

# Blessed

## A Study of Job for the Suffering Saint

By H. M. Coker

*“As an example of suffering and patience, brothers,  
take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.  
Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast.  
You have heard of the steadfastness of Job,  
and you have seen the purpose of the Lord,  
how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”*

James 5:10-11 (ESV)

## Introduction

Welcome, I am excited to study God's Word with you!

My mom lost both her parents in a relatively short period of time. I remember soon after my grandmother's death she told me that grief comes in waves— a fact which experience has since proven true for me as well. Imagine that you are in the ocean. The grief washes over you like a stormy wave, cold and suffocating. Then, it pulls away. You can breathe again. You can feel the sun. Just when you think everything might be alright, another wave slams into you and smothers you with blinding water. Each wave threatens to toss you about, shatter you against the jagged shore, and eventually drag you out to sea. In this kind of suffering your only hope is a solid rock, a stronghold. The waves will still come, but you will rest secure.

If you have read any of my other work, you know I usually write from where I'm at or where I've just been. In her introduction to *Rose from Brier* Amy Carmichael wrote, "I did not know how to give comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted without giving something of my own soul also. If I had waited till the harrow had lifted, perhaps a less tired mind would have found a better way. But then the book would have been from the *well* to the ill, and not from the *ill* to the ill, which I think is what it is meant to be—a rose plucked straight from the brier."<sup>1</sup> *Blessed: A Study of Job for the Suffering Saint* was written in a season of suffering and was designed to be done in the midst of suffering. It is for when burn-out has taken over, when your cup feels dry, and you know all you can handle, and all you need, is the sweet purity of Scripture. With that in mind, I have tried to keep my own words to a minimum in this study, allowing you to revel in that which gives light and imparts understanding (Psalm 119:130).

You will also find that the study is divided into "Session and Parts" rather than "Weeks and Days." This will hopefully give you permission to spend as much time as you need to complete each session before moving on to the next session. My personal experience in suffering has taught me that through the fog of tears reading even one verse can take twice the time and comprehension comes slowly, but press on, Saints, because when it does come it settles all the more deeply into the store rooms of our hearts ready for times of need. As Isaiah prophesied to Israel, "the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail" (Isaiah 58:11). This conditional promise to Israel has been fulfilled for us in Christ (Matthew 5:17). The water that Jesus gives is a river of living water (Isaiah 12:3, John 7:38). So, come, drink deeply, "and after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called

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<sup>1</sup> Carmichael, Amy. *Rose from Brier* (CLC Publications, 1933), 13.

you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To Him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 5:10-11).

### **Recommendations for completing the study:**

*Blessed: A Study of Job for the Suffering Saint* is divided into sessions which are then divided into five to six parts per session. If you are doing this study with a group, I recommend meeting either weekly or biweekly to discuss each session with your group. If you are doing this study on your own then just take one session at a time, work at your own pace, and don't move onto a new session until you have completed the last. I don't want you to miss a single truth!

### **I would love to hear from you!**

I would love to know you are doing the study! Send me an email by going to the contact page on [www.Surpassing-Worth.com](http://www.Surpassing-Worth.com). If this study has blessed your life, please share it with a friend.

## Session 1: Who will suffer?

### Session 1, Part 1:

**Pray the Word:** Dear Father, you are the God of hope. Please fill me with all joy and peace as I trust in you. Amen. (Romans 15:13)

**Hear the Word:** We will spend the first few weeks of this study observing Job chapters one and two. These chapters are like a ball of yarn, neatly wound. Our goal is to unwind them layer by layer and observe them like following a thread. Today, read Job 1:1-2:13. Read it as you would a book. Don't stop to question the text, just read it straight through to set the stage for the weeks of study ahead.

**Apply the Word:** In my deepest season of suffering, it was the Scriptures I had memorized in the past which the Lord used to initially sustain me in my sorrow. There were times, especially in that initial wave of pain, in which I physically could not read. But the Holy Spirit brought to my mind verse after verse which had been buried in my heart, and I lived on their truth. This week we will memorize Job's verbal response to his suffering. I have included the passage below. Begin by just repeating the verse aloud to yourself three times a day. However, if memorizing feels overwhelming to you in this season, then begin with Job's close, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

*"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return.  
The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away;  
Blessed be the name of the LORD." - Job 1:21b, ESV*

With the remainder of your study time today, journal a prayer to the Lord. Pour out your heart before the Lord; He is a refuge for you (Psalm 62:8b).

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### Session 1, Part 3

**Pray the Word:** Lord, “you make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11). “I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness” (Psalm 17:15b).

**Hear the Word:** Read Job 2:1-13. Then, answer the questions. There are so many beautiful truths in Job chapter one. Don't worry. We aren't skipping over them. Remember that over the next few weeks we will be unwrapping this passage layer by layer.

1. What did the Lord say to Satan in chapter two verse three? (Job 2:3)
2. Has the Lord's description of Job changed since Job 1:8?
3. What occurs in verse seven? (Job 2:7)
4. How severe was the physical affliction? (Job 2:7-8)



**Session 1, Part 4:**

**Pray the Word:** Dear Father, Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of you! How unsearchable are your judgements and how inscrutable your ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” For from you and through you and to you are all things. To you be the glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:33-36).

**Hear The Word:** Was Job’s experience unique to him? Read Hebrews 11:1-40 and answer the questions in the space provided. (If reading this much feels overwhelming for you today, then focus on Hebrews 11:35-40.)

