tendency to favor the version that supports the ideas we like?
50. **If Job didn't have Scripture to refer to, how did God communicate with him, and what did he have to look back on? Wasn't this mostly oral tradition?** Jacob received visions from God as did Joseph. (3SG 168.1; 1SP 152.1) Is that how God communicated with them? Abraham had personal visits. (Genesis 18) Luke seems to go to great length to sort out the oral traditions (See Luke 1:1-4) Shouldn't this help us with understanding Ellen White's use of sources? How did she know which parts to "copy" and which parts not to "copy"?
51. Did Job actually blame God in Job 1:21? What about the many times when the Bible even suggests that God is responsible for evil? Compare 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Samuel 31:4 and 1 Chronicles 10:13, 14; Isaiah 45:7; Genesis 45:4-8; Exodus 4:21; 7:22; 8:15; Isaiah 10:5-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:11.

Semitic people looked upon God as the first cause of everything. Thus God is said to be the cause of all that happened to Job. (See Job 1:11; 2:5.) Yet in the book of Job,

Moses makes it clear that it was Satan who provoked and caused Job's sufferings. In the Bible, God often is said to have done something that He permitted or did not prevent. Other examples can be found in Genesis 45:4-8; Exodus 4:21; 7:22; 8:15; 10:1; Isaiah 10:5-11.

Holy, ministering agencies of heaven are cooperating with human agencies to lead into safe paths all who love truth and righteousness. It is the greatest joy of the angels of heaven to spread the shield of their tender love over souls who turn to God; and **Satan fights determinedly to retain every soul that has had light and evidence. His fierce, unabated desire is to destroy every soul possible.** Will you choose to stand under his banner?—Ellen G. White, *7SDA Bible Commentary*, p. 922.9.

Satan was permitted to tempt the too-confident Peter, as he had been permitted to tempt Job; but when that work was done he had to retire. Had Satan been suffered to have his way, there would have been no hope for Peter. He would have made complete shipwreck of faith. But the enemy dare not go one hairbreadth beyond his appointed sphere. **There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God.**—Ellen G. White, *My Life Today* 316.3.

52. Does that absolve God from all responsibility? If a father allows his son to steal something is the father in any way responsible? When something is quite evidently done at the hand of the adversary why would Bible writers suggest that God did it? If Bible writers suggest that what God permits He is actually doing, how does that affect our understanding of the passages that suggest that God will destroy the wicked in the end? Will they destroy themselves? We need to understand that in Old Testament times many of the pagan nations had large numbers of "gods" each responsible for certain things that happened. But the Hebrews believed in only one God. This left them with the problem of explaining where evil came from! They often suggest simply that God is in control and thus is responsible for everything that happens both good and evil.
53. If you were the Devil and God really gave you a completely free hand who would you spend most of your time bringing trouble on? Wouldn't you focus on God's people? The Devil apparently feels perfectly free to use force. God doesn't use force. But how does He protect us from being completely overwhelmed by the Devil?

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. **The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government;** He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. DA 22.1.

54. The theology of Job's four friends was so bad that as we have noted, it led the Jews later to reject and crucify Christ. It could be described as demonic! The four friends appear so caring and helpful, just as Lucifer did in heaven! What we have here is a good dose of what is right mixed with portions of error. Does this make the error more dangerous or less so? What will be Satan's most successful methods at the end of time? (See Revelation 13)

This work of opposition to the law of God had its beginning in the courts of heaven, with Lucifer, the covering cherub. Satan determined to be first in the councils of heaven, and equal with God. He began his work of rebellion with

the angels under his command, seeking to diffuse among them the spirit of discontent. **And he worked in so deceptive a way that many of the angels were won to his allegiance before his purposes were fully known. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character, nor see to what his work was leading.** When Satan had succeeded in winning many angels to his side, he took his cause to God, representing that it was the desire of the angels that he occupy the position that Christ held.

The evil continued to work until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. Then there was war in heaven, and Satan, with all who sympathized with him, was cast out. Satan had warred for the mastery in heaven, and had lost the battle. God could no longer trust him with honor and supremacy, and these, with the part he had taken in the government of heaven, were taken from him.—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 222.2-3.

55. Notice the very subtle methods that Satan (Lucifer) used way back in the beginning! Satan ultimately brought war in heaven (Revelation 12) and God had to expel him and his followers because he was no longer trustworthy!
56. As the story of Job unfolds we realize that Satan could no longer be trusted, and God had to say so. Then God turned and said, “but I can trust Job!” Imagine how Satan must have hated to hear that!
57. Sometimes even the demons tell the truth! They often called Jesus the Son of God when no one else was doing so! (Matthew 8:29; Mark 3:11; 5:7; Luke 4:41; 8:28) But you would have to prove the statement was true from the rest of Scripture before accepting it! One must be very careful when accepting such “claims”.
58. In Esther and in Job, God seems to end up saying something good about Himself; but, what about the people involved? Was Job used just as a pawn? What about Job’s children? (Job 1:4-5,18-19)

Many times, it may seem that things that happen, even apparently at God’s hands, are not fair. This is one of Satan’s favorite arguments against God. No one expects Satan to be fair; but, as he continues to lie, cheat, misrepresent, deceive, and confuse, he jumps at any opportunity to accuse God of being “unfair.” (See handout on - “**Job - What Does It Say About God? If God Didn’t Do It, Who Did?**”) Nothing about Satan’s accusations against God or God’s true people are fair.

Despite all of this, God and His true people live and act in whatever way they can to correctly represent the truth. Doing so will eventually cause the truth to come out, and it will be seen that Satan is the cause of all the evil and unfairness in this universe. If we can help God in any way to win the cosmic conflict by correctly representing Him here on planet earth and thus help Him to “checkmate” the Devil, we should feel honored even if for the time being it may seem very unfair—even like we are nothing but pawns. (Compare Job 1&2.)

59. Was Job wrong when he said, “The Lord gave, and now the Lord has taken away”? (Job 1:21, *GNB*. Compare Job 1:12; 2:1-10; 2 Samuel 24:1 in contrast with 1 Chronicles 21:1.) Isn’t it clear from the earlier verses that Satan was the one who “took away”? Was this a serious error on Job’s part? (Job 1:22) Or, was he speaking as they understood things in those days? Was Naomi (Mara) right that the Lord had dealt very bitterly with her? (Ruth 1:20-21) When someone has a horrible accident, we sometimes say, “It must have been God’s will.” Are death and sickness ever God’s will?

This is an issue that we will face and discuss many times in Scripture. (Compare 1 Chronicles 10:13-14 with 1 Chronicles 10:1-7 and 1 Samuel 31:1-13.) To the Hebrews, *Yahweh* was the only God; (Deuteronomy 6:4) they rejected the common idea of those around them that there were “good gods” and “evil gods,” and when something bad happened to you, it was because you had offended one of the good gods or had not appeased one of the evil gods adequately. But, this left them with the problem of trying to explain the source of all evil. This is discussed considerably in the book of Job and elsewhere.

Ultimately, the Jews and even conservative Christians today believe that God is in control and that He could prevent all evil if He chose to. Thus, in a sense, He is responsible. But, we must remember that God, more than anything else wants us to be free; and that includes His having given us the ability to make choices, good choices and bad choices, and to reap the results of those choices. God cannot forcibly overrule the effects of evil without fundamentally altering the nature of the universe that He has created. (See handout on “**Love.**”) So, in the broadest sense, God did “give” and God did “take away,” but not in some arbitrary way for no reason at all. God realized that Job was someone who could play an important role in helping God Himself clarify for the onlooking universe some of the issues and win the great controversy. God certainly needs all the correct representation He can get here on planet earth! If so many of us had not misrepresented God so seriously, God would not have had to make such an example of Job.

60. Would it be correct to say that the death of Job’s first children and the loss of all his wealth was God’s will? In what sense? Or, was that demonstrating a great truth in the great controversy? Could anything happen if God did not permit it? If one eats lots of candy and gets holes in his/her teeth, would it be correct to say that it is God’s will, because He did not stop that person? What about smoking and lung cancer? Or, drunk driving and fatal accidents? If a person neglects to study all year and then fails, is that God’s responsibility? This world is full of diseases, disasters, and drunk drivers. Is that God’s fault?

There are several main reasons why “bad things happen to good people.” Let us review some of the most important of them:

**1)** Even good people here on earth are continually making mistakes or bad choices and reaping the consequences of those mistakes. In order for sin to be seen as the evil that it is, it must be demonstrated that evil has bad consequences. (James 1:13-15)

**2)** Just living on planet earth is “hazardous to one’s health”! Often, we do not even know that what we are doing is dangerous until it is too late.

**3)** Living surrounded by evil often results in the evil deeds of others killing innocent bystanders. This is one of the important things that needs to be demonstrated about evil, and this is part of what makes evil the bad thing it is! (Deuteronomy 29:19)

**4)** Probably very rarely, some good person like Job suffers something very bad happening to himself because God is allowing it as a part of some necessary demonstration for the benefit of the entire onlooking universe in the larger setting of the great controversy. In the hereafter, we will be able to see why each of these things happened. It will turn out to be a wonderful revelation of the love of our heavenly Father.

61. Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper? We like to tell stories suggesting that if we faithfully pay our tithe and obey God, He will protect us. But, what about Job? Job trusted God even when all the evidence seemed to be against him, and when even Job’s wife said, “Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9) Which shows greater faith? 1. You have nothing

to eat, you pray, and miraculously, food is provided (such stories make great stories for kids)? Or, 2. You have nothing to eat, you pray, and no food is provided, but you still trust God (like Job)? The story of Job is for grownups!

This is a thought question. Are we prepared to trust God on the basis of a careful evaluation of the total evidence even when things do not seem to be going too well? Or, are we just “rice Christians”? We need to make our decisions about God based on the long history of the cosmic conflict and not just on what seems to be happening to us at a given moment.

62. Does Satan stop working after Job 2? Or does he continue to work all through the book in a subtle way through these four theologians? Wasn't even Jesus tempted on the cross to doubt His Father and to believe the theology of His persecutors? Did He even say some things that might appear to be wrong? (Matthew 27:46)
63. **Why do so many theologians want to say that the only way God can make the statements He does in Job 1&2 is that Job is forgiven, justified and covered by Christ's righteousness—legally declared righteous. Was the Devil denying God's right to declare someone righteous? Wasn't the Devil claiming that no creature could ever come to the place where he could actually be trusted? Does God trust Job just because Job is covered with Christ's righteousness and God therefore can't see what kind of person he really is? Was Satan denying that people can be forgiven? Or was Satan's point that God was declaring Job to be righteous when he really wasn't?! This has great implications for our whole understanding of the plan of salvation.**
64. **Read Job 3-5.** It would be most dangerous to pick just a few verses from Job! It is important to read on and see how Job resolved his problems. Consider these words about Jesus Himself:

All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. **But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.**

Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. **He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal.** Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. **It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 753.1-2.

