

2021 BIBLE DISCOVERY GUIDE

# MAY

JOB — PSALMS



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### Contributors

Rod Hembree  
Corie Bobeckho  
Ryan Hembree  
Janice Hembree  
Matlock Bobeckho

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# A Time of Distress

Pain is an amazing motivator. If we assess how much money we spend on reducing or avoiding pain in our lives, we would be surprised how much of our resources are used.

This month, we begin the journey through the book of Job. There are three points that we will address: (1) How do we respond to pain? (2) How do we react when we lose control? (3) Do we trust God? All three of these questions are answered beautifully in one of the oldest books of the Bible.

The time of Job was likely set before Moses had been given the Law. Job was a great man of faith, a faithful husband, and an amazing father. He had such concern for his children that Job frequently sacrificed to the LORD on their behalf for protection and provision. Clearly, Job was a man of God. So, how did Job