

JOB

A MAN OF HEROIC ENDURANCE

STUDY FIFTEEN

The Passionate Testimony of an Innocent Man

Selections from Job 29–31

Job was a man of integrity before the bottom fell out of his life, a man of integrity when it fell out of his life, a man of integrity after it fell out of his life, and a person who died with integrity. He never compromised.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

CHARACTER is destiny,” said the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus.¹ He was right!

It’s not our family name, our social standing, or the size of our inheritance that determines the course of our life. Neither is it the school we attend, the people we know, or the career we build. Our *character*—our resolve to do what’s right even under pressure—determines whether we lead a worthy life with a legacy that lasts.

At one time, leaders were chosen because of their character, and people implicitly trusted and followed them. But our generation has become jaded, suspicious, and mistrustful. It’s not surprising.

The Watergate scandal in the US in the 1970s shattered our trust in government as a place where leaders always told the truth. Worse yet were the religious scandals of the 1980s. Sexual misconduct, financial fraud, and theological heresy have corrupted God’s house. Somewhere along the way, integrity was abandoned.

Abandoned integrity is not new. Job’s friends assumed Job suffered because he was hiding something, and they lectured him to admit his secret sin. However, despite devastating loss, physical torment, and character assassination, Job’s integrity never wavered.

In his final defense, Job approached the witness stand, raised his right hand, and swore before his eternal Judge that, through the ups and downs of his life, he remained faithful. Let Job’s character inspire you in this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study to always hold on to your integrity, through whatever trials come your way.



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SEARCHING
THE
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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Many years after Job, David petitioned the Lord:

*Declare me innocent, O LORD,
for I have acted with integrity;
I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.* (Psalm 26:1)

In prayer, express your trust in the Lord and invite Him to help you follow Job's example of solid character.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Job 26–31 records Job's ninth speech, and it forms a bookend with his first speech in chapter 3. It also marks the end of the dialogues between Job and Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. To see where this passage fits into the overall flow of the book, review the book chart of Job in our first *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study.

The first section, "Introduction to the Suffering" in Job 1–2, describes God and Satan's conversation in heaven and Job's calamities. Job's friends' arrival launches the current section, "Discussion of the Suffering," chapters 3–31. In the following study, we'll enter the next section of the book, chapters 32–41, as Elihu speaks and then God Himself speaks—leading up to the book's finale in chapter 42.

The passage for this study, Job 29–31, contains Job's final appeal. Step into the courtroom and listen to Job testifying about his innocence. Though silent, God clearly heard Job even if Job's friends didn't.

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Observation: Job's Poetic Speech

Our first task is to observe all that the passage says before moving on to what it means or how to apply it.² Always start observation by looking at the context. Job's earlier journal entry sets the theme:

*I will never concede that you [Bildad] are right;
I will defend my integrity until I die.
I will maintain my innocence without wavering.
My conscience is clear for as long as I live. (Job 27:5–6)*

Beginning in chapter 29, Job defends his integrity by, first, reflecting on the past.

Job Reflects on Past Glory—Job 29:1–25

Read [Job 29:1–25](#). In 29:1–6, Job's focus was vertical and his words were directed toward God Himself. What blessings of God did he pine over? Whom did he fondly remember in 29:5? What feelings do his word pictures evoke in you?

In 29:7–12, 25, Job focused horizontally on his esteemed standing among the people of Uz. Who are mentioned? What images are used to capture the depth of respect, even reverence, for Job?

What benevolent qualities contributed to Job's renown, according to 29:12, 25?

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Job Rehearses His Present Misery—Job 30:1–31

Read [Job 30:1–31](#). How does Job's present situation contrast with his past?

According to 30:1, 9–10, in what ways did Job's community now look down on him and mistreat him? How sad was his plight (Job 30:10)?

Job moved from humiliation before his community to despair before God. According to 30:15, 17, what consumed him?

Once revered in Uz for his benevolence toward others, what was Job's experience when he now needed kindness and help, according to 30:24–28?

How does Job describe his physical condition in 30:30–31? His harp and flute, instruments of celebration, now expressed what?

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Job Reaffirms His Integrity—Job 31:1–31

Read [Job 31:1–31](#). Turning once more to address his integrity, Job asserted his blamelessness regarding two potential pitfalls. First, from what sin did Job’s “covenant with his eyes” keep him, according to 31:1, 9, 11? How does he use wordplay between verses 31:1 and 31:4?