65. Notice how Christ dealt with His doubts and questions. Notice that the Father was present at the cross! (DA 753.4-754.1) Christ depended on the previous evidence that He had learned! It was sin that broke the heart of the Son of God. He died of sin.
66. Is it right for “a perfect and upright man” (Job 1&2) to make the statements that Job made in his first speech? (Job 3) Is it true as Eliphaz the Temanite said that “God does not trust

his heavenly servants; he finds fault even with his angels”? (Job 4:18, *GNB*) Who made this statement? Is it true that “mankind heads for sin and misery as predictably as flames shoot upwards from a fire”? (Job 5:7, *TLB*) Is it true about God that “though he wounds, he binds and heals again”? (Job 5:18, *TLB*)

These are typical “poetic” statements that are characteristic of the “wisdom literature” found in the Bible. Job was in terrible distress; and so, he expressed himself as one who was in such distress. These were not intended to be statements of universal truth under all circumstances but rather correct expressions of Job’s feelings at the time. (Compare Job 9:23-24; Psalms 2:11-12; Psalms 58; Psalms 59; Psalms 77:10; See ***Psalms Teacher’s Guide***-Classic #6.)

67. **Look at Job 4:17** in several versions. The *Good News Bible* translation seems to make more sense than the *King James Version* or the *New International Version*.
68. Since when did we begin using statements made in the midst of nightmares by ghosts or apparitions—no doubt from Satan himself—who appeared to an erroneous theologian as key texts! (See Job 4:12-21) Could such words be considered as inspired scripture? What is it that Eliphaz is using to support his arguments? Who do you think appeared to Him? Have you ever heard a story begin, “I woke up and there was someone standing at the foot of my bed...” **Eliphaz wants to impress us with the miraculous. Does this give his statements authority? Notice that this “ghost” directly challenges God’s statements about Job in chapters 1 and 2!** (Job 4:18-19) This whole book is about God’s trust in Job! How often do we hear people try to get us to believe falsehood by supporting it with the miraculous?

For a discussion of Eliphaz’s statement see handout on - ***“Job - What Does It Say About God? If God Didn’t Do It, Who Did?”*** pages 2,3. Notice that this statement was repeated several times in the book: Job 4:12-21; 15:14-16; 25:4-6. Furthermore, Elihu suggested that it was God who spoke in dreams and visions. (Job 33:15) But, God said back in the beginning of the book that Job was an upright and a faithful man. Satan wants us to believe that it is impossible for humans to be good. (Job 4:17-21) He believes that he is the “lord” of this earth and that he controls everything and everyone who lives here.

Worse than that, Satan accused even God of not being an accurate Judge of human character. Satan wants us to believe that God made a mistake when He threw Satan and his angels out of heaven; he was hoping through this conflict over Job to prove God’s judgment about Job wrong. As far as Satan is concerned, this would, in effect, win the great controversy for his side.

69. After reading the speeches recorded in Job 3 and 13, would you agree that Job was “perfect” and that he had not sinned? What did God mean when He said Job was perfect? Did anyone disagree? Why? Look at Job 22:19 and Psalms 58:10. Compare Job 31:29. Which represents God’s attitude?

God was not trying to suggest that Job had never sinned. Every human being has sinned. (See 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Psalms 5:9; 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Isaiah 59:7-8; Romans 3:23.) Being a righteous person does not stop one from having feelings, or being really upset by what appears to be a terrible injustice. In fact, righteous people may be more aware of injustice since they are often trying their best to promote justice for all. It would be helpful to know more about Job’s background; but, that will have to wait until we are in the kingdom. What God was able to say about Job was that he would not be turned away from his loyalty to God by a temporary, although terrible, reversal in his fortunes. Job had a settled trust in God that stood firm through everything,

and Job was right. (4SDABC 1161.6) Notice that it was God who apparently initiated this whole affair. Satan was desperate to prove God wrong about anything. God knew that something important could be demonstrated in this exchange, and He was willing to let it take place. Notice the difference between Job's attitude on certain matters and that of Job's friends:

Job 22:19: [Eliphaz said:] "Good people are glad and the innocent laugh when they see the wicked punished." (GNB) (Compare Psalms 58:10.)

Job 9:23-24: [Job in the depths of his depression said:] "When an innocent person suddenly dies, God laughs.<sup>24</sup> God gave the world to the wicked. He made all the judges blind. And if God didn't do it, who did?" (GNB)

Job 31:29-30: [Job, after thinking things through said:] "I have never been glad when my enemies suffered, or pleased when they met with disaster;<sup>30</sup> I never sinned by praying for their death." (GNB) [Content in brackets is added to give the context.]

God welcomes our questions. Perhaps, this is one of the most important things that we can learn from the book of Job. This should be quite clear from the concluding comments in Job 42:7-8. What God wants most is friends who are willing even to suffer in order to speak the truth about God whom they regard as their greatest Friend.

70. Notice the other claim that Eliphaz made in Job 5:27! "Job, we have learned this by long study. It is true, so now accept it." (GNB) Should we accept such claims? How often do people appeal to experience or research without presenting the evidence? It has been said, "No one can go down so deep, and stay down so long, and come up so dry, as a theologian!"

The Bible with its precious gems of truth was not written for the scholar alone. On the contrary, it was designed for the common people; and the interpretation given by the common people, when aided by the Holy Spirit, accords best with the truth as it is in Jesus. The great truths necessary for salvation are made clear as the noonday, and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God.—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 331.2 (1885) compare *Signs of the Times*, July 11, 1906 par. 1.

We must learn to make up our minds for ourselves! Isn't this asking a lot of people? How will we be able to survive the time of the end unless we can do this?

71. Could the Holy Spirit be helping us to survive the time of the end and the Devil not be aware of it? Ellen White suggests that the latter rain may be falling all around us and we not be aware of it!

Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. **It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.**—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald* March 2, 1897 par 4; *Testimonies to Ministers* p. 507.1; *Mar* 219.4; *FLB* 33.6.

72. **Read Job 6-8.** This portion of Job reads very well in the *Good News Bible*. Look particularly at Job 7:11. Some very strong language is used. Job says, "I am angry and bitter," or "anguished, and distressed." (See different translations). It's too bad we don't have a video of Job speaking these words. Compare Jesus saying to the Pharisees, "You are of your father the Devil." John 8:44. And God said at the end, "Job has said of me what

is right.” Does that include the words in Job 7:11? Or should we do as many commentators have suggested and pick out a few passages in Job where he speaks the truth about God such as when he says, “I repent in dust and ashes”! Job 42:6. They are ready to admit that that is correct. God places no limitations on His statement about Job. He does however say that the four were wrong. So we must discover the places where there is a difference between Job’s statements and their statements. Do any of them question God’s power?

73. Do you think Job was ever able to stand up and give an explanation to his friends about what had happened? In his ongoing conversations with God, did he ever solve this mystery?
74. How long has this idea persisted that if you are a sinner, you will be sick or poor but if you are a saint God will bless you with health and wealth?
75. Job does not question God’s sovereignty or holiness. See Job 6:10 and following. And Job makes an initial conclusion in Job 7:16. “I give up. I am tired of living. Leave me alone. My life makes no sense.” (GNB)
76. After Job finishes pouring out his lament, Bildad comes and, like a good chaplain, says, “Are you finally through with your windy speech?” Job 8:1 (GNB)
77. Did Job’s children die as they deserved? (Job 8:4) Is it true that God will never abandon the faithful or ever give help to evil people? Job 8:20 (GNB) Compare Matthew 5:43-48. You can’t stop reading with all of Bildad’s accusations. You must move right on into Job 9 and read Job’s response. Once again Job reaffirms his belief that God has power. Job 9:4-12.
78. It’s useful to look at the references to Job in the writings of Ellen White. But you will notice another typographical error has crept in that has theological implications. The index says, “not **as** guilty as his friends supposed” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 350.2. Was Job really guilty? The original passage says, “not guilty as his friends supposed.” In the ongoing saga of people misquoting John 16:26 by leaving out the “not” there is another example this week. See *Glad Tidings Study Guide* #15, part 3. The question is asked, “In whose name do we pray?” And John 16:26 is quoted without the “not.” The “not” is there in *Steps to Christ* as it should be. However, if you get the modern paraphrase prepared by the White Estate entitled *Steps to Jesus* it says “When we pray, Jesus is at God’s right hand, asking Him to forgive us.” By the time of Jesus, the Devil had managed to twist the meaning of Scripture so much that the Pharisees believed they were doing God’s will when they killed Jesus. What methods is the Devil using to meet us in our time? There is not very much difference between the opinions of Job’s three friends and many of us today.
79. Read Psalms 8:4-5. The original Hebrew says, “We have been made a little lower than the gods.” See different versions. Some think this refers to angels, but some say “than God.”
80. We need to understand not only that Job was being tested but we must ask for what purpose? One scholar suggested that “God intended them, (that is these trials), for his benefit?” Should that be God’s benefit or Job’s benefit? Would we dare to say that Job actually accomplished something for God’s benefit?
81. Did God put Himself on the line when He said, “Job will not let me down”? Were the angels and the rest of the beings in the universe looking on to see whether or not Job would fail. **The only way it could be proved that God’s judgement of Job was correct was to allow him to be tempted to the very limit.** Wasn’t it God who actually first brought this case to Satan’s attention. Have you noticed my servant Job? What would you think if you

could hear God saying about you, “Have you considered my servant. . .?” That would be an exciting moment. But what do you think would come next?

The value of a soul, who can estimate? Would you know its worth, go to Gethsemane, and there watch with Christ through those hours of anguish, when He sweat as it were great drops of blood. Look upon the Saviour uplifted on the cross. Hear that despairing cry, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Mark 15:34. Look upon the wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet. **Remember that Christ risked all. For our redemption, heaven itself was imperiled. At the foot of the cross, remembering that for one sinner Christ would have laid down His life, you may estimate the value of a soul.**—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 196.4.

82. Does Job raise any questions in your mind about what it is right to pray for? Is it right to pray for one’s family when you know that one of God’s greatest saints had his family entirely wiped out? Would it be all right to pray for your house, recognizing that God might take it away? How do you explain to children about a God who gives Satan permission to kill children just to make a point. Don’t we teach our children that they should help people who are in trouble? Should we pray for a safe trip thinking and realizing that God may have other plans for us? Should our only prayer be, “Thy will be done.” Should Jesus have prayed like that in Gethsemane and then taken a nap? Did God condemn Job for crying out? How did God, the Father, respond to Jesus’s agonizing prayers? (Matthew 27:46)
83. **In the book of Job many theological ideas seem to be agreed upon by all speakers. But there are a few areas where there are differences. What are those areas?**
84. If we look at the Great Controversy from Satan’s perspective, shouldn’t he be doing his very best to wipe out anyone who is correctly representing God? How does God go about protecting us? It is very possible that something like what happened to Job could happen to some of us in the end. (Matthew 24:37-41; Luke 17:26-30)
85. **It would be very useful to read right through the book of Job, marking those passages which appear to be the most important in your mind. And then, to go back through the book just reading the passages you have marked to get the overall picture. There are so many things which Job is accused of not believing which he agrees to right in the book: that God is sovereign, that He is powerful, that He is in control of everything, that we should be humble before Him, even that Job was not willing to listen to God. Job’s friends appear to have been so convinced by their traditional beliefs that they could not even understand what Job was saying to them.**
86. What would you have said to Job if you had been there?
87. What would you say today to people who hold the views of Job’s four friends? In our day these people come speaking with what they believe is great authority, quoting God, and it is very difficult to say anything to convince them. In some cases, they say, “We have studied these matters at great length.” Or, “We have studied the wisdom of the fathers.” Are the angels in heaven waiting to see how we will go through our Job experiences? Imagine their watching us realizing we could end up being their neighbors. Do our guardian angels ever feel anxious as they watch us? Are we so settled into the truth about God and His character that we cannot be moved—even when the Devil appears as Christ? How will Satan appeal to all the various peoples of this earth, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, even the non-churched? How does the book of Job help us to live through a time like that?

