

Lesson 4.4 - Job: Sin and Suffering

Topic: Peace with God
Key Concept: Sin and suffering
Key Concept 2D. Sin
Key Concept 3B. Integrity

Class: IV (4th grade)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** When asked a question, students will know that if we remain faithful when we suffer, God will reward us. They will be able to give examples from the Bible.

Attitude: Students will remain faithful and trust God to bring them through times of suffering.

Material Needed:
Chalkboard and chalk
Exercise book or paper and pencil
Optional: Drawing materials –paper and colored pencils, markers or crayons

Reference: Job 1:1-2:10; 42:10-13
Memory Work: Proverbs 3:5

Teacher Activities

Introduction: What does it mean *to suffer*? Name some ways that people sometimes suffer. Have you ever wondered why there is pain and suffering? The story of Job helps us understand this.

Bible Story:

1. Tell the story of Job. Use the Bible verses and Teacher’s Notes as a guide.
2. Write this sentence on the board, “Job was faithful because _____.” Talk about why Job was faithful. (He trusted God. He did not blame God. He waited patiently for God to help him. He still loved God even when he lost all his wealth.)

Application: Ask, “What can we learn from Job’s story?”

Evaluation:

Did the students understand that Satan and sin are the source of pain, not God? Did they understand that God does allow Satan to tempt people so He can test our hearts to see if we really love God?

Student Activities

Introduction: “*To suffer*” means to experience something unpleasant. *Answers to the other questions will vary.*

- Bible Story:** 1. Listen to the story of Job and answer questions.
2. *Possible answers:* Job was faithful because he trusted God. He did not blame God. He waited patiently for God to help him. He still loved God even when he lost all his wealth.

Application: *Answers will vary but if students don’t give these answers, add them yourself:*

- Suffering comes from sin and Satan not God.
- If we remain faithful through suffering, God will reward us.

Evaluation: Are students able to name people from the Bible that suffered but remained faithful to God and later were rewarded? Are they able to tell how Job was faithful? Do they demonstrate patience during times of difficulty?

Extension Activities: *Other verses.* Look at other verses that show that Satan is the one who brings temptation and trials: John 10:10; James 1:12-17; Luke 22:31-34.

Writing. Pretend that you are one of Job’s three friends. Job asks, “Why is this happening to me?” Write down what you would tell Job now that you know what God said to him.

Draw a picture. (Materials: paper and drawing tools—pencils, colored pencils, crayons or markers.) Have each student draw a different scene from the story of Job. Some students could draw him with all his wealth at the beginning. Have different students draw different things that happened to Job: The Sabeans stole his donkeys and oxen and killed his servants. The sheep and those who were watching them were burned up with fire. The Chaldeans stole his camels and killed more servants. A big wind came up and knocked over the house where his sons and daughters were and they were all killed. Job had painful boils on his skin. Have someone draw Job with twice as much wealth as he had in the beginning. Put the pictures together to make a book, mural or bulletin board.

Memory Verse: Discuss the verse. Did Job know what was happening in heaven between God and Satan? No. We don’t always know what is going on either. We must be like Job and trust God even when we don’t understand it. Practice saying the verse to a partner.

Notes for Teacher

The story of Job is difficult even for adults because it doesn’t give us a simple answer to why Job suffered. It just tells us that Satan requested the right to test Job and God allowed it. It speaks of God’s sovereignty and the uncertainty of life. The story will help students understand the on-going conflict between good and evil which causes much suffering in the world. Take your time and encourage the students to talk about the verses. If they ask questions you can’t answer, be honest and say, “I don’t know.”

Key Point: Satan and sin are the source of pain and suffering, not God. If we stay faithful to God even in times of difficulty we will have a heavenly reward.

Bible Story: Review the story below until you can say it in your own words. The bold is what they teacher would say.

Job was a man who was very rich and very blessed. Then one day he began to have lots of problems. He didn’t understand why he was suffering so much.

The book of Job helps us understand a little bit about pain and suffering by showing us what was going on in heaven when Job was suffering.

Have a student read Job 1:1-3. **What do we know about Job from these verses?** (The people in the Bible measured their wealth by how much livestock they had and how many children they had. Job is a very wealthy man because he has lots of both. He was also a good man, “careful to do no evil.”) Read or have a student read Job 1:6-7. **“The heavenly beings” means angels. Just as God made people to be His friends on earth, He made angels to serve Him in heaven. When have we read about Satan before?** (Satan is the one who tempted Eve to take a bite of the apple God told her not to eat. That caused her to sin.) **Satan means adversary or enemy. He was created by God as an angel but he became proud and tried to take over in heaven. He is now known as God’s enemy or adversary. He went down to earth and tempted Adam and Eve. If they had refused to listen to Satan and told him to leave, he would have had to leave because God gave Adam control over everything in the Garden.**

Did Adam tell Satan to leave the Garden? (No, he and Eve disobeyed God and did what Satan wanted.) **Because Adam obeyed Satan instead of God, he lost control of the Garden and Satan was allowed to stay on earth and continue to cause trouble.**

In this verse the angels are coming to report to God on their activities. God seems to be acting like a magistrate or judge. What is a judge (or magistrate) supposed to do? (A judge uses the law to determine who did right and who did wrong.)

