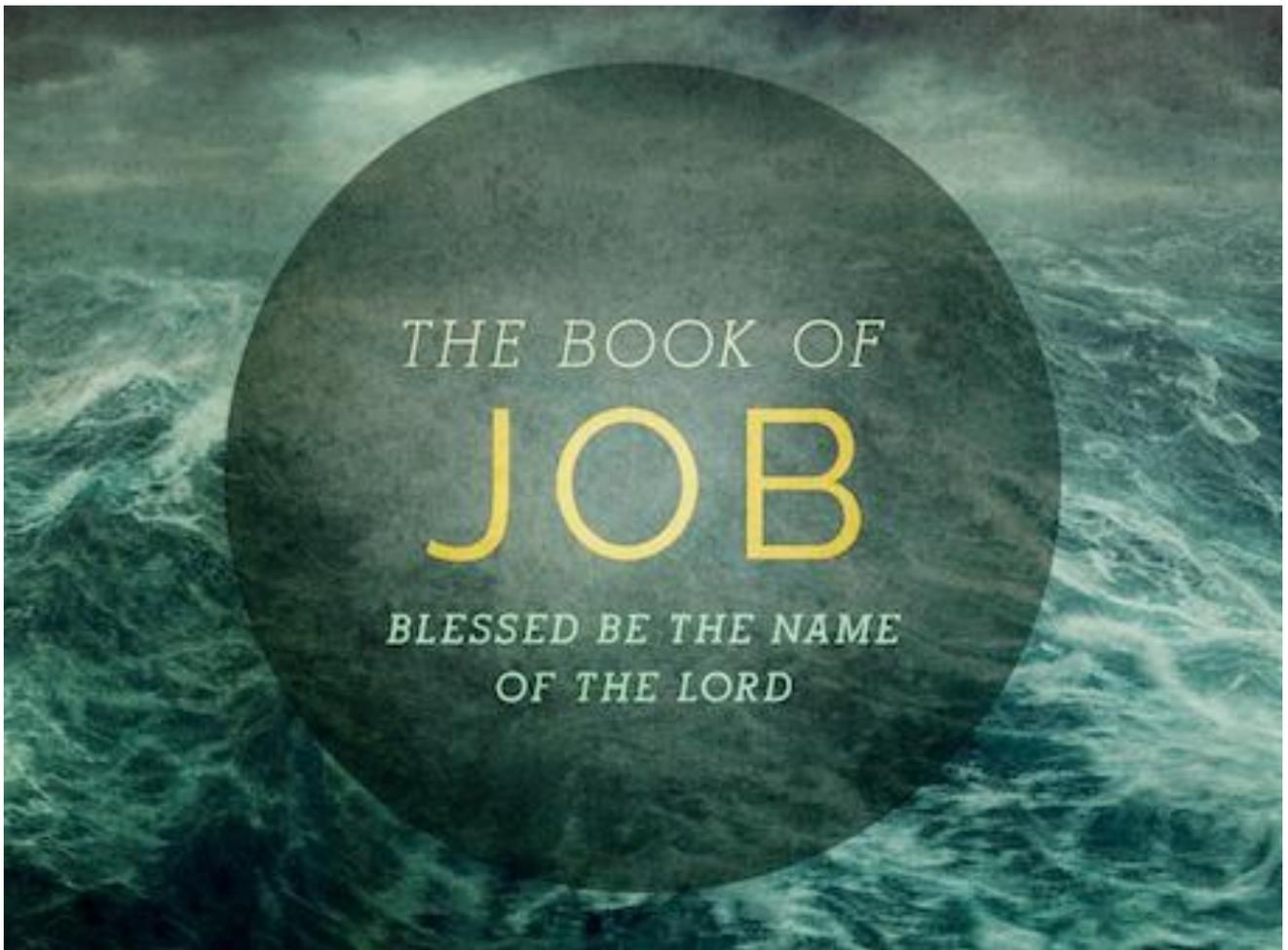




church@the peak

a sydney anglican church



*"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21*



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## BIBLE STUDIES FOR JOB

### PURPOSE OF GROWTH GROUP SERIES

The current sermon and Growth Group series we will be studying is the book of Job. The purpose of these Bible studies is to *follow* the sermon series and therefore allow members of our congregations to further investigate, reflect on and apply what they have heard in the Bible talk the previous Sunday. Given church members will have heard the Bible passage/s explained on Sunday, the studies are deliberately designed to have more application style questions. However, the study will still require group members to engage with the passage in order to draw out the main ideas.

The studies are designed to *help* small group leaders and do not take away from the need for leaders to prepare properly. Leaders will still need to read and reflect on the passage and if necessary engage with a commentary. Growth Group leaders are encouraged to adapt the study to suit the circumstances of their own group or the Bible talk.