88. **Read Job 9-11.** This is a very provocative section in Job. Once again, it is essential to put all of these three chapters into the context of all of Job. It is an error to suggest that Job has already concluded something. Job was far from concluding yet. This is another example of the necessity for taking the book as a whole and not little pieces here and there.
89. What is the central question in Job? Would it be, “Would Job worship you [God] if he got nothing out of it?” (Job 1:9, *GNB*) [Content in brackets is added.] Or, “And if God didn’t do it, who did?” (Job 9:24, *GNB*)

Very clearly, there are at least two major themes in the book of Job. Between Job and his friends in their dialogues, it would appear that the question was, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Job wanted to ask God why all this was happening to him; his friends were sure that they knew more about Job than even Job appeared to know! They were certain that God punishes only the wicked, and God’s punishment was shown by loss of health and/or wealth. The righteous may temporarily suffer setbacks; the wicked may temporarily appear to prosper; but, before long, it was clear in their minds that each gets what he deserves. (See *GNB* on Job 8:4; compare Job 11:6; 34:11; 36:17; contrast Job 42:7-8.) They had a “gospel” of “health and wealth.” They wanted everyone to know that they were prosperous and, thus, on God’s “good” list! By contrast, they had never even imagined anyone so suddenly beset by so many terrible tragedies as Job; to their minds this could only mean one thing: Job had committed some terrible sin.

But, behind the rhetoric of Job’s friends was the Devil himself! Remember what God had already said about Job. (See handout on “***Job - What Does It Say About God? If God Didn’t Do It, Who Did?***” and Job 1:1,6; 2:1.) **Satan thought that this was his chance for the first time to prove God wrong. If he could just get Job to sin in some obvious way, it would raise significant questions about God’s ability to judge character.** Satan felt that, given his track record with human beings, surely, it would be possible for him to catch Job in some kind of sin. So, Satan began his side of the “dialogue” involving Job’s friends by appearing in a dream at night to support the view of God that he had already imposed on Job’s friends and, we might add, many other people down through history. Satan wanted them (and us) to believe that it is impossible for a human being to be “perfect and upright.” Satan suggested that God does not even trust the angels (like Satan and his followers); so, how could He trust a feeble human being like Job? (Job 4:12-21) According to Satan, we are so weak and insignificant in God’s eyes that God would crush us in the dust like an insect without even noticing it. Such an insignificant creature could never play a key role in the great controversy between God and Satan!

**By contrast, God had clearly stated already what He thought of Job, and His judgments had always been right before. God considered Job a friend, and Job felt that God was a Friend. You do not talk about friends as insects to be crushed in the dust!** Furthermore, God knew that Job, despite all his problems, was going to prove to be a wonderful example of the kind of person who bases his decisions about life and God on the total amount of evidence that is available—no doubt, including many conversations that they had had together in the past—and not just on the fact that he was depressed, terrorized, and hurting at that particular moment. Why are we so often ready to throw out everything when something happens to us that we are not happy about? Is it right for Christians to expect that nothing bad could ever happen to them? What do we expect to take place in the time of trouble?

If Satan can get us to give up our faith by inflicting us with some kind of sickness, tragedy, or other evil, then, in effect, we have allowed him to control us, and we are not

God's true friends. God's true friends will remain faithful no matter what happens to them, faithful like Job was.

So, the most important question in the book of Job is: "Can God be trusted to judge angels and humans?" Can He be trusted to stick by us through good times and bad times no matter what happens? Do we really believe that God will not allow us to be tempted more than we can bear? (See 1 Corinthians 10:13.) Does God sometimes allow bad things to happen to us for our own good?

Satan, by contrast, wants us to believe that God's ways are simple to understand. Satan wants us to believe: If you are good, God will bless you; and if God blesses you, you will, no doubt, be wealthy. If you are not good, God cannot bless you, and you will clearly be poor. So, in this view, you can tell who the good people are and who the bad people are just by looking!

Notice this summary of Satan's theology and Job's friends' theology:

A Comparison of Satan's Theology with that of Job's Friends

<b>Satan's Theology</b>	<b>Job's Friends' Theology</b>
IF Job is blessed by God, THEN he will be faithful.	IF Job is faithful, THEN he will be blessed.
IF Job is not blessed by God, THEN he will be unfaithful. (Satan accused God of bribing His followers.)	IF Job is unfaithful, THEN he will be punished and he will be ill and lose his wealth.

Is there any real difference between these two views? Job's friends did an excellent job of representing the Devil's viewpoints. And the Devil got some very good ambassadors to try to push his views on Job.

In conclusion then, we can say that there are many issues discussed in Job. But, the most important one by far is the question of whether or not God's treatment of people is "fair" in the largest possible context and whether or not He is a correct Judge of character. In the final judgment, we want to be sure that God makes no mistakes; or else, the whole great controversy could start all over again! The book of Job shows us that God judges rightly.

90. **The real question in Job comes up in Job 9:24. If God didn't do it, who did? (GNB)** Does God expect us to just smile and be at peace? Job 9:28 (GNB) Contrast Elihu's statement in Job 37:20. "I won't ask to speak with God. Why should I give Him a chance to destroy me?" (GNB)
91. And Job goes on to ask a specific question in Job 10:2. "Tell me, what is the charge against me?" (GNB) If God had stopped the whole discussion right there and answered, what do you think He would have said?
92. Job said clearly, my argument is not with you three friends, I want to discuss this directly with God. Isn't that where we should be taking our problems and questions?
93. When something unexplainable happens, our natural tendency is to blame somebody or something. Would we say now that Job should have turned to the written word of God. But none had been written in his day! Imagine if he could have taken out the book of Job and read it, especially Job 1&2! How could Enoch, Abraham, Job and Moses have been such good friends of God that they could be examples to the rest of us through all time even before any inspired record was written down? If they had only an oral tradition handed

down, how would they test that to see whether it was true? Don't we have clear evidence that Abraham and Moses spoke directly, even face to face, with God? See Genesis 18:22-33, Exodus 33:11, Numbers 12:7-8 and Deuteronomy 34:10. Doesn't the book of Job imply that Job had these kinds of conversations as well?

94. Why doesn't God use this direct face to face method of communicating with us today? Is it because we are so easily carried away by anything that appears to be miraculous? Wouldn't Satan demand equal time? And Satan will one day carry the whole world away with this method? (Revelation 13;3-4,7-8)
95. Job 11:7 is a quote from Zophar. Is he noted for always telling us the truth? We have already looked at Job 4:17 which is quoted from an apparition which appeared to Eliphaz. Does the fact that Zophar says this make it wrong? Should we quote a text in the New Testament stating that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as a key text supporting the divinity of Christ? (Mark 5:6-7) Would you feel comfortable quoting this statement from a demon-possessed man? We don't want people to think we are being facetious or careless with Scripture. We are just trying to develop common sense guidelines for interpreting scripture. In Job 22:19 Eliphaz says, "Good people are glad and the innocent laugh when they see the wicked punished." (GNB). Should we use that as a key text from the Bible? Compare Psalm 58:10 or what about Job saying, "I have never been glad when my enemies suffered or pleased when they met with disaster. I never sinned by praying for their death." Job 31:29 (GNB). Contrast Job 9:23 and Luke 15:7,10.
96. What was Job asking for in Job 16:21? "I want someone to plead with God for me as one pleads for a friend." See also the context Job 16:19-20. Compare also John 16:26. Was it wrong for Job to ask for a mediator? Compare Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. (*Desire of Ages* 686-689) Jesus is wishing for at least His closest disciples to pray for Him! Just a few hours before that in the upper room He had said it is not necessary. And as you remember in Matthew 27:46 Jesus finally reaches a place where He cries, "My God, my God, why did You abandon Me?" Was that wrong for Jesus and Job to cry out like this? We should be much more sympathetic with them. Or if Job had been a real saint would he have just sat there and said, "No problem, I'm at peace"? Could we do a little dramatic rehearsal in imagination and try to think what may have been happening there? Remember that Job said, "I wish we [God and I] were still the kind of friends we used to be." (Job 29:1-5) Putting all of Job together, he seemed to be saying, "I wish I had someone to help me. You four friends don't seem to be helping. When I see God I don't expect to regard Him as a stranger." (Job 19:27)
97. If you were in the middle of some war right now and got shot by the enemy, would you say, "No problem. It must have been God's will." Or would you say, "We are not going to raise any questions but please make them miss me next time"? Is God's response to situations like this just "Trust me. It's none of your business what I'm doing"? Remember that this book is really about God and His character.
98. Was Job a real saint when he was making all these cries? How did God regard Job? God said Job was a perfect man. Job 1:8 and 2:3. Did God make these statements about Job just because he was perfectly forgiven? Or is Job just showing that he is very upset when God stops communicating with him? **How many of us are terribly upset because God is not communicating with us?** If someone could have handed Job a copy of the Bible would that have taken care of his communication problem? How will Job feel when he reaches heaven? Won't he be delighted to be in God's presence?

