

STUDY 4

The Heavenly Wager

JOB 1:1-2:10

*I need to be so utterly God's, that he can
use me or hide me, as he chooses, as an
arrow in his hand or in his quiver.*

*I will ask no questions: I relinquish all
rights to him who desires my supreme good.*

—HELEN ROSEVEARE, *Living Sacrifice*

A cursory survey of the history of humankind will reveal that trials are part and parcel of life itself. It is only in the last few centuries, with the advent of industrialization and the comforts and conveniences of modern life, that this reality has been questioned. Why stay hot if air conditioning is available? Why walk when cars are so easy to access? Why wash clothes by hand when reliable washing machines will do the job for you? Why suffer with a headache when you can take a pill? All of these technological advances certainly alleviate many discomforts, but they will never eliminate the fact that life is difficult and all of us must face trials.

Unfortunately, along with our modern appliances and conveniences has come a general attitude that we have a right to a quick and comfortable solution to *any* problem we face. Why

work hard to write a paper for school when paper-writing services are available? Why suffer a minor injury in silence when a lawsuit may make you rich? Why stay in a painful marriage when a divorce is easy to obtain?

In light of our modern context, Job's story may at first seem old-fashioned and out of date. However, a closer look at the substance of his trials shows that his experience is timeless, and his attitude through trials continues to provide a model for us today.

1. In what areas do you struggle with wanting instant solutions to tough problems?

READ JOB 1:1-12.

2. What do you learn about Job's character from these verses?
3. Why do you think Satan was roaming the earth (verse 7)?

READ JOB 1:13-2:10.

4. What examples of Satan's power do you see here?
5. How does Satan's accusation of Job in 2:4-5 differ from his prior one in 1:9-11?
6. Note Job's reactions in 1:20-22 and 2:8-10. How do you think he was able to maintain this perspective?
7. Job attributed his trials to God (1:21). What difference might it have made if he had known about Satan's hand in them?
8. Put yourself in Job's place. Which would have been the hardest test for you to face?

9. What do Satan's responses to God in both encounters show us about Satan's character?
10. In what way was Satan on trial in this passage?
11. In what way was God on trial in this passage?
12. Job never confronted or rebuked Satan or the attacks. Instead, he kept his focus on God's continuing sovereignty and mercy. What are some practical steps you can take to maintain the same perspective as Job?