

WHAT IF . . . ?

What If You Suddenly Lose Everything?

Job 1:1–3, 6–11, 20–21; 2:1–6, 8–10; James 4:13–16

LET'S BEGIN HERE

Job said, “Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?” (Job 2:10).

There’s an insidious fallacy, a false teaching that plagues Christian theology: if we have enough faith in God and live blameless lives, we as believers can expect health, wealth, and overall prosperity.

The book of Job—the life of Job—flies in the face of such false teaching. *God Himself* characterizes Job as blameless. Even so, Job experiences excruciating trial after trial at the hand of Satan. Everything Job has is snatched from him, yet God demonstrates to Satan His confidence and approval in Job’s character (Job 2:3).

Our circumstances in this utterly sin-besmirched world are *not* accurate reflections of our spiritual standing with God. Job’s life is an Old Testament pre-incarnational perspective on the preeminence of faith in God and a foreshadowing of Jesus, the Suffering Servant who perfectly yielded Himself to the will of God the Father.



Resources to Enhance Your Bible Study

When you study the Bible, a helpful first step is to gather resources that will add theological depth and context. Make certain you have handy a Bible dictionary and a concordance as well as a reliable commentary on the book or topic you’re studying. For this particular message, you may want to supplement your study with a copy of Chuck Swindoll’s book, *Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance*. This easy-to-read work guides readers through Job’s tough themes of senseless tragedy, false accusation, the mystery of God’s will, faith in the face of trial. It’s a fantastic source of encouragement.

If you don’t have a library full of resources, don’t fret. There are fantastic, free online tools at your disposal. Check out biblegateway.com or lumina.bible.org.

Quotable

God doesn’t exist to make you healthy and happy. He exists to glorify His own name. And you are the channel through which the glory comes. Get that.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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Reading different Bible versions can help you glean fresh perspectives from the same passage. If you don't have different versions handy, use biblegateway.com or biblestudytools.com.

Searching the Scriptures in Job

When you survey the shelves of the many genres of biblical literature, you discover that Job belongs in the category of literature known as poetry. Also included in that category are the books of the Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. When studying a passage of Scripture in one of the poetry books, it's important to pay close attention to dialog, repeated patterns, imagery, and figures of speech. Though Job appears in narrative form (basically telling a story), the writer used poetic forms to emphasize meaning. A Bible commentary on Job is an excellent place to start as you explore this fascinating genre of biblical literature.

**YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES**

It's your turn to use the *Searching the Scriptures* methods—*observation, interpretation, correlation, and application*. Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Observation: What Do You See?

Observation is a critical beginning technique you can use to put together the pieces of a passage of Scripture. Paying attention to Job 1 and 2, make some initial observations about what you see; for instance, *are there any repeated words? Did the narrator use any connecting words that offer clues into what he was emphasizing?*

Use the space below to record your observations and discoveries as you look closely at the text. Remember: look for repeated words, commands, questions, emphatic statements, images, or figures of speech. Your notes can be specific and detailed as you examine the passage.



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Interpretation: What Does It Mean?

What does the name “Job” mean? How does this name align with the subject matter of Job 1 and 2? (HINT: This would be a good time to look up *Job* in your Bible dictionary. Read the material presented there to get a wider feel for the kind of literature this book represents and the cultural background surrounding this epic story. Make some notes!)

Read Job 1:1–4, and list the characteristics the narrator uses to describe Job.

Read Job 1:8 and 2:3. How does God describe Job?

Describe in your own words how Satan views Job’s faith in contrast to God. Finding this section of Scripture in a Bible commentary and reading about the dialogue between God and Satan will provide valuable insight as you seek to interpret its meaning.

Paraphrase Job 2:10 in your own words.



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Correlation: How Does It Compare?

Read the following passages, and write a note or two on how they help confirm the meaning of Job 1–2. If another passage of Scripture comes to your mind, write that one down in the margin and include that in your study.

Genesis 50:19–20

Isaiah 53:3–12

John 9:2–3

Romans 5:3–5

2 Corinthians 1:6–7

Hebrews 5:8



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James 1:2–4

James 4:13–16

Application: What Difference Does It Make?

In his message, Chuck highlights four questions to ask yourself in preparing your heart for perseverant faith in God during times of great loss. We encourage you to pray and thoughtfully answer each question:

What kind of person are you becoming? Are you cultivating dependence on God? How do you handle life's tests?

What do you see in the future? How can you make James 4:13–16 a part of your planning?

Can you discern good advice from bad? In times of trial, people will give you all sorts of advice. Do you have a good truth filter?



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How will you respond to suffering? Will you grow bitter and angry? Or will you give yourself space to grieve and still trust and worship God?

In the space below, write out a few specific personalized applications to what you have studied in Job 1–2.



A FINAL PRAYER

Lord of heaven and earth, I submit my life to You. I don't know what will come tomorrow or even at the next moment . . . but I do know that I live to glorify You. Help me to overcome my unbelief and shore up my perseverance, even in the midst of suffering. Help me to lean on You when I don't understand the whys of life. In Your Son's name, amen.



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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



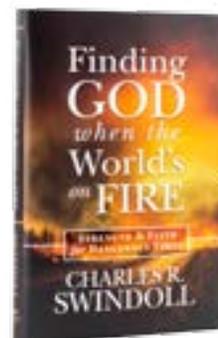
Tools for Digging Deeper



What If . . . ?
by Charles R. Swindoll and
Insight for Living Ministries
Classic CD series



**Help Me Understand:
How the Bible
Speaks to My Pain**
by Insight for Living Ministries
Canada
softcover book



**Finding GOD when the
World's on FIRE**
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For the 2017 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by the Pastoral Ministries Department in collaboration with Mark Tobey, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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