We pray you enjoy learning from and applying God's Word so that '*you may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*' (Ephesians 4:12-13)

### RECOMMENDED READING

*The Message of Job*, David Atkison, The Bible Speaks Today, IVP

*Job: The Wisdom of the Cross*, Christopher Ash, Crossway

*New Bible Dictionary*, Inter-varsity Press

*Leading better Bible studies*, R & K Morris, Aquila Press

*Growth groups*, Colin Marshall, Matthias Media

All available at [www.koorong.com.au](http://www.koorong.com.au)

### SERIES BREAK UP

Week 1	Job 1-2	Job's Trials
Week 2	Job 3	Job's Questions
Week 3	Job 4-37	Job's Friends
Week 4	Job 38-42	Job's God

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

The author of Job is unknown. It is neither Job nor his friends. However it's clear however it is divinely inspired given we get to hear the dialogue in heaven between God and Satan.

The date of writing is not known either. However time period from which the story originates (i.e. when Job lived) seems to be around the time of Abraham and the Patriarchs. This is evidenced by Job living for 140 years (42:16); his wealth was measured in cattle (1:3); he acted as priest for his family (1:5); and the raiding of Sabeans (1:15) and Chaldeans (1:17) fits with this time period.

## OVERVIEW

Between the prologue and epilogue is sandwiched an extensive poetic dialogue. Job is introduced in chapters 1–2 as a God-fearing, righteous and prosperous man. However, God allows his piety to be put to the test, after Satan suggests that it is motivated purely by self-interest. As a result, God allows Satan to cause Job to suffer intensely: he is stripped of his wealth, his family and his health in order to determine the integrity or otherwise of his faith. At first, Job praises God, as Job loses his possessions, children and health. But as time goes on, Job struggles with his suffering.

The main portion of the book (3:1–31:40) consists of three cycles of dialogue between Job and his friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. The intentions of Job's three friends are good, but they are hopelessly misplaced. With increasing vehemence his friends maintain that Job is suffering because of personal sin(s). Job's friends tell him to repent and turn back to God. This does not help because sin is not Job's problem because Job knows this is not true. But Job does not understand why he suffers. It does not seem fair to Job. Worst of all, God seems silent. God does not comfort Job. God does not say that Job is innocent.

As a result, Job says many strong things in his suffering (and wrong things too). Mostly he feels dark and depressed. He feels that God is against him. But he never lets go of God (as Satan wants him to). Flashes of deep trust in God shine through in Job's painful words.

After the three cycles of dialogue, a fourth individual offers his explanation. With the arrogance of youth, Elihu restates with more vigour the accusations of the others and takes it upon himself to make a defence for God. Job's friends do not help him. As Elihu's tirade peters out, God himself speaks and humbles Job, showing that His ways are beyond human comprehension and that he does not need the answers to his questions. Instead he learns to trust that his great God is good and just.

In the closing section of the book (42:7-17) Job's friends are rebuked and Job's fortunes are restored, along with long life in which to enjoy them.

**LESSONS FROM JOB**

- God is in control, not Satan
- God is always good and fair
- God only has good plans for his people
- God works 'bad' and painful things for the good of his people
- There is so much we cannot understand because we are not God
- We do not need to understand everything. We do need to trust God in everything
- Knowing God is more important than knowing why
- God has many good reasons for suffering. All of them are good
- The devil tries to use our suffering to turn us away from God. God uses our suffering to turn us to God
- Our suffering is often not because of our sin
- It is easy to sin when we suffer
- When we comfort people who are suffering, we need help from God
- Our suffering will not last forever when we trust in Jesus, the one who suffered for his people. Suffering will end and heaven will come

**STRUCTURE**

<b>Ch 1-2</b>	<b>Job's Trials</b>
1:1-5	Job's happiness
1:6-2:13	Job's trials
<b>Ch 3</b>	<b>Job's Questions</b>
3:1-26	Job's lament
<b>Ch 4-37</b>	<b>Job's Friends</b>
Ch 4-14	First cycle of speeches
Ch 15-21	Second cycle of speeches
Ch 22-25	Third cycle of speeches
Ch 26-31	Job's final response
Ch 32-37	Elihu's speeches
<b>Job 38-42</b>	<b>Job's God</b>
38:1-40:2	God's first speech
40:3-5	Job's reply
40:6-41:34	God's second speech
42:1-6	Job's repentance
42:7-9	God's verdict
42:10-17	Job's restoration



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**MISSION THINKING**

6. Spend some time revisiting your growth group's mission activity.
  - a. Have you developed / agreed on what mission activity you want to do as a group?
  - b. Are there things that need following up from last term?
  - c. Are there things you need to plan for / put in place for term 2?
  - d. Try and work out what might be the 'next step/s' for those who connect with through your mission activity
  
7. Spend some time praying for your groups mission activity
  - a. Give thanks for progress / opportunities so far
  - b. Pray for the people you are trying to reach through your mission activity
  - c. Pray for good conversations and connections with people through your mission activity
  - d. Pray that God would help move your connections to the 'next step' (see above).

