

**JOB SERIES ONE**  
**THE PAWN WHO MOVES UP (DOWN) THE BOARD TO BE KING**  
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**JOB 1:1-12; REVELATION 12:10; JOHN 10:10; EPHESIANS 6; 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13**  
**(Sermon-1582)**

READ JOB 1:1-12

We live in troublesome times.

■ SLIDE #: From the fall of the World Trade Center Towers

■ SLIDE #: to the murderous fall of three innocent nursing professors this week, we live in an age of uncertainty and suffering. Welcome to Job's world.

For the next several Sundays Glenn and I will explore with you the problem of undeserved suffering. This age-old problem has flowed unanswered for many since the dawn of mankind. It is no accident that the first chronologically written book of the Bible lays out some guidelines for solving this universal puzzle.

■ SLIDE #: Joseph Parker speaking to young ministers: "A broken heart is in every pew. Speak often on suffering and you will never lack for a congregation."

Suffering, pain, and affliction are never out of date.

■ SLIDE #: When Scott Peck picked up his pen to write "The Road Less Traveled", he began with a three word blunt sentence: "*Life is difficult*".

■ SLIDE #: When the writer to Job picked up his stylus to write his book, he, too, could have begun with a blunt three-word sentence: "Life is unfair".

Life is difficult. Most of us have learned to handle difficult. But, what about when life is unfair? Something makes unfair almost intolerable for us. Our drive for justice overrides our patience in pain.

■ SLIDE #: You're born Canadian. Skated for as long as you remember, dream of making Olympics. Skate well – Teacher, partner, the two of you skate along with dreams of being at Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympics. Your moment comes. Your routine, you do it better than ever before. Know it was a gold-medal performance. Until you see the scores – and your heart sinks. Life is difficult. You'll get silver and another will get the gold.

In a few hours you find out that the judging was fixed and unfair. One judge will be removed. When you find out it was unfair, you were cheated. That's a whole different subject. You can't bear the thought of not getting what you have coming—it was judged unfairly.

■ SLIDE #: Single parent, move with three kids 1200 miles to Tucson for job with Baptist Foundation of AZ. Invested life savings, get job, lose job. You lose everything. Now notice lump under left breast. Biopsy – advanced stage of cancer. Oh, by the way, I forgot to mention, three years ago your husband ran off with his secretary and they're doing great. They have new cars and fine jobs and no kids. You move in with aging parents, neither healthy and the home just has three bedrooms. It isn't fair. It isn't fair.

Welcome to Job's world. And to think some folks believe the Bible is not relevant.

■ SLIDE #: Eugene Peterson: "It is not only that Job suffered that troubles us, it's undeserved suffering. In our growing up years we all disobeyed our parents and were punished for it. When discipline is connected with wrongdoing it has a certain sense of justice to it. When we do wrong we get punished.

■ SLIDE #: One of the surprises as we get older, however, is that we discover that there is no real correlation between the amount of wrong we commit and the amount of pain we experience.

■ SLIDE #: An even larger surprise is that it is often quite the opposite. We do right and get knocked down. We do the best we are capable of doing and just as we are reaching out to receive our reward we are hit from the blind side and sent reeling.”

That is the story of Job! Life was not only difficult, life was absolutely, categorically unfair.

■ SLIDE #: *Job 1:1: In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.*

■ SLIDE #: Job lived in the land of Uz. Uz is located in the Midwestern United States, near Kansas, just a little north, south, east and west of the land of Oz. Just kidding.

■ SLIDE #: [ map of Uz from Jensen page 4]. Present day Iraq and Jordan.

Job dates back to the days of Genesis. Written during the days of the Patriarchs. Contemporary with Abraham

You may not know the story of Job so allow me a few moments for a quick analysis. Let's take a moment and OVERVIEW THE BOOK so we will know where we are going.

Job is a man of unparalleled piety and well-deserved prosperity. He is a good and rich man – a fine husband and a faithful father—in wonderful health for a 60-year-old.

Unbeknownst to Job, behind the scenes, God and Satan are locked in a battle of truth, justice and the Kingdom of God way. Job becomes a pawn in the battle.

In a quick and brutal sweep of calamities, allowed by God, but engineered by Satan, Job is reduced to a twisted mass of brokenness and grief. He is left penniless, homeless, helpless, childless—and healthless.