99. What was it that Job and his friends disagreed on? They all agreed that God was all-powerful and that is what made things so difficult for Job?
100. Is it true that, under the pressure of discouragement, Job made statements that misrepresented God? Daniel J. Simundson, who wrote a commentary on Job, listed reasons why Job may have felt a need to repent. He asks a question: "Do we too often base our faith simply on what we read in scripture and the writings of Ellen White and fail to invite the Holy Spirit into our lives to speak to our innermost being"? What is he suggesting there? Could this be some error? Is he trying to suggest that we are leaving out the Holy Spirit if we base our faith strictly on Scripture and perhaps Ellen White? If you are comparing Scripture, Ellen White, and this inner voice, which would have the greatest authority? Many people even on television are claiming to be receiving messages directly from God and saying that that has much greater authority than anything you can read even in Scripture. Compare the 1 Kings 13 story. Who loves it when people make such claims?
101. In Job, the Devil claims that Job serves God only because of the rewards and benefits he receives. Jesus said, "He [Satan] is a liar." John 8:44. Who should we believe? Does God stand up and address the angels and say, "I expect you to believe me and not the devil? And if you don't, I have the power to destroy you. Now do you trust Me?" If that wouldn't work, what does God do to prove His point? That's the whole book of Job.
102. The on-looking universe got the message in Job because they knew about Job 1&2. Imagine how wonderfully God will speak about Job throughout eternity. What do you think the angels thought as they saw this whole story transpire? Were they worried that Job would collapse? Did they think that perhaps he was crying out too much? Is it possible in his candid cries to God the angels were learning that it is all right to speak out like that? Compare the experience of Moses when he said, "God, you couldn't do that. It would destroy your reputation." See Exodus 32:11-14.
103. The loyal angels still needed to have some things explained to them. They still needed the truths that they were going to learn through the experiences of Calvary. Compare Colossians 1:19-20, Ephesians 1:9-10, 3:9-10. In Job 9-11, Job clearly recognizes God's power and sovereignty. See Job 9:4-10. Job's real question is summarized in Job 9:21-24, especially the last part of verse 24. "If God didn't do it, who did"?
104. Job was wondering, if God is all-powerful and has total control, why are all these things happening to him. He even cried out in Job 9:32-34.
105. Suddenly Job changes the metaphor. He began talking about a court. Did Job think he would not be treated fairly in God's court? Did God become very upset when people like Abraham (Genesis 18) and Moses (Exodus 32:11-14) wanted to discuss things with Him? Did God accuse Moses and Abraham of impudence and impertinence? Where was Job supposed to have learned about how he should relate to God's "court"? Is it possible that after this experience, recorded when the book of Job was all finished, Job was able to go back to his former means of communicating with God and discuss the whole thing and get some of the answers he needed about that whole experience even while he was still living on this earth? If Moses was the one who wrote this book, he certainly showed a great deal of understanding. Does God want us to come to Him and reason with Him? (Isaiah 1:18, *KJV*)
106. **Read Job 12-15.** Considering all of the places where there are problems around the world, would it help them to give them a copy of the book of Job to read? When an earthly leader says he is waiting for a message from God, what should we do? Deuteronomy 13:1-3 and

1 Kings 13 should warn us about those who claim to speak for God! Any movement that denies its members the right to investigate the Scriptures for themselves is not safe.

107. It is useful to read the passage from Job in several different versions? Compare Psalms 69. Is that a “Messianic Psalm”? Does the end of Psalms 69 sound like Jesus? Does it sound like Job? (Compare Job 31:29-30, *GNB*) God’s love is only mentioned once by Job (Job 10:12, *RSV, NIV*) and once by Elihu in Job 37:13, *RSV, NIV*). It is not mentioned at all in the *King James Version*.
108. Job spoke very pointedly to his “friends” at times, but he never called for their destruction! (Job 31:29-30) Of course, we must remember even when reading those passages that we do not have the look on his face or the tone of his voice recorded. What was the tone of his voice when he was saying, “I know as much as you do?” (Job 13:1, *GNB*) What was Job’s attitude as he said, “Everything you say, I have heard before?” (Job 13:1, *GNB*) Was he being sarcastic? Could an ordinary Christian face a theologian and say, “I am just as intelligent as you are, and I am able to read the Bible for myself”? Or is it better that we be intimidated by them? Is it important to make up your own mind about God?

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. [18] Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions.—Ellen G. White, *Education* 17.2.

109. An old friend used to tell us of the time when he was a child and his father was still a Methodist lay preacher. He would read Jesus’ rebukes against the Scribes and Pharisees and clench his fist and shake it at the church members angrily. But when he read Ellen White’s comment that there were tears in Jesus’ voice as He said those words, he spoke them quite differently. Jesus was about to die for those very people.

He [Jesus] was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. **He fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes.** He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, that refused to receive Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness, and sorrow so deep that it broke His heart. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He always bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* 353.1.

110. The real question that still remains is Job 9:24. Recognizing God’s power, what do you do next? It is good to remember that Job lived 140 years after this experience (Job 42:16) and

hopefully in his ongoing conversations with God he found out why all those things happened to him. What would be the purpose of the whole book if we didn't know who was responsible? (Job 1&2)

111. Did Job say anything that was wrong? Did he learn some important new understandings in the book?
112. Why was Zophar trying to telling Job to reach out to God? (Job 11:13) Hadn't Job already been doing that?

We must study the truth for ourselves. No living man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who it is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a perfect criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject to one another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God. We must not become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions.—Ellen G. White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 18, 1889 par. 6; *TM* 109.4, *CWE* 45.1, *GW92* 129.3; *Signs of the Times* February 6, 1893 par. 7)

113. Age does not turn theological error into truth! It may even get more rotten! Notice Eliphaz appealing to the gray-haired people (Job 15:10, *GNB*; compare Job 8:8-10; 12:12-13; *Evangelism* 589; *CWE* 35; *Review and Herald* July 26, 1892) Does God do the things mentioned in Job 12:14-25?
114. The only way that these religious leaders can exercise such authority is that they establish themselves in some way as holding the key to wisdom or knowledge. That kind of an attitude is deadly when it comes to knowledge about God!
115. Why would God find it necessary to speak out so strongly about his power in Job 38-41? Who would be most impressed by that show of power? Wouldn't it be the four friends? Wouldn't they say, "If God has said it, we believe it, and that's all there is to it!" Having thus established His authority, God says, "you four were wrong!" (See Job 42:7-8)
116. Does Job ever deny that he is a sinner? He denies having done some terrible secret sin for which he is being punished. Is Job denying the resurrection? (Job 14:9-15) Job clearly believes that God will forgive and put away sin. (Job 14:17)
117. Do you agree with Eliphaz that if Job "had his way no one would fear God?" (Job 15:4, *GNB*)
118. Why is it that some even while studying in a very liberal atmosphere find it very easy to believe in Ellen White, while others feel it is necessary to throw her out? It is never safe to accept as truth something being pushed by someone who discourages investigation! Investigation doesn't have to be rude! The Spirit of truth is also the Spirit of love.
119. Notice that Eliphaz is again quoting the "apparition"! (Job 15:14-16; compare Job 4:12-21; 25:4-6) How do you think Satan feels about the fact that apparently God trusts Job, and He couldn't trust him (Lucifer)?
120. Job recognized God's power. In fact, that is part of the reason for his question! Does the fact that someone is powerful guarantee that he is right? Does "might make right"? Has Job ever suggested that he doubted God's power? Does even the Devil doubt God's power? (James 2:19) Could God have solved the great controversy by the use of power? Is that what you find in the 66 books of the Bible? If God were like that, couldn't He have gotten by with a short one or two paragraph statement instead of the Bible! Couldn't He have

destroyed Lucifer at the first sign of his rebellion? Our freedom would be gone. God could and can run the universe any way He wants! To see how He does run it, read the Bible!

121. Will we be able to stand up to the Devil's claims in the end? This is what it means to be sealed! (See *4BC* 1161 quoted in #17 above) Is Job's record an encouragement to us?
122. On what basis do you think Job was able to say: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him"? (Job 13:15, *KJV*) Or, should this be stated as a question, as in some versions: "Should I trust Him, though he slay me?" (See *GNB*.)

One possibility, which should be given real consideration is that Job knew God on a personal basis. Compare the experiences of Abraham and God. God came down and talked with Abraham as well as appearing to him in visions. (See Genesis 17&18.) Is there any reason to believe that He could not have communicated with Job in the same ways? Job's commentary from the book seems to suggest that he knew God very well (See Job 29.) in a day when there were no churches, no pastors, no Bible study groups, and no Bibles! As far as we can determine, not a single one of the books of the Bible had been written yet.

Under those circumstances, how did Job come to know God? They must have had some sort of working relationship. It was probably on the basis of this relationship that Job could speak so confidently about God. What other possibilities can you think of? (See Job 29:1-5.)

123. Read **Job 16-18**. The only way to understand Job is to read it right through several times preferably in different translations. It is not a book about why the righteous suffer! That is why that question isn't answered in the book.
124. In these chapters Job suggests that there is a court in heaven. Who is presenting our case in Heaven, and to Whom? Why is it necessary to have a "court" at all? Who is being convinced? About what? Is Jesus up there pleading for us? Some have said, "If Jesus is not up there pleading for us, then all is lost!" Who is the accuser? (Revelation 12:10) That is the meaning of the word Devil!
125. How successful has the Devil been in convincing people of the truthfulness of his claims? He convinced 1/3 of the angels! Who was against Job and Who was defending Job? (Compare Zechariah 3:1-5) Which Member of the Godhead would primarily take that role? Has Satan only accused One member of the Godhead? We have often come very close to a pagan view of religion in the way we present these ideas! Ellen White is so good on this in *Prophets and Kings* 582-592 and *The Great Controversy* 477-491. It is very clear in those chapters that God is not just checking things over to see if He has overlooked something! For whose benefit then is the investigative judgment conducted? (See Daniel 7:9-10)
126. **Satan is accusing God of not only not being trustworthy, but also of not being able to correctly diagnose the condition of sinners!** Satan through the apparition even claims that God cannot trust His own angels! (See Job 4:19; 15:14-15) The Devil wants us to believe that God doesn't really trust anybody! Guess who it is that God can't and doesn't, even shouldn't, trust!
127. Who is primarily benefitted by the events and story of the book of Job? We humans by and large haven't even gotten the point! So what do you think the angels learned from this book? They didn't need to learn anything about how to comfort those who are suffering! The real question is, "Can God Be Trusted"?

128. Is God trying to say, “Since I am so powerful, of course you can trust Me?” If so, you don’t need Job 3-37!
129. What were the angels saying about Job before God made His statement in Job 42? Did the Devil ever think he was winning? When did he discover that he hadn’t won? Did Job ever let God down? If not, why do so many theologians suggest so frequently that Job was wrong here and there throughout the book?
130. If you try to take this as a book on counseling you can become very confused! Would it be safe to take a memory verse from someone of whom God said, “he is not speaking the truth about Me?”
131. What about using Job 36:17 or 37:20 as a key text? Even the devil sometimes tells the truth! So is it correct to say that there are some false statements in the Bible? Then how do we choose what to believe? Can we still rely on 2 Timothy 3:16? Can a false statement be recorded under inspiration? (See Genesis 3:4; 1 Kings 13:18) Inspiration accurately records these false statements or lies. Then in what sense is the Bible “infallible”? The only safety is in taking the whole context and searching for the meaning!

The Bible is God’s word, and is for His people. It was communicated by men; but “they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” [2 Peter 1:21] It was given at different periods, and the men called to express the divine will and diffuse the light of truth, were chosen from all stations, from the humblest to the most exalted. **The wonderful thing about it is the harmony there is in the divine word, coming to us, as it does, through these different channels and such widely separated periods.** Each wrote in his own natural style, giving utterance, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to his own personal impressions, relating the events and scenes opened before him, or made to pass before his eyes; yet link is connected with link in the chain of precious truth given us in the word of God. The plan of redemption, and the will and character of God, are revealed to meet the necessities of man in every age; for **these human instrumentalities were under divine control, and are not false witnesses of what they saw and heard.**—Ellen G. White, *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, August 19, 1895, par. 4

The word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err; for not only is the word of God plain and simple in declaring the way of life, but the Holy Spirit is given as a guide in understanding the way to life therein revealed.—Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* 220.2; *1SG* 117.2; *SR* 391.1; *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, August 10, 1896, par. 11.