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## JOB'S QUESTIONS

### Job 3

#### Read Job 3:1-26

1. After dealing with his suffering in Ch 1-2 in the most exemplary way, what does Ch 3 reveal to us about Job and the circumstances he is enduring?
2. In the pain and rawness of his emotions, what things does Job wish had happened that would have meant he would never had to have suffered such things?
3. What is it in Job's questions in v20-23 that indicate despite his anguish that there is hope beyond his suffering and that he has not given up on God?

#### Application

4. How might Job's lament and hope help us when we (or others we know) are suffering through dark times?
5. How might the suffering of Christ and the darkness he experienced on the cross give us hope in our times of suffering and darkness?

#### PRAYER

Spend some time praying about the lessons learnt, encouragements and challenges from this passage.

**MISSION THINKING**

6. This year we are trying to encouraging one another in our personal mission to our friends as we 'scatter' out and away from church each week.
  - a. Write down (re-write) those friends or contacts you have that you would like to mission to on page 16
  - b. Share with the person next to you how your personal mission to your friends is going (points of encouragement, challenges, points for prayer)
  - c. Spends some time praying for those on your list
    - i. Thank God for your friend /s and the relationship you have with them
    - ii. Ask God to work in them by his Spirit to soften their hearts to the gospel
    - iii. Ask God to give you opportunities to connect and share with them
    - iv. Ask God to give you wisdom and boldness as you connect and share with your friends
  
7. If there is time, share any encouraging stories with the larger group of how God is answering your prayers in your personal mission.

**NOTE:** not every encounter with your friends has to include you sharing the gospel with them. It may be that just catching up with your friend, showing them some love or hospitality is what's best at the moment.

One idea maybe to commit to inviting one of your friends over for lunch or dinner with a couple of friends from church. That way, not, only do you get to introduce them to other Christians but if / when they do visit church they will see some familiar faces.

The important thing is we are bringing our friends and their eternal future regularly before God in prayer as he is the one who works by his Spirit to open people's hearts and minds to the truth about Jesus.

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## JOB'S FRIENDS

### Job 4-37

#### Read Job 4:1-11, 8:1-7 & 11:13-20

1. Chapter 4 begins three cycles of speeches from job's friends (see outline on p4) that essentially say the same thing. What is the essence of the three 'friends' speeches to Job?
2. Why are his friends wrong in their simplistic assessment of God and therefore the suffering Job is experiencing in his life? (refer back to what we learnt Ch 1-2)
3. While Job's friends say many things that are true (e.g. 4:17), the advice they offer Job is also simplistic and misguided. What is wrong about the counsel they give Job?

#### Application

4. What do we learn from Job's friends about how **not** to comfort someone who is suffering through dark times?
5. In what ways do these verses us to be better friends to those who are going through tough times?
  - a. John 3:16
  - b. Romans 12:15
  - c. James 1:19
  - d. 1 Peter 1:3

#### PRAYER

Spend some time praying about the lessons learnt, encouragements and challenges from this passage.

**MISSION THINKING**

6. Spend some time in two's or three's sharing what you have been reading in the Bible lately
  - a. Share something you've learnt or been reminded of about God
  - b. Share something that's God's word has challenged you
  
7. Spend some time praying for one another

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## **JOB'S GOD**

### **Job 38-42**

#### **Read Job 38:1-18**

1. After long winded speeches from Job's friends and responses by Job, God finally speaks to Job in two speeches (see outline on p4). Rather than answering Job's questions about 'why am I suffering like this?' God gives him a different kind of answer. What is the essence of God's response to Job? What does God want Job to understand?

#### **Read Job 40:3-5 & 42:1-6**

2. How does Job respond to God's reminders that he is sovereign over all things?

#### **Read Job 42:7-17**

3. Job's story has a perfect ending, but many who suffer do not. What does God's blessing of Job point to for all those who also repent and trust in God? (refer Ephesians 1:3-8)

### **Application**

4. How might the reminder from these verses that God is sovereignly in charge of all things help us know how to respond in times of suffering?
  
5. Brainstorm as a group all the lessons you have learnt from studying Job over the past four weeks

### **PRAYER**

Spend some time praying about the lessons learnt, encouragements and challenges from this passage.

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**MISSION THINKING**

6. Spend some time getting an update from your link missionary. Break into two or three groups and spends some time praying for them. Pray for
  - a. Their ministry
    - i. Opportunities
    - ii. Points the thank God for
    - iii. Points to petition God for
  - b. Their persona, spiritual and financial needs
  
7. If you have time, why not write a quick email to your link missionary to let them know you prayed for them and giving them an update about your group and church.

## **GROWTH GROUP PRAYERS POINTS**

## **GROWTH GROUP & CHURCH MISSION OPPORTUNITIES AND PRAYER POINTS**

## LINK MISSIONARY

Our growth group link missionary is \_\_\_\_\_

## PRAYER POINTS

## PERSONAL MISSION

### PEOPLE I AM PRAYING FOR

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

**NOTES**