1. Who were these men and women? Were they men and women of faith?

2. What suffering did they endure?

3. According to Hebrews 11, why did they suffer? (Look specifically at Hebrews 11:13-16, 25-26, and 35.)

**Apply the Word:** What are you grieving and suffering today? Write about it briefly in the space provided.

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Job's suffering encompassed financial loss, physical illness, relational strain, and the death of loved ones (Job 1-2). The Old Testament men and women of faith suffered torture, mocking, flogging, chains, and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated, wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. (Hebrews 11:35-38). "These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13). "Refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life" (Hebrews 11:35b). "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2). Tomorrow we will look at the suffering of Jesus.

**Session 1, Part 5:**

**Pray the Word:** Dear Father, You have called me to endure in suffering because Christ also suffered for me, leaving me an example, so that I might follow in his steps (1 Peter 2:19-21). He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled he did not revile in return; when he suffered he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to you, Lord, who judge justly (1 Peter 2:22-23). Jesus bore my sins in his body on the tree, that I might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds I have been healed (1 Peter 2:24). Thank you, Father, and Amen.

**Hear the Word:** We saw yesterday that Moses “considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward” (Hebrews 11:26). Hebrews 12:2-3 exhorts us to look to Jesus and “consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.” What hostility did Christ endure? Read the following passages, and in the space provided, make a note of everything Christ suffered.

A Brief Note of Encouragement: When I first began studying the Bible I strongly disliked cross-referencing. Looking up one passage after another felt tedious. I would think, “Why can’t the Bible study writer just include the passages for me, so I don’t have to do all this page flipping?” But as I have grown, I have learned the value of looking verses up for myself, for reading things in context, and for fitting together piece by piece my still expanding understanding of the greater picture of Christ in Scripture. I have learned that you will get out of cross-referencing what you put into it. So, take your time, dwell on the verses, and let the truth of Scripture bath your battered soul with healing balm.

1. Philippians 2:7b-8

2. Isaiah 53:3-4

3. Hebrews 4:15

4. Matthew 27:24-50

5. What similarities do you see in Job's suffering and the suffering of Jesus? What are the differences you see?

6. Why did Christ suffer? Read the following passages and write your observations.

a. 1 Peter 3:18

b. Isaiah 53:5-6

## c. Hebrews 2:14-18

**Apply the Word:** In Job chapter one, Job had suffered terrible loss, but it wasn't done yet. Job chapter two begins with "again there was a day." From this, we know that some amount of time passed between the events of chapter one and the events of chapter two. The second shoe dropped, and on top of his grieving heart, Job was struck with a severe physical ailment. What about you, Saint? Has sorrow built upon sorrow? Have the punches just kept coming? Are you growing weary and fainthearted? We have seen today that there is another who suffered sorrow upon sorrow. A man despised and rejected by men (Isaiah 53:3). A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces (Isaiah 53:3). He was despised and esteemed stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted (Isaiah 53:3-4). But, unlike you and I and even Job, he lived a sinless life. Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4). "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Hebrews 12:3 instructs us to consider Jesus that we might not grow weary or fainthearted. "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:15b-16). Act in obedience to these passages by spending the rest of your study time today in prayer. If it helps you focus, journal your prayer in the space below.

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**Session 1, Part 6:**

**Pray The Word:** Dear Lord, “I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes” (Psalm 6:6-7). “Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled” (Psalm 6:2). “Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love” (Psalm 6:4).

**Hear The Word:** Yesterday, we studied the suffering of Christ, but what about you? Will you suffer? Does Christ’s suffering for you mean you will now live a life free of suffering? You may know the answer in your head, but how many of us when faced with suffering have cried, “What’s going on? This isn’t supposed to happen! It’s not supposed to be like this.” It is critical you know exactly what the Bible says to expect in life as a new covenant believer, and to believe it in your heart, applying its truth to your walk.

1. Let’s begin by looking at the life of Paul. Paul is one of the most prominent figures in the New Testament; in fact, God used him to write a large portion of it. The wisdom God gave to Paul, the boldness with which he shared the Gospel, and the love with which he loved the church are all deeply inspiring, almost intimidatingly so. Surely this man didn’t suffer, did he? Yes, he most certainly did. In the book of Acts the Lord said of Paul, “he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name” (Acts 9:15-16). In 2 Corinthians Paul issued a very sound rebuke to the Corinthian Church; in the midst of that rebuke, we also gain a litany of the sufferings which Paul experienced in his walk with Christ. Read 2 Corinthians 11:21b-28 and list everything that Paul suffered.

2. In Philippians 3:17 Paul says, “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.” So, what about you and me? What does the Bible teach us about the suffering of every believer? Read the following passages in your Bible and in the space provided write your observations regarding the suffering of believers.

- a. Philippians 1:29-30

Note: The book of Philippians was written by Paul to believers (Philippians 1:1).

- b. Matthew 16:24-27

- c. 2 Timothy 3:12

- d. John 15:18-20

## e. Matthew 10:16-24

**Apply the Word:** How do you respond to suffering? Does suffering surprise you? Are you indignant, fearful, desperate? How *should* you respond to suffering? Later in this study we will spend an entire session observing Job's response to suffering and learning how we should respond in our suffering. However, I don't want to let this first session of study end without giving you a practical step to take in the midst of your current circumstances. When the first waves of suffering struck Job what did he do? Job 1:20-21 says, "Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.'" Whatever you are going through right now, worship God. In your season of suffering, firmly fix your eyes and hope on God. Plant your feet in worship. Choose this as the mountain from which you will wage this battle of suffering. Choose this as the position from which you will fight, right here, with bowed knees and upflung hands of worship. "Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning" (Psalm 30:4-5b).

Below are three Psalms. Pick one, kneel, and worship God aloud with your voice.

- Psalm 145
- Psalm 96
- Psalm 138

I would love to know you are doing the study! Send me an email by going to the contact page of [www.Surpassing-Worth.com](http://www.Surpassing-Worth.com). If this study has blessed your life, please share it with a friend.

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