Standing beside ten fresh graves on a windy hill, his wife heaving in sobs beside him, having lost all Job says in faith, “The Lord gives, the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” His wife bitterly whispered, “Just curse God and die.”

■ SLIDE #: Country preacher beginning study on Job. “I can't eat by day, I can't sleep at night, and the woman I love doesn't treat me right.”

And the only thing funny about the story is the title. There is no laughter in Job.

Three friends arrive with plans to comfort him. First, they don't recognize him, which tells us something of the swelling and sores all over him. Then, at a loss for words, they sit and stare wordlessly for seven days. Unfortunately, when they spoke they switched from their comforting intentions to massive condemnation.

For over thirty chapters in three philosophical cycles (which we will summarize in three sermons), they explain with condemnation that Job's plight is all his fault.

■ SLIDE #: Eliphaz: “You are suffering because you sinned.” His name means, “God is dispenser.” He is the scientist of the group. He is noble, sincere, wise, polite and considerate. He is the spokesman for the group.

■ SLIDE #: Bildad: “You won't admit you sinned, so God is sending more suffering.” His name means, “Son of Contention.”

■ SLIDE #: Zophar: “Your sin is so bad you even deserve more suffering than this.” His name means, “Rough.” He is the oldest. He is a blunt spoken moralist. He often displays a “holier-than-thou attitude.”

Job’s friends missed the opportunity to go down in history as the most sensitive men of all time. Sat in silence for seven days, then opened their mouths and spoiled it.

Sensitivity in the presence of grief usually makes us more quiet, more silent.

Joe Bayly: *The View from a Hearse* after losing three children in a row.

“The summer after our 18-year-old son died our 16-year-old daughter went to a Christian summer camp. A minister, in the presence and with the silent acquiescence of the camp director told our grieving daughter, “Your brother need not have died if only your parents had had more faith. It is not God’s will for one to die before the age of 60. When our daughter told this to us in a letter I thought about one who died in His early 30s, one who loved children enough not to hurt them.”

Pay close attention to the words you use with the grieving and the hurting. Stay quiet. Grief is a deep river, strong current sucking many people under, They don’t need snags to hold them under.

■ SLIDE #: Job responds to each: “It is not my fault. I have done nothing wrong.” He has flashes of insight mixed with depression, self-condemnation, pain—and great faith.

Then one more “friend,”

■ SLIDE #: Elihu enters the discussion. His name means, “He is my God.” He gives the best diagnosis to Job’s plight with two themes: Look up: “Sufferings are often God’s way of refining the righteous,” and, “Your sin is pride. You are really not as good as you think. You must deal with your pride.”

When Elihu finishes, Job is speechless. Job couldn’t see his heart for what it really was. He needed Elihu’s evaluation, but he needed God to complete the process of seeing himself from God’s perspective.

■ SLIDE #: Beginning in chapter 38 God finally speaks. He asks Job 77 questions about science and life for which Job has no answer. It is as if God said: “Since you can’t answer my questions, who are you to question My motives and sovereignty? The issue all along was trust. I wanted to know if you served me for Who I am and not what you received from me?”

In Chapter 42 Job realized that God was there all along through his suffering. Job passed the test. God then used Job to minister to the three “friends” and then restored his possessions.

NOW, LET’S EXAMINE OUR TEXT.

■ SLIDE #: *Job 1:1: In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.*

“Blameless” doesn’t mean “perfect”. It means he did not compromise with moral evil. Respected both in and outside the family.

■ SLIDE #: *Job 1:2: He had seven sons and three daughters,*  
When we pick up the story they are all grown. This is a grandfather’s life at its best.

■ SLIDE #: *Job 1:3:and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East.*

7000 sheep – Wool for clothes and meat to eat.

3000 camels – I imagine Job ran a trucking business for the caravans from east to west. These camels were for hire and for personal transportation.

500 yoke of oxen – that means 1000 of them. Two yoked together to plow fields for successful crops.

500 female donkeys. Why? Donkey milk was a delicacy of the day.

Over and above all of this is a family all grown. No diapers to change, no baths to give, no car pools, no sack lunches to prepare, no boys with tattoos driving vans showing up out front honking for their daughters. No daughters with nose rings and pierced belly buttons.

These are all grown kids. This guy is rich and he has it made and no one is criticizing – because there's nothing to criticize.