Second, in 31:13–17, Job’s integrity helped him avoid the pitfall of power. What situations did he cite? To whom did he appeal?

In the heavenly and human courtrooms, Job’s closing statement expresses his righteous plea. Paraphrase the content and the tone of his closing statement, found in 31:33–37.

This is the one they once sat with in silence and listened to, and now, “I mean nothing to them. I am a diseased piece of humanity. I am a thing of shame.”
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Interpretation: Job's Oaths and Signatures

Job defended his integrity and innocence before his friends, who kept accusing him of secret sin and presuming his guilt. In their season of life and experience, they should have known better. How did they err? What were their theological flaws? How could they have approached him differently?

Job's rhetorical question, "Have I tried to hide my sins like other people do, concealing my guilt in my heart?" (Job 31:33), may be a reference to Adam and Eve hiding their shame with fig leaves (Genesis 3:7).

How is Job's miserable condition similar to Adam's condition under God's curse? Conversely, how does Job's life differ from Adam's? List as many similarities and differences you can think of concerning their life situations and life choices.

Job crowned his fevered and righteous defense with an unusual statement:

*"Oh that I had one to hear me!
Here is my signature;
Let the Almighty answer me!"* (Job 31:35 NASB)

At the end of Galatians, Paul wrote something similar: "See with what large letters I have *written to you with my own hand!*" (Galatians 6:11 NASB, emphasis added).

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These marks, or signatures, convey authentication, emphasis, and even emotional appeal. It essentially served as one taking an oath. What did Job's oath-taking communicate about the truthfulness and gravity of his defense before God and before his friends? What was at stake?

It is an oath saying, "If these things are true, may God reveal it and cast me down. Take my life. If this is true, then I am guilty." But his point of the oaths, one after another, is, "Not guilty. Not guilty. This is not true of me."
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Life's Peaks and Valleys

Job's poetic but anguished testimony recounted life's peaks and lamented life's valleys. In the Psalms, David did the same. Read his praise in [Psalm 103:1–3, 12](#). For what things did he bless the Lord from the mountaintop of praise?

From what valley of mourning did the psalmist write [137:1–4](#)? What was the Jews' Job-like situation and struggle?

Maybe that explains why all of us have such high regard for Job—a man of integrity before the bottom fell out of his life, a man of integrity when the bottom fell out of his life, a man of integrity after the bottom fell out of his life, and a man of integrity even unto death. He never compromised his integrity. Nothing is better than that. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Application: Principles to Practice

Three principles guide us in our response to trials and give us confidence and courage for living.

First, *reflecting on past blessings gives us reason to rejoice*. Reflecting on blessings helps us contend with misery when it inevitably comes knocking. Don't let present misery eclipse past memory.

Can you recall a special time or experience in your past that fosters good memories? Why was it significant? Can you create a “memorial” to help you regularly recall God’s work in your life? What might it be?

Second, *rehearsing present trials forces us to swallow our pride*. Pride accompanies a jaded culture. Cynicism feeds on pride. Too often we look down on others because we see ourselves as better.

Do you tend to focus more on life’s pains—“write your blessings in sand but engrave your miseries in marble”? If so, why do you think you cling to painful memories? Invite the Lord to help you remember His blessings. What Scripture might He use to encourage you?

Third, *reaffirming our commitment to integrity strengthens us with confidence and courage*. We love Job because after rehearsing his trials he wasn’t defeated. He maintained the confidence and courage to take an oath and boldly defend his innocence. He knew his integrity was intact.

What people or activities help you maintain your personal integrity?

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As you close your study, in a quiet moment of prayer, draw near to the Faithful One, Jesus, whose character stayed pure through His trials. Express your admiration for Him and your trust in Him to keep His promises. Declare your undying commitment to Him who will always stay true to you.



A FINAL PRAYER

Lord, I pray that You will use these ancient words of Scripture to help me reflect and rehearse and reaffirm what is true. Thank You for Your mighty work and for Your Word that instructs me in the truth. Help me now to live it in a new way by Your power and for Your glory. I ask it in the name of Christ my Savior. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Heraclitus, in *Familiar Quotations*, ed. John Bartlett, 13th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1955), 12.
2. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2026 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Marshall F. Davis in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2002, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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