Read verses 9-12. **Satan is saying that God is not being fair. Why does he think that?** (Satan says that Job would not be God's friend if God didn't give him so many good things. Some people only want to obey God when things are going good.)

If you had a friend and you wanted her (or him) to give you something that was hers, would you get angry if she said "no"? Does God have a right to give good things to us? Does He have a right to take away those good things if He wants to? These are hard questions but a good friend will still be your friend even if you say "no" sometimes. God has the right to give us good gifts but He doesn't have to. He had given Job a lot of good gifts. Satan wants God to let him take away all the good things and see if Job will still love God.

Have different students read the next verses (Job 1:13-20). **What were all the things that happened to Job?** (Have students list them: The Sabeans, an enemy tribe, stole his donkeys and oxen and killed his servants. The sheep and those who were watching them were burned up with fire. The Chaldeans, another enemy tribe, stole the camels and killed more servants. A big wind came up and knocked over the house where his sons and daughters were and they were all killed.)

Read Job 1: 20-21. **How did Job react to all this bad news?** (Tearing the clothes is a sign of grief. He was grieving but he did not get angry with God. He fell on his knees and worshipped God.)

Read Job 2:3-5. **What do you think Satan will do now? Let's read on to see what happens.** Read Job 2:7-10. **What are boils?** (sores on your skin) **Has anyone ever had one? Do you remember if it hurt? Job's boils hurt a lot.**

Notice that the Bible says Job did not sin. Some Bibles say, "He was still faithful." What does it mean to be faithful? (You do what you are supposed to do. You can be trusted.) **Some Bibles say, "Job kept his integrity." What is integrity?** (It means being honest but it is more than that. It means that you are transparent. You are good on the inside and on the outside. Even if people can't see you being good, you do what is right all the time. God can always see us and He knows not only if we are doing right but also what we are thinking. Job did not get angry with God. He still worshipped God. He was faithful and he kept his integrity.)

The rest of the book tells how three friends came to comfort Job but they weren't much help. They say Job must have done some bad sin to have all these bad things happen. Was that true? (No, we read that Job was good and careful not to do anything evil.)

Job says, "I did not sin. I don't know why I am suffering." Do you sometimes wonder why you are sick or why you are suffering? We don't always know, do we? Sometimes it is because we did something we should not have done. Other times it is because someone else is sinning and they are deliberately hurting us. But sometimes there doesn't seem to be any reason why we are suffering.

Job didn't know that Satan wanted to tempt him to hate God. We don't always know what is going on so we have to just keep trusting God. Job trusted God. Does anyone know what happened to Job in the end?

Job asked God lots of questions about what was happening and why. He asked God to speak to him and answer his questions. God did speak to him but He didn't answer his questions. God told Job that he was just a man and could not understand everything that God does. Do we always understand what God is doing? (No, even adults don't understand everything.) **Many times in the Bible God would call someone to do something special and then there would be a time of testing and trials before God fulfilled His promises to them. God allows us to be tempted to see if we will be faithful and still trust Him. Can anyone think of other people from the Bible who were tested before God fulfilled His promises?** (If they cannot think of anyone remind them of these:

- Noah was teased and ridiculed for many years as he built the ark.
- Joseph was promised that he would rule over his brothers but first he was sold into slavery and imprisoned for something he didn't do.
- David was anointed king and then he had to run for his life and live in caves to keep from being killed by Saul.
- Abraham was promised a son but he had to wait many years before God gave him Isaac.)

God was angry with Job's friends because they said Job sinned and that wasn't true. He told Job to make a sacrifice for his friends and forgive them. Job forgave his friends. Now turn to the end of the book and let's see what happened to Job in the end. Read Job 42:10 & 12-13. What does it mean to "make someone prosperous"? How do you know that Job was prosperous again? (Job became very wealthy again. God doubled all the animals that Job had before. Job had twice as many sheep, camels, cattle and donkeys. He had the same number of sons and daughters as he had before.)

How did God reward Job for being faithful? (He blessed him with wealth and more children.) **What can we learn from this lesson?** Students answers may vary but here are some possible lessons to be learned from the story of Job.

- Satan is the one who causes problems—his goal is to steal, kill and destroy.
- Satan cannot do anything if God does not permit it.
- God allows Satan to tempt us and test us to see if we will be faithful.
- We need to be faithful and trust God even when we are suffering.
- In the end, God will reward those who are faithful to Him. (Some people get their reward on earth but God has promised us that everyone who is a friend of God and is faithful on earth will get a reward in heaven. In heaven there is no more suffering.)
- If we give in to the sin of resentment and anger, we dishonor God. (Sometimes people will turn away from God when they do not receive earthly riches they think they deserve. None of us deserve earthly riches but God gives us blessings anyway.)
- If we are faithful with what we have and continue to trust in His sovereignty, we can trust God for the reward of eternal life without suffering.

Satan causes people to sin. How do you think God feels about that? (Yes. God is sad that Satan can cause so much trouble but He doesn't want to take away our right to choose who we will serve. We either serve God or we serve Satan. Satan may not like it if you serve God and he may cause trouble for you. That is what happened to Job. Never blame God for the pain and suffering on earth. God is good and it is sin that let evil into the world.)