Today – Bill Gates, Donald Trump, Ross Perot and Billy Graham all wrapped up into one.

You will notice, he did have his concerns.

■ *SLIDE #: Job 1:4: His sons used to take turns holding feasts in their homes, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.*

■ *SLIDE #: Job 1:5: When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts."*

Perhaps a little bit of profanity, or an off-colored story told in the fasting. Job is so concerned not only for his own walk but for the walks of his children.

If you have a parent like Job, give God thanks. Give God thanks that you have parents, or one of them that care for your spiritual life.

This is a sparkling resume of a good man. Job is a praying man, trusting man, priestly man, faithful man, family man and godly man.

If this were a film, there would be a slow fade-out at the end of verse 5. We sit in darkness for a few seconds and then a bright new scene appears.

If this were a stage play the curtains would close at the end of verse 5. The audience is given a moment to stretch as behind the curtain the stage hands change the scenery from earth to heaven.

That night Job goes to sleep. Without Job's knowledge, another scene is playing out in the heavenlies.

■ *SLIDE #: Job 1:6: One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.*

God is sitting in his throne room to use our term. The seraphim are there who fill the presence of God with the flutter of their wings. Angels there to do His will.

But there is an intruder. He is identified in Hebrew text as "the Satan." "Ha-Satan." The Judas of the group. The Satan of the group.

Satan is not in hell. Why would he want to be there? It is a horrible place. It is prepared for the devil and his angels. He not go there until the end of time when he is cast into the Lake of Fire.

"Satan" means to be an "adversary, to resist." The adversary or "The Accuser".

■ *SLIDE #: Revelation 12:10: Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down."*

“Accuser of the brethren”. Sure it would include the “sistern” as well.  
He accuses God’s people day and night.

Remember that Satan is not an imp in a red suit with a pitchfork sitting on your shoulder whispering nothings in your ear. That is a medieval caricature that Satan would love for you to believe. He’s the most attractive, brilliant, powerful arch-angel that God ever created. He has not lost his brilliance, his power, his beauty. He is insidious and his favorite method is behind the scenes (occult). Because he is invisible does not mean that he is not real. He is engaged in wholesale commitment to ruining God’s people and destroying God’s plan.

■ SLIDE #: *JOB 1:7: The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it."*

The Satan has access to this planet as well as to the heavenlies. He moves about and his demonic forces as well. If we could see his demonic forces we would be at least sick, frightened, may never laugh again. Until you were also able to see the angelic presence.

Satan is not omnipotent. He does have random access. He is a supernatural being. The material world which holds us in check does not apply to him. Move from Asia to America, Mexico to North Pole in a split second. Those kinds of things do not restrain spiritual beings. Same will be true in our spiritual bodies.

■ SLIDE #: *JOB 1:8: Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."*

Greatest thing about Job is that he is a servant of God. If Lord and Satan were considering you, would you use the word “servant” to describe you? I hope so.

■ SLIDE #: *JOB 1:9: "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied.*  
Talk about penthouse perks. Look at what he has! Watch closely.

■ SLIDE #: *JOB 1:10: "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land."*

This is an astounding statement. Look at the categories.  
Protected him in his body.  
Protected him in his family.  
Protected him in his possessions – All he owns.

“You’ve not only protected him. You’ve blessed the work of his hands.”  
The accuser points out divine favoritism. The audacity of that! Who wouldn’t worship you!?

■ SLIDE #: *JOB 1:11: But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."*

“Instead of treating him like an overindulged child, why don’t you treat him like everyone else on earth? Let him feel the pain of disease, loss of possessions, suffering death of a child. You’ll see what Job’s made of. He’ll curse you to your face.”

■ SLIDE #: *JOB 1:12: The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.*

That is a frightening thought. Look at the permission slip he issues to Satan. God puts a caveat: "Don't touch his body, "soul", mind. You can touch his possessions and family. But leave him alone.

I know, some of you are still hung up on how did the intruder get in? Right. I don't know. Now let's go on.

There are a lot of these things I don't know. I just know what's written and I accept them. There was a time in my life I had answers for questions nobody was asking. Used to have a lot of speculations.

We're never told why. We have all sorts of commentators give their opinions but they're worth nothing more than your opinions – or mine.