132. Why are people so afraid of using their minds or their reason to understand Scripture? What are we supposed to do with passages that are difficult or seem contradictory? (Deuteronomy 14:25-27; Proverbs 31:6-7) How do we explain even Jesus’s behavior when it doesn’t fit our health ideas? (Luke 24:42-43; John 21:9) If the Bible is just a code book of deeds to be done and sins to be shunned, then we are in real trouble! What will we do when the Devil appears at the end to deceive? We must test even the spirits (1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1) Many of David Koresh’s followers in Waco, Texas, were ex-adventists. What does that tell us?
133. So how do we decide what to believe? Do we just add up verses to see if there are more verses that support an idea than there are against it? What do you do with one verse that seems to say wonderful things about God, but appears superficially to contradict many

other verses? (See John 16:26) Most of the Bible is in “servant” language. God had a few friends, like Abraham, Moses, Job, and John but most of the others were servants and God used “servant” language with them. The length to which God is willing to go in stooping down to meet us where we are is a proof of God’s love for us. (See Judges) It is absolutely essential then that we read all of the Bible and try to understand every part of it. It is not safe to go through, just picking out the passages you like! We must get the overall picture of the entire Scriptures, especially seeking to understand how God is involved.

134. The only way to pick out the statements that are correct in Job is in light of all the rest of Scripture! Many believe that Satan only appears in Job 1 & 2. But we have discovered that Satan’s most devastating and most subtle campaign was through the four friends!
135. Do you think Satan at any time during the book felt that he was about to win? What would you think if you were able to hear God discussing your case with the Devil as He discussed Job’s case? Satan was sure that he could get Job to “curse God”. Did he succeed? What about Job 9:24, “If God didn’t do it, who did?” (GNB)
136. Were Job’s children treated as pawns? What about the firstborn in Egypt? The flood? What will Job’s children say when they arise in the resurrection and read Job 1?
137. **Satan’s main charge is that Job can’t be trusted and neither can God because He had bought Job’s trust! Was Job actually doing anything to help God by his faithfulness? Was it important for Job to demonstrate that God’s diagnosis (judgment) of him was correct?** Would that be important to understand in our day? Look at Job’s apparent accusations against God in Job 16. But if these correctly represent what Job really believed, why did he keep coming back to God and asking to speak with Him? Was God responsible for what was happening to Job? Didn’t God fully understand what was going to happen when He handed Job over to the Devil?
138. **The issue in Job is not whether or not God has power (the Devil doesn’t question that - James 2:19). The issues is: can God be trusted with all that power! In Job 13:24, Job suggests that God is the One responsible. (Compare Job 6:8)**
139. Even when it was all over, all Job’s friends and brothers blamed God! (Job 42:11) Almost no commentary makes any comment on this verse! **The real question is: What did the angels learn in the great controversy about God from the events in the book of Job? Job always turns to God! Did the angels trust God more after this story unfolded?** The best thing God could say about the “friends” was, “Please ask Job to pray for you!” Did Satan and the “friends” slip away shaking their heads wondering what in the world had happened? Are we able to step back from human events and take a larger view and not be deceived by Satan?
140. Read **Job 19-20**. What was it that Job said about God that was right that was in contrast to what the friends said? This is not a question about human suffering. Can any of us come to the place where we can be trusted?

By seeking to make him [Job] guilty before God, and deserving of His punishment, they [the friends] brought a grievous test upon him, and represented God in a false light; but Job did not swerve from his loyalty, and God rewarded His faithful servant (MS 22, 1898); *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1140; *Signs of the Times* June 21, 1899 par. 6.

141. In the light of God’s statements about Job, how do you understand Job 19? Was it true that God had afflicted Job? (See especially Job 19:6,9,21) Didn’t Job recognize that God was ultimately responsible?

142. How do different versions translate Job 19:26? The Hebrew can go either way: in this body, or out of this body! See fuller discussion in *Problems in Bible Translation*. This is not a safe proof text for bodily resurrection.
143. Did Job actually accuse God in Job 19?  
 Job was permitted to suffer; he was severely tempted; but he would not speak one word against God. *The Signs of the Times*, May 27, 1897 par 13; *HP* 251.4.
144. Do we have a video of Job to show what the look on his face was and the tone of his voice during this terrible trial?
- 145. To really understand Job's experience we need to put ourselves in the place of Job and his friends. Wouldn't it be interesting to hear God read the book of Job out loud and give His comments? We do have His comments at the end.**
146. Does Job express a wish that his friends be punished? Is he actually praying for vengeance? Compare *S.D.A. Bible Commentary* vol. 5, p. 343. If we take this to mean that Job was actually praying for vengeance, how do we explain his later comments in Job 31:29-30? Compare Eliphaz's statement in Job 22:19 and Psalms 58:10. Why would these people want to accuse Job of launching an attack against God?
147. Read Job 19:25-27. Notice Job says clearly that someone will come to his defense and he will not be a stranger. Is that close to Job's conclusion for the whole book?
148. Was it possible for a human in Job's day to be completely trustworthy in the eyes of God?
149. **Read Job 21-25.** Does listening to sermons such as "*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*" written long ago by Jonathan Edwards make you want to love God more? What would such a man have said to Job? Would he have joined the "friends"?
150. Job states that the wicked tell God to leave them alone. (Job 21:14, *GNB*) Is that what God does? The wicked do not see any advantage in communicating with God, while Job seeks it constantly.
151. How do you feel about Eliphaz's statement in Job 22:1: "Is there anyone, even the wisest, who could ever be of use to God"? (*GNB*) Did Job's behavior help God? Does Satan even care what happens to Job?
152. What Satan is really trying to show is that God's diagnosis of Job is wrong, and thus that God cannot be trusted in His diagnosis (judgment) of people!! The Devil even claims that God's evaluation of him (Satan) is wrong!! The Devil doesn't care about Job. Does Job's loyalty do anything for God? Doesn't it say wonderful things about God?
153. Was God saying that He could really trust Abraham, or was He saying that He had the right to forgive him? (Genesis 15:6)
154. Who is misjudging here? God and Job? Or all the others? Who do you feel more comfortable with? The Four? Or Job? What evidence did Eliphaz have for all the accusations he made against Job in Job 22:6-9? (Compare Job 29:11-25.) What kind of picture of God is implied by Job 22:19? What do you suppose was the tone of Eliphaz's voice as he said Job 22:21? Was he being "pretentiously pious"? **What do you do when someone comes to counsel you and you realize that he is wrong? Or what if he prays for you that you will see that he is right? How would you pray under those circumstances?**

155. Prophets or Bible writers that have serious questions about how God is doing things go straight to God to discuss it. They don't go around complaining about God! (See Jeremiah, Habakkuk) If a grandchild came to you and said, "Grampa, can I tell you my side of the story", wouldn't you love it? If you are asking God to be on your side, you better be sure that you are being honest and telling the truth!
156. Can you name any places in our world today where the wounded and dying are crying out to God? (See Job 24:12, *GNB*)
157. Notice that in Job 25:4-6 Bildad repeats the arguments of the apparition in Job 4:17-19.
158. The experience of Job and God should encourage us to come freely with our questions and problems. Might we even be able to help out God?
- By his patient endurance he [Job] vindicated his own character, and thus the character of Him whose representative he was. *Education* p. 156.1
159. The 144,000 who are alive at the end will speak well of God to the entire universe. (Ephesians 3:10) In order to do so they must admire and worship God until they come to the place where they actually are changed to become like Him. (*GC* 555) This kind of change is not perfectionism.
160. Would you go to a physician and say, "I don't want to be a perfectionist, please heal me 75%"? The church has at times scheduled large meetings to discuss the theology of health and healing. If we don't get our theology straight first, it will be a struggle to put these two together! If you go to your doctor with lung cancer which you got by smoking, would you ask to be healed or just forgiven? If he agreed to forgive you, would you rush out of the office saying, "Wonderful, everything is fine now, I'm forgiven?" The only way to correct what is wrong is to fully change the damage that has been done. But ultimately the only way to set people right and keep them right is to reveal the truth about God. (*Signs of the Times* January 20, 1890)
161. Dr. Maxwell remembers asking some grade school children what they had learned that day about God, and one young girl responded, "Oh, we never talk about Him!" He once spoke to a used car salesman who was seriously considering joining the SDA church, but he was looking for a church that really spends time studying the Bible. He had visited several Adventist churches and hadn't yet seen what he was looking for! Those who really get going with Bible study find it is hard to stop!
162. Do you think Job was speaking to God about his "reasonable doubts". Would God allow that? Job was just trying to make sense out of his life. Does God want us to try to make sense out of our lives? (See *Steps to Christ* 105)
163. How do you feel about the judgment and final retribution? Is it essential that God raise the wicked so they can receive their just reward? How is this problem of justice resolved by the judgment? (Our Christian friends have a real hard time with why God releases Satan after he has been bound in Revelation 20!)
164. How is God's character involved in the destruction of the wicked? Do we need to see our enemies suffer before they perish eternally in order to be satisfied? How does our inherent sense that they should receive their own punishment for what they have done help us to understand why God raises the wicked at the third coming? Is this necessary for our eternal salvation to be secure? Or are the wicked raised so they themselves will understand why they cannot be saved forever?
165. Which member of the Godhead is primarily talking to Job in this book?

166. Who will ultimately live in the “fire” that is God’s glory? (Isaiah 33:10-16) The righteous have nothing to fear from the “fire”! It will however consume the wicked. (*Desire of Ages* 107.4; 600.2; **764.1**; “The Final End of Sin and Sinners” - [https://www.theox.org/images/images\\_A2115/KHART-EGW-PDF\\_SIN\\_&\\_SINNERS-FINAL\\_END.pdf](https://www.theox.org/images/images_A2115/KHART-EGW-PDF_SIN_&_SINNERS-FINAL_END.pdf) - Copy this link and paste it into Google and you will get the handout.)
167. Where did Job get the evidence on which he based his faith? He knew God so well and He trusted God so much that he could not understand why this problem had arisen between them!
168. Does God give us the book of Job as a giant true/false quiz? Are we supposed to go through the book and mark each verse true or false? On what basis would we do that? If we have to check with all the rest of Scripture to get the answers, then why have the book of Job at all? The friends did speak a certain amount of truth mixed with their error!
169. Job’s friends’ main accusation of Job was that his picture of God was in error. They were sure they were speaking the truth about God and they ended up quoting the Devil (Job 4:12-21) Ellen White suggests that even the Devil and his angels will appear to be converted at the end (2 Corinthians 11:14; *GC* 588; *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 405) The whole world will be crying, “Christ has come, Christ has come!” (See *The Great Controversy* 624.2) And the Devil is God’s worst enemy!
170. So why are all these mistaken and deceptive speeches recorded in the Bible? To show how their mistaken views led them to misrepresent God and Job! At the end there will be a great “religious revival” but they will have a wrong picture of God.
171. What would Job’s friends have said if they had been one by one asked to go through what Job went through? How should we handle those who claim to be Christ’s representatives and come with great compassion to teach error?
172. Read **Job 26-31**. It is important in reading this section of Job to realize that there are portions for whom the original speaker is not known for sure. Some feel that Job 26:5-14 is the speech of Bildad. Some feel that Zophar is the speaker of Job 27:7-10,13-23. Traditionally these portions have all been attributed to Job. This makes Job apparently contradict himself. How should we decide for sure who gave these speeches? However we understand these sections, they must be considered in the light of Job 31:29-30, where Job makes it clear that he has never been glad when his enemies suffer. This is part of the reason for believing that Job 27:7ff is not Job talking. Who do you think is talking in Job 28? Is it clearly Job again in Job 29?
173. Wasn’t it a compliment to God that Job really missed their conversations? Was God really communicating with Job? Job notes that he is despised by the community (Job 30:1-8) Then Job calls to God and God doesn’t answer! (Job 30:20) Was God listening to the prayers of Job? If so, did Job have any way of knowing that? Notice how Job treated even his servants. (Job 31:13)
174. Job admits his sins once again in Job 31:33. Did God really abandon Job during this experience? If He didn’t, but instead surrounded Job with angels or the Holy Spirit, wouldn’t the Devil have cried foul? Or does God help us secretly so that even the Devil can’t see Him?
175. How much had the life of Job been molded by the work of the Holy Spirit already? Could this influence be undone?
176. Is faith something that somebody else does for us? If not, why do we call it a gift of God? (Ephesians 2:8) Would that suggest that when we say we have faith and trust God, that

God is really speaking through us and thus speaking to Himself? Almost all scholars—including most Seventh-day Adventist scholars—believe that there is no way that Job could have been righteous himself. They suggest that his only righteousness must have been the righteousness of Christ imputed (or imparted?) to him. Was Satan in Job 1 and 2 saying that Job was not justified, or cannot be justified, or that God cannot forgive Job or that God can't declare Job to be upright? Hadn't God already said Job was upright? (Job 1:8; 2:3) Was God lying there?

177. Is it possible to come to the place where when you say that you trust God it is actually you speaking? Is it possible to make such a decision yourself? Some are very reluctant to say that.
178. Was Satan challenging Job's legal justification, or whether his "righteousness" was imputed? **If Job hadn't been really changed, what is this whole book about?** How does the Holy Spirit actually do His work in the lives and minds of people? Was the Holy Spirit present when Jesus was dying on the cross? How many of God's angels and the Holy Spirit were there protecting Job lest Satan go beyond exactly what God had prescribed that he could do? (See *Desire of Ages* 753-754.)
179. Has Job learned something new that has caused him now to **admit** that the wicked should ultimately be punished? Or are those sections really the words of Zophar? See above. Is Job really coming to the place where he is using excerpts from the speeches of his "friends"? The *Anchor Bible* makes it very clear that this is the theology of the "friends". Has Job finally been convinced that the friends are right? Are you comfortable with these ideas? Is this section suggesting that a truly righteous person might call for vengeance on his enemies?
180. **Could our seeing God punish the wicked keep us from sinning for the rest of eternity?** Is our biggest argument against hell that it would not be fair and just? Is that why we talk of committees that will determine exactly what is "fair"! If however we go through the Bible and replace the word "justice" with the word "righteousness" which is the same word in the original, it doesn't seem to fit! When those religious people gathered outside the prison awaiting Bundy's execution in the electric chair, crying "Burn, Bundy, Burn" were they asking for righteousness? If our state governments were more God-like, would we require that each criminal be sentence to a just period of torture appropriate to their crime? Does our sense of justice require that the wicked burn?
181. Job's friends clearly wanted justice, even retribution, but Job never asked for the destruction of his enemies (Job 31:29-30) Do the victims of the Holocaust have a right to ask for retribution? Why do some say they don't want any vengeance? Does destruction discipline the one destroyed?
182. Is it the purpose of studying Job to learn how to develop the skill of studying Scripture in its context and from the perspective of the author. What is the context for the whole book of Job? Isn't it Job 1,2, and 42? The real issue is the great controversy.
183. There are 4 fundamental questions in the book of Job:
  - a. **What is the basic issue in the book of Job?** Is it a book about why the righteous suffer? Is it a handbook about how to help people who are suffering? Or is it a book about whether or not God can correctly judge human beings?
  - b. **Did God win His case, or did He lose?** God announced that he had won in Job 42. Does that settle it? If so, He might as well have done that in the

beginning and avoided all this suffering. If God could settle things by making a proclamation there really is no need for all of Scripture.

**c. How did God win His case?** Was He shown to be right in trusting Job? Does God depend on the weight of evidence? Why did He keep His disguise on the road to Emmaus? (Luke 24:13-35; 3SP 214.2)

**d. Did Job let God down?** Why are some so anxious to show that Job did? Then they have real trouble with God's statement at the end! At the end of this study we will discuss some of the things that Job may have said that were right. Does that imply that he said a lot of things that were wrong? God said it was "about Me." Were there things about which Job and the four agreed? God's existence? God's power? God's justice? The only thing that they clearly disagreed on was their picture of God! See Elihu's comment in Job 37:20, *GNB*. Elihu belonged with the Israelites at the foot of Sinai! They believed that might makes right!

184. If we take Job just as a manual on human suffering then we have a lot of true/false statements for our study! Of what use would that be? Job's friends were very pious and God-fearing, but they did not tell the truth about God! They preferred Satan's picture of God! Why else would they be quoting "apparitions" inspired by the Devil?
185. At the end, when God says that Job has spoken the truth, is He asking us to agree? **One of the greatest proofs that God can be trusted is the method He used to show that Job could be trusted.** Was God offended by Job's cries? God is commending Job for what he did! The four were horrified! **The real lesson is that God's approval of all that Job did says wonderful things about God Himself! God has set His seal of approval to this kind of method and this kind of a relationship! Imagine what that says about what kind of government He wants to preside over!** Do you like a God who behaves like this?
186. Did the "friends" of Job ever learn about what happened in Job 1 and 2? Surely God discussed it with Job. Did Job in turn find a way to share it with them? Compare the way Jesus treated His betrayer and His worst enemies!
187. Dr. Maxwell once told of a time when he received a letter from a Pastor of a large church apologizing for 20 years of misunderstanding this picture of God. Then the pastor stood up in his pulpit and apologized to his congregation and then started taking them through the Bible, book-by-book!
188. Read **Job 32-37**. Elihu is sometimes thought to be the best of the four "friends". Do you agree?
189. See Job 33:1-7 as an introduction. Do you agree with the statements in Job 33:12,19-28. Is that a good beginning? Elihu is clearly hoping that Job will admit his sin. **But if Job were to admit having committed some terrible sin just to satisfy the friends, he would be acting in contradiction to God's statements. Job can't win.**
190. Look at Job 34:7-15. Once again the argument is that might makes right. No one was arguing that God is not powerful. The question is about how God uses His power. Could someone possess great power and do what is wrong? Do you trust God just because He is powerful?
191. See Job 35:15; 36:3. How do you know that God is just? See verse 15! He is strong! The whole direction of Elihu's argument is shown in Job 36:17: Job "you are being punished as

- you deserve.” He was wrong! And then he goes back to mentioning God’s power again (Job 36:22). Why then did God come in a great display of power in the next few chapters?
192. What was Elihu’s attitude toward God? See Job 37:20. “I won’t ask to speak with God; why should I give him a chance to destroy me?” Compare Exodus 20:18-20. See also Job 37:23. Would Job 36:17 be a better key text or Job 37:20?
  193. Did God cause Job’s suffering? Was He responsible? Of course! Did God deny being responsible? Does Job have a right to ask God why He did it? Did Pilate remove his responsibility for the death of Jesus by washing his hands?
  194. **Did the onlooking universe get the message? God always settles matters by reviewing the evidence!**
  195. The essential truth that Job spoke was the truth about God! This is what our whole world needs to learn. We don’t serve a God who says, “Love Me, or I’ll torture you for eternity!”
  196. Did Job ever imply that God was unrighteous? Did Job change his attitude? Does Job ever question God’s power? What does it say about God that He approved Job’s many comments?
  197. What did Satan and his spokespersons actually want Job to do or say? Didn’t he want Job to give up his trust in God? Did Satan succeed? **Satan is doing his best to show that Job cannot be trusted and thus that God is a poor judge of character! Satan was very offended to hear God say that He could trust Job, while Satan could not be trusted! The real issue here is: Can God be trusted in His judgment of people?**
  198. Job exposes one of the fundamental false beliefs held by many throughout Biblical times: If you are good, God will bless you, but if you are bad, God will curse you. They then took the next step to say: Therefore, if you are rich, you must be very good, but if you are poor, you must be very bad. Think of all the illustrations of this in Scripture. How could Jesus say, “Blessed are you poor” (Luke 6:20)? How could Jesus ask the rich young ruler to give up all the evidence that he was a good man?
  199. A Rabbi was once invited to come and speak to chapel at LLU. His message was a comparison between Christians who seem to be embarrassed when they are “blessed” and Jews who thank God when they are “blessed”!
  200. Did Job help God by remaining faithful? Eliphaz stated that no human can be of any use to God! (Job 22:1; 35:5-8) God has only a few people in the Bible who are real friends: Abraham, Job, Moses. (Would you include Joseph? Daniel? Paul?)
  201. Through all of Job’s experiences what was it that he prayed for the most?
    - Job 6:8: Why doesn’t God answer me?
    - 7:16: Why can’t I make sense of what is happening?
    - 9:24: If God is not doing this, who is?
    - 10:2; 31:23: What have I done wrong?
  202. God is asking for only one thing: trust/loyalty. What did the thief on the cross have? When Jesus introduces him in heaven, can you hear Him saying, “Let Me introduce you to the only person who said something encouraging to Me as I was hanging on the cross!” The thief would have gotten an “F” for Bible Doctrines or Daniel and Revelation class but he will get an “A” for trust! Meanwhile the “theologians” at the foot of the cross were totally unsavable!
  203. Did God ever answer Job? That will be our study from now to the end of the book.

204. Why is it that at the end of the book of Job, God seems to support some of the views of the friends? Job clearly admits that he is a sinner several times in the book. (Job 7:21; 13:23,26; 14:16-17; 31:33; 42:6) Do you think Job needed to repent? He also states quite clearly that he has not committed any specific sin for which he should be punished!
205. Is Job suggesting at the end of the book that God doesn't really want understanding friends, but only trembling servants? When Job said that, God said, "Wait! The experiment is over!" And then God stated that Job had said of Him what is right! (Job 42:7-8) How did Job know that God was speaking to him? How will we know who the "angel of light" is at the end? (2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 13:1-8)
206. Who understood God better? Elihu? Or, Job? (Job 34:34-36, *TLB*; Job 37:20, *GNB*; Job 42:7-8) Do you sometimes feel like Elihu did when he said: "I won't ask to speak with God; why should I give him a chance to destroy me?" (Job 37:20, *GNB*)

Elihu did not have a friendly relationship with God! He respected God; but, he was afraid of Him. Is that what God wants most of all?

On the other hand, Job asked lots of questions of God, even when God did not appear to be listening. Job had come to know God well enough so that he was comfortable asking questions. God's best friends in the Bible often seem to be the ones who ask questions. God wants an understanding friendship, not just grudging servanthood. In order to have willing, understanding friendship, one must seek to know the one with whom one wishes to be friends.

