

# The Book of Job

## *Why do the innocent suffer?*

Session Five: God's Answer

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*What is God saying?*  
That was Job's dilemma.

While you were suffering, what was your experience of God? What did He say to you? If God did not speak to you, how did you cope with His silence?

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The Book of Job poses two questions:

1. Why do the innocent suffer?
2. Does your faith depend on reward from God, the carrot and stick approach?

Elihu had mocked Job for expecting God to speak to him. As soon as he stopped speaking though, God started speaking to Job out of the whirlwind.

**Read 38:1-3**

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God says to Job, "Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me."

**Read 38:4-7**

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*In what way have you seen a meticulous, engineering kind of mind behind the Creation?*

**Read 38:8-15**

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God begins with chaos, with a formless void and waters deep.

*How have you seen nature represent wickedness?  
In what way does the chaos evil inflicts on us seem contained?*

**Read 38:25-30; 39:1-4**

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God talks about the earth and the animals living on it, but not of humans.

*What does it mean to us that God cares for the land and for animals?  
What is the symbolism of seven in the lists God gives?*

**Read 40:3-5**

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Job's first response to God. Or rather he doesn't answer God's questions

*What do you do when your question(s) remains unanswered?*

**Read 40:10-15**

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God continues to answer Job and so to justify him.

*How do you see God bringing the proud low?  
In what way does God tread down the wicked where they stand?*

**Read 40:19 - 41:4; 41:11-34**

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What is God telling Job about evil in his second speech?

*How does God creating Behemoth/Leviathan as His first great act make you feel?  
What do you think of Leviathan?*

**Read 42:1-6**

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What do we do with this idea that God unleashed Satan on Job, that only He can control it, and we are not safe near it? Job's responds a second time to all that God has revealed to him. Now he feels energized enough, unburdened enough to answer God's questions!

*What does it mean to you that you can resist evil?*

Paint, sing, write, photograph, do something creative to show your response to God's answer!

**Read 42:7-17**

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God restores Job and Job's family to him. Job learns that it's in the Creation that the innocent suffer and that his faith does not depend on reward from God. He loves God for who He is.

*How did your loved ones react at the end of your suffering?  
How were you able to pray for those who acted like Job's friends, if you could?*

*How were you able to welcome back family members who'd abandoned you while you suffered?*

The Book of Job ends with Job treating his daughters as equals to his sons, maybe even elevates them above his sons.

*In what way has suffering changed the way you treat a particular group of people, a group you perhaps previously ignored?*