So why waste our time with opinions? The fact is Satan is allowed in, and Satan is allowed this moment of bargaining – and God for some profound, unrevealed reason says, "I'll take you up on it."

LET'S APPLY WHAT WE'VE HEARD. I FIND FOUR PRINCIPLES FROM THESE FIRST TWELVE VERSES THAT HELP ME TODAY.

Worth remembering – someday you may need them.

■ SLIDE #: 1. WE FACE AN UNSEEN, GOD-HATING ENEMY WHO WOULD LOVE TO DESTROY US. FORTUNATELY, WE ARE NOT DEFENSELESS.

Don't mean to frighten you, but I do mean to educate you. Get past your empiricism. Many trained that if you can't see it, it isn't real. "Nonsense," is my answer to that. Some of the most real things in life you'll never see. We have a very real enemy.

He has a strategy to trick you and ultimately bring you down – to destroy your testimony and to bring you down. John 10:10 – If it takes ruining your family relationships, he'll go there. If it takes tempting you to cut corners in your business, he'll go there...

New Testament truth – we're not defenseless – Ephesians 6.

Limited-under God's control  
Way of escape 1 Cor 10:13: way of escape  
Eph 6 armor

The accuser of the brethren is out to destroy us, but the Savior is praying earnestly for us.

Luke 22:31-32: Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

"Greater is He (Christ) in you than he who is in the world (Satan)." In the name of Christ we are able to withstand and restrain the attacks. Walk very sensitively with Christ this week.

■ SLIDE #: 2. LIFE IS NOT FAIR. THERE ARE TRIALS WE ENDURE THAT WE DO NOT DESERVE. MOURN AND RECEIVE COMFORT FOR YOUR HURTS AND LIVE ON.

Lady at 40 with second chapter of life.  
Aaron Schleutter

Imaginary lady didn't deserve to have husband walk out on her, etc., lost job, physical report. She was a hard-working single mother trying to raise three kids under the age of 15, but it was all permitted. That's XXXXX XXXXX isn't.

■ SLIDE #: 3. GOD HAS PLANS FOR OUR LIVES THAT HE CANNOT REVEAL. NOTHING IS OUT OF CONTROL. WE MUST TRUST HIM AS WE LIVE OUR LIVES IN THE DARK.

Do not try to unscrew God's inscrutability. Do not try to grasp His profound plan. That's a waste of time. And because you will not be able to do that you will become increasingly more angry, resentful and finally bitter and than Satan will have won the day. Accept it! Accept the trial as permitted by God. Nothing passes through my life that is not first permitted by God. Nothing.

James 1 and 1 Corinthians 13:12: glass darkly

God's cosmic plan is at work and He doesn't feel the need to explain it all to us now. If He tried, out answer would be like the student looking at his calculus teacher, "What?" You wouldn't get it and neither would I.

■ SLIDE #: 4. GOD PROVIDES US A HEDGE OF PROTECTION. SO DON'T BE STUPID. STAY INSIDE IT.

"The angel of the lord encamps around those who fear God and he rescues them."

■ SLIDE #: Picture of Christ standing in the middle of a large meadow. The fence around the meadow enclosed many sheep. But there were small flocks of sheep outside the fence, removed from safety and security. Demons were trying to get the sheep inside the fenced meadow but were prevented. The sheep outside the perimeter, however, were fair game.

Some of you are thinking, "Don't quit." Well, not all of you, but some of you are thinking, "Don't quit here."

We have to. It's enough to digest for now.

Many of us are now experiencing something we don't deserve. We didn't ask for it, anticipate it, think it would come. We've done our best, kept our part, maintained our bargain and look at what's happened! It is all right. We've moved onto Job's turf.

And if nothing else it has prepared you to pay close attention to the teaching of this book. It has something for us all."

If you don't know Christ, He's ready for you today. Come to Him today who paid the penalty for our sins.

Pray with you in the prayer room.

Father, we realize that we've spoken about a number of our situations. Plans underway that will reduce us and break us and humble us and who knows why. Your plan is to ultimately purpose us to be like Christ. We need your strength to go through this road less traveled. We understand that a life unfair or undeserved is still orchestrated by a God who loves us and has our best at heart. Some to discipline us and some to reshape us. All of it for his glory for your good. Prepare us for what is open before us this week. Find us humble and trusting. In Jesus' Name – and everyone said, "Amen."