207. Read **Job 38-41**. What was God's main response to the events in the book of Job? His major response is in Job 42:7-8! That is what Job really wanted to hear!
208. **At the beginning of this section, in almost every version we read, "Then the Lord answered Job..." Before reading the answers we should try to understand the questions!** This is a very essential part of understanding a number of parts of the Bible where answers seem to be given, but we don't have the questions. Unfortunately, theologians have often assumed the wrong questions, and this leads to a misunderstanding of the answers.
209. What were Job's questions? [The questions may only be implied] Look at the passages:
- Job 6:8:** Why won't God give me what I ask? Why won't he answer my prayer? (*GNB*)
- Job 7:16:** ...My life makes no sense. (*GNB*)
- Job 9:4:** God is so wise and powerful; no one can stand up against him. (*GNB*)
- Job 9:8:** No one helped God spread out the heavens or trample the sea monster's back. (*GNB*)
- Job 9:12:** He takes what he wants, and no one can stop him; no one dares ask him, "What are you doing?" (*GNB*)
- Job 9:24:** ...And if God didn't do it, who did? (*GNB*)
- Job 9:32:** If God were human, I could answer him; we could go to court to decide our quarrel. (*GNB*)
- Job 12:10:** It is God who directs the lives of his creatures; everyone's life is in his power. (*GNB*) [Job clearly does not question God's power or His sovereignty.]

**Job 13:23-24:** What are my sins? What wrongs have I done? What crimes am I charged with? Why do you avoid me? Why do you treat me like an enemy. (GNB)

**Job 16:11:** God has handed me over to evil people. (GNB)

**Job 19:25-27:** But I know there is someone in heaven, who will come at last to my defense...I will see him with my own eyes, and he will not be a stranger. (GNB) [Job expected God to be a Friend!]

**Job 21:14-16:** The wicked tell God to leave them alone; they don't want to know his will for their lives...but their way of thinking I cannot accept. (GNB)

**Job 23:1-10:** Job wants most of all for God to speak to him

**Job 29:1-2:** <sup>2</sup> If only my life could once again

be as it was when God watched over me.

<sup>3</sup> God was always with me then

and gave me light as I walked through the darkness. (GNB)

**Job 30:20:** I call to you, O God, but you never answer; and when I pray, you pay no attention. (GNB)

**Job 31:33:** Others try to hide their sins, but I have never concealed mine. (GNB)

**Job 31:35:** Will no one listen to what I am saying? I swear that every word is true. Let Almighty God answer me. (GNB)

**Job 31:37:** I would tell God everything I have done, and hold my head high in his presence. (GNB)

It is clear to Job that the questions were about God all along! God doesn't interrupt Job and say, "Why are you arguing with these people? Why don't you direct your questions to me?" That is what Job had been doing from the beginning! **Job had been talking to God, and the friends had been trying to answer for God!** They even gave Job a whole list of the sins they believed that he may have committed! (Job 22:1-14) They hadn't seen Job do any of these sins, and in fact Job was not guilty of any of them!

210. Did God use His strength to put Job in his place? Job was ready to accept any word from God! Job 27:5-6: "I will never say that you men are right; I will insist on my innocence to my dying day." (GNB) Did God agree with Job? (Job 1:8; 2:3) What was the most important way in which Job was right? Was it not about God?
211. Job does not dictate to God what He should say. He just wants Him to speak up. After all the statements noted above, did God need to emphasize His power?
212. Do we have any record of how Job and God may have communicated back before this experience or even after? We know how God spoke to Abraham! (Genesis 18) Job seems to imply very strongly that he was accustomed to speaking with God on a regular basis because otherwise why would he raise all those questions about God not speaking to him? How did Enoch walk with God? Did he see God in any way?
213. Eliphaz got his messages in quite a different way! He apparently was accustomed to listening to apparitions! (See Job 4:12-21) Notice that none of Job's "friends" complained that God was not speaking to them!!! (See Job 37:20, GNB)

214. How did God speak the words in our passage for today? Was it a voice that came out of the sky? David Koresh claimed that God spoke to him!! Daniel and his companions walked with God just as Enoch did:

In acquiring the wisdom of the Babylonians, Daniel and his companions were far more successful than their fellow students; but their learning did not come by chance. They obtained their knowledge by the faithful use of their powers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making the knowledge of God the foundation of their education. In faith they prayed for wisdom, and they lived their prayers. They placed themselves where God could bless them. They avoided that which would weaken their powers, and improved every opportunity to become intelligent in all lines of learning. They followed the rules of life that could not fail to give them strength of intellect. They sought to acquire knowledge for one purpose—that they might honor God. They realized that in order to stand as representatives of true religion amid the false religions of heathenism they must have clearness of intellect and must perfect a Christian character. And **God Himself was their teacher**. Constantly praying, conscientiously studying, keeping in touch with the Unseen, **they walked with God as did Enoch**.—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* 486.1.

215. Wouldn't we like to have that kind of experience? Or is God not speaking to us now primarily because God is now slowly withdrawing Himself for the end of time?
216. What should we say about all the TV evangelists that claim to be receiving messages from God right on the platform? Or do we just get ideas that we need to bring back to test by the Scriptures?
217. How do you think Job and his friends felt as God began to speak? Job was no doubt relieved at first! But who was it that was full of ignorant empty words? (Job 38:2) Was that Job or the "friends"? How will we respond when Satan begins to appear as Christ? Or will we be able easily to tell it is Satan? The one who deceived one-third of the angels? The devil did a masterful counterfeit of Christ's first coming, and no doubt his counterfeit of the second coming will be even more deceptive!
218. How many people do you think heard God's speech in Job 38-41? Is it possible that most of what God was saying there was actually addressed to the four "friends"? Wouldn't it seem likely that the four would say as they listened to God's speech that they were right!! This would make God's judgment in Job 42:7-8 even more stunning!! Does God say anything in His speech that Job would have disagreed with? At the end of God's speech in Job 41 did Job feel that everything was now making sense?
219. If someone already knew about the great controversy and Job 1 & 2 and 42:7-8 what would he think of this speech from God? God seems to begin by emphasizing His creative power. He goes on (Job 38 & 39) to suggest that He has power even over the most powerful creatures (some may have been mythological). Or is this the monster mentioned in Revelation 12? There are excellent articles in the *SDA Bible Dictionary* on Leviathan and Behemoth.
220. Is the fact that God provides for the young lions evidence of His love and care? (Job 38:39) But what do young lions eat? Who is caring for those creatures? The same could be asked about ravens (Job 38:41) and hawks and eagles. (Job 39:26-30) How do you feel as you see the young eagle drinking the blood of another creature? Are these pictures describing

the way things were in the beginning as God created them, or now after sin has corrupted this planet? How should saints feel about predatory animals?

221. Is God describing His ideal world or is He describing some of the problems that He is faced with in our world? God has plenty of problems, He even lost one-third of His angels!
222. When God spoke out of the whirlwind, could all around hear and understand what was being said? Why doesn't God speak openly to us now? There are many occasions when God has spoken even in an audible voice and not everyone understood and comprehended what was being said. (Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; **John 12:28-29; Acts 9:7; 22:9**) If someone claims to be receiving messages from God, should we believe them? What about Jonestown and Waco and other such places? If we were good enough and had enough faith would God speak to us directly, even audibly? Even if He did wouldn't we have to test everything He said against the Scripture? (1 John 4:1-3)
223. Ellen White is reported to have said at her last speech to the students at PUC, "If you can find anything in my writings not in accordance with the Scripture, do not believe it!" By contrast, beware of those who claim that their writings take precedence over the Bible!
224. How do you think Job would have responded to the questions raised in Job 40?
225. Ellen White suggests that the devil may have experimented with "creating" or "amalgamating" different creatures. This would give him an opportunity to blame God for making things that didn't seem to be in harmony with God's original creation. (*S.D.A. Bible Commentary* Vol. 1, p. 1086; *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 78; *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 75; *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 288; *Manuscript Releases* Volume Sixteen, p. 247)
226. What do you think was done about the carnivorous animals that were taken into the ark?
227. By mentioning all these "monsters" is God trying to terrorize us? In this speech has God really answered any of Job's questions? Is it possible in this speech that God is trying to get even Job to realize how much larger the conflict is than just his case? Job had no books to look back to to help him understand the controversy or what God had done up to that time.
228. How much is the Devil responsible for all the change and deterioration in our ecosystem? Is he trying his best to get "nature" to misrepresent God? In the beginning, the lion lay down with the lamb etc.! Did God clear up all the problems by emphasizing His love and grace and care in these verses? Was God expecting Job just to bow his head and submit to God's power? Compare Elijah's experience at Mt. Sinai (Horeb) 1 Kings 19:1-18. Wouldn't Job have been very happy with the "still, small voice"?
229. Was this display of power etc., really for the benefit of the onlooking universe and the four "friends" rather than for Job? The real monster that God created and only He can control is the Devil! He is constantly limiting what the Devil can do to prevent him from destroying all of us! (See Job 1 & 2)
230. Perhaps the second most important evidence of God's love and care in the book of Job is His saying to Job, "Please pray for these "friends" who have misrepresented Me!" (Job 42:8)
231. When Job said, "I repent" did God say, "Finally, it's about time! Let's ask these other men to pray for you so you can get your life straightened out!" Does God ever mention Job's sins?
232. What do you think Job said in his prayer for his "friends?" Did God say to Job, "Because I created this universe, including the world with all its forms of life, and because I rule over

all and control the relationships that exist among living creatures, why should you doubt My capacity to control the affairs of your life? Why should you, with your limited vision, question the justice of My dealings?” Did God expect Job to say, “OK, God, I recognize that You are in charge, so ‘no problem’”? Or might Job have said, “After listening to your speech I have more questions than I did before! Who did this to your beautiful creation God!?”

233. With all the recorded revelation that we have available, do we need miraculous appearances of God to have enough evidence to believe in God? How did some of God’s best friends communicate with Him so well back before the days of Scripture?
234. **At the end of the book, Job repents. Probably not because he thought he had said anything really wrong but because he wished he could have represented God even better.** And Job may have actually apologized for crying out in some of the ways he did and God said, “I understand perfectly.” And God could have responded to Job, “At least you always stayed with Me. You didn’t try to turn to any other ‘gods’ or other sources of help. And you didn’t accept the wrong pictures of me presented by your friends!”
235. Would it be presumptuous for any of us in our day to stand up and speak about God as Job did?
236. Did Job ever curse God as Satan said he would? Did Satan win? As many view the book of Job, Satan appears in Job 1&2 and then he disappears never to be mentioned again. But is he not still working through the rest of Job? Is Satan subtly working through the so-called caring pastors right through the book? What methods did he use to convince a third of the angels to join him? Did he destroy their property and their families? Did he inflict the angels with boils? No, he used this other method. **There are two very different pictures of God being suggested in the book of Job and contrasted.**
237. Read **Job 42**. What is God trying to say to us in this final chapter?
238. It is essential when reading this chapter to remember all that God has said so far and also what Job has said about God so far! When Job said, “I have seen you with my own eyes” (GNB) does he mean that he physically saw God?
239. Read Job 42:6. Theologians have suggested some reasons why Job needed to repent. Do you agree with these ideas?
1. Job demanded that God give him a visible sign of divine blessing and care.
  2. Job thought that God had become his enemy.
  3. Job went too far in his lament and complaint.
  4. Job suffered from pride.
  5. Job was depending on a secondhand religion.
  6. Job was hostile to his friends.—Daniel J. Simundson, *The Message of Job*.
240. Did Job really need to repent because he had sinned so grievously? If Job needed to repent, who won in this argument, God or the Devil? Was Job’s attitude wrong? Ellen White draws some very interesting parallels between James White and Job in 3T 509. Were the friend’s speeches actually nauseating to God?

Some shortsighted, short-experienced friends cannot, with their narrow vision, appreciate the feelings of one who has been in close harmony with the soul of Christ in connection with the salvation of others. His motives are misunderstood and his actions misconstrued by those who would be his

friends, until, like Job, he sends forth the earnest prayer: Save me from my friends. God takes the case of Job in hand Himself. His patience has been severely taxed; but when God speaks, all his pettish feelings are changed. The self-justification which he felt was necessary to withstand the condemnation of his friends is not necessary toward God. He never misjudges; He never errs. Says the Lord to Job, "Gird up now thy loins like a man;" and Job no sooner hears the divine voice than his soul is bowed down with a sense of his sinfulness, and he says before God, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."—Ellen G. White, 3T 509.2.

241. What led Job to say, "I repent" and of what do you think he repented? Don't you think by this time, Job's friends were sure that they were about to succeed in their mission?
242. What was Job's response to God's speaking to him? (Compare Isaiah 6:5; Matthew 27:4-8; Luke 5:8.)
243. Job 42:7-8 is probably the summary statement in the entire book! Why is it that these key verses are so often ignored by theologians? Wouldn't you want to make these verses the key to the whole book!
244. This book is not about why the righteous suffer, but about whether God had spoken the truth about Job in Job 1 & 2! Can God really be trusted in His judgments of people? One of the Devil's accusations has always been that God cannot be trusted! The Devil would especially like us to believe that God has misjudged him!
245. The real focus in our summary on Job should be about what Job may have said about God that was right and not on how Job may have failed at some point!!
246. When Job prayed for his friends is there any indication that they were converted or understood God or the issues in the book any better?
247. At the end of the book (Job 38-41) God comes and appears to discuss His power and sovereignty. Then He asks, "Do you all admit that I have power?" And the friends agree and Job agrees. "Will you accept anything I say?" Oh yes! If God has said it, we believe it, and that's all there is to it." Then God stuns them by saying, "Job has said of Me what is right." (Job 42:7-8) What do you suppose was their response?
248. It is interesting to note in Job 42:10-11 that when Job recovered and had his wealth again many people came to feast with him. Were these people fair-weather friends? There was a time when Job said, "My wife can't stand the smell of my breath and my own brothers won't come near me." Job 19:17 (GNB). And these fair-weather friends at the end of his life comforted him for all the troubles the LORD (YHWH) had brought on him. Job 42:11 (GNB). But maybe they weren't real saints because each of them gave him some money and a gold ring!
249. Did Job ask to have all his prosperity returned, or did he just ask that God restore their communication? How would you compare Solomon's response to God's offer? (2 Chronicles 1:7-12) Did God "reward" Job with all those material things after this experience? When Job was restored to prosperity all his "friends" seemed to come back (Compare Job 19:17) Were these "fair weather friends?" (See Job 42:11) What did Job do with all the rings that were given to him? (Job 42:11)
250. Do you see evidence in Job 38-41 that God cares for you!? Does God make any attempt to make it clear to Job why he went through all that suffering? Does power (apparently the message of Job 38-41) prove justice or right? Does might make right?

251. How should one pray for one's theological critics and enemies? Have you ever been prayed for and found the prayer to be very humiliating?

252. What was the key issue in all this?

**1. Can God's judgment be trusted? Did Job let God down?**

The Devil would have done anything to destroy Job, not because he really cared about Job but because of what Job proved about God!

**2. Did God win His case in the book of Job?**

Did God need to prove that He was more powerful than the Devil? (See James 2:19) NO! God simply allowed the evidence to accumulate. God is still teaching the universe about Himself by the way He deals with us. (Ephesians 1:7-10; **3:7-10**; Colossians 1:19-20)

**3. How did God win His case?**

Did God win in the book of Job by making a pronouncement about His power? If God could win by making a claim about Himself, why bother with the whole great controversy? God is prepared to bend down and wash our dirty feet to show how He feels about us! (John 13:1-11) How many religions, even Christian churches, have that kind of God? God wins by the way the Spirit works!! (Compare Zechariah 4:6)

253. **Our greatest mission should be to teach the world the truth about God! And the practice of the healing arts should be our number one illustration!**

254. If your God demands propitiation, then this picture of God doesn't fit. God does at times frighten His children, but only long enough to get their attention with the hope that they will listen and learn something!

255. How do you feel about God speaking so lovingly and candidly to Job after what Job had said about God? **The greatest evidence about God in the book of Job is how favorably God speaks about Job despite all Job has said in the book!**

256. Do you think that God would be offended if we asked Him in eternity why He created Lucifer? Does God really want a universe full of trembling servants or a universe full of friends who love to ask "Why?" Dr. Maxwell once preached on the subject, "Blessed are the Whys!"

257. What was Job's attitude about God in the end? Did he simply bow his head and say, "I won't ask any more questions; I'll just trust you God?" This seems to be what is suggested by many theologians.

258. What was it that Job was so convinced about that even his friends could not change his mind? **Aren't you glad that God is not the kind of Person that the Devil and millions of pulpits have made Him out to be?!!!**

259. How do we relate these grand, universe-wide issues discussed in the book of Job with our day-by-day battles with evil? Should we daily ask God to look after us? Or, should we not bother God and assume that whatever happens is according to His plan? Is God too busy to pay attention to our little day-by-day needs? Consider the life of Jesus: Feeding Jairus's daughter after raising her from the dead (Luke 8:55); feeding the hungry (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14); healing the sick and casting out demons (John 5:1-17; 9:1-34, etc.); crying at Lazarus's funeral (John 11:35); blessing the children (Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17); etc.

The Bible is full of evidence that God cares for even the tiniest creatures. He notices even when a sparrow falls. (Matthew 10:29) God apparently has the capacity to concern

Himself with all of the grand, universe-wide issues and at the same time care for the smallest needs of His tiniest creatures. He does not just provide for us in a broad, general sense; Jesus demonstrated a very personal interest in the lives of all He came in contact with. (See references in the question above.)

But, each of us is also a part of the greater universe-wide controversy that is going on. The battles in this cosmic conflict are being fought in the minds and hearts of human beings. More than this, God Himself chooses to place His reputation and His government on trial to be judged by His creatures.

### **Romans 3:4:**

<sup>4</sup> μὴ γένοιτο· γινέσθω δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἀληθής, πᾶς δὲ ἄνθρωπος ψεύστης, καθὼς γέγραπται·

ὅπως ἂν δικαιωθῆς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου

καὶ νικήσεις ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε.—Nestle, E., Nestle, E., Aland, B., Aland, K., Karavidopoulos, J., Martini, C. M., & Metzger, B. M. (1993). *The Greek New Testament* (27th ed., Ro 3:4). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Stuttgart.

...”That Thou mayest be declared righteous in Thy words, and mayest overcome in Thy being judged.” (*Young’s Literal*)

...”That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.” (*KJV*)

...”That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged.” (*NKJV*)

...”That thou mayest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art judged.” (*RSV*)

...”So that you may be justified in your words, and prevail in your judging.” (*NRSV*)

...”So that thou shouldest be justified in thy words, and shouldest overcome when thou art in judgment.” (*Darby*)

...”That Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, And mightest prevail when Thou art judged.” (*NASB*)

...”That thou mightest be justified in thy words, And mightest prevail when thou comest into judgment.” (*ASV*)

...”Your words will be proven true, and in court you will win your case.” (*CEV*)

...”So you hand down justice when you speak, and you win your case in court.” (*God’s Word*)

...”You must be shown to be right when you speak; you must win your case when you are being tried.” (*GNB*)

...”so that you, God, may be proved right in your words and win the verdict when you are put on trial.” (*Jewish New Testament*)

...”That God’s words will always prove true and right, no matter who questions them.” (*TLB*)

...”Your words stand fast and true; Rejection doesn’t faze you.” (*The Message*)

...”That you may be justified in your words, and conquer when you are judged.” (*NAB-RC*)

...”That You may be justified in Your words, And prevail when You are judged.” (*NASB, 1995*)

...”So you will be shown to be right when you speak, and you will win your case.” (*NCV*)

- ...”So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge.” (NIV)
- ...”That you may show your saving justice when you pass sentence and your victory may appear when you give judgement.” (New Jerusalem-RC)
- ...”He will be proved right in what he says, and he will win his case in court.” (New Living)
- ...”That you may be shown to be right in what you say, and win your case when you go into court.” (Goodspeed)

Many of these translations strongly imply that it is God who is being judged, presumably not only by humans on this earth but also by beings in the rest of the universe. There is a universe-wide great controversy in which God’s character and government are on trial.

260. Would it be safe to freely pick key texts from the book of Job? In what sense could such a book be “inspired”? If, as God Himself suggests, Job’s three friends had not said what is right about Him, (Job 42:7-10) how can we call their speeches inspired? Should we consider this book as being only partly inspired? That is, should we consider Job 1&2, 42, as well as Job’s speeches and God’s speeches as inspired, but the rest not inspired? What about some of the things that Job said in his depression? (Job 1:21; 6:4,13; 12:16-25; 16:6-14; 17:11-16)

It should be clear from what we have seen so far that much of what the three friends of Job said came from ideas that are not in accordance with God’s ideas. Some of it seems to have come directly from the Devil! In such a situation, we must be very careful in using this material, no matter how familiar it sounds or how correct it seems, as if it were inspired by God. God Himself concluded at the end that the three friends needed to repent because they had not spoken the truth about Him as Job had.

*Inspiration* under such circumstances takes on new meanings. We cannot just assume that everything we read in Scripture is directly from the mouth of God! The book of Job is inspired in the sense that God helped the story to be recorded correctly, and the reporting can be relied upon. That does not mean that every word is truthful and should be regarded as a “thus saith the Lord”! But, we should remember that we have run across other examples of such a thing happening in Scripture. Would we quote the words of the serpent in the Garden of Eden as if they were the words of God? (See Genesis 3:1-4.) If so, we would have had God contradicting Himself! **The fact that something is in Scripture does not guarantee that it is from God or even that it is the truth! (See 1 Kings 13:18)**

261. If you were asked to summarize the real issues behind the rhetoric in the book of Job, what would you say? Was the real question about Job? Or, about God? (See Job 9:24.) Was there any real difference of opinion over God’s omnipotence? Or, sovereignty? Do you think Job should have repented at the end? (Job 1:22; 2:10; 42:1-8) Did Satan agree with God’s judgment of Job? Does he agree with God’s judgment of us?

See the handout on ***Job - What Does It Say About God? “If God Didn’t Do It, Who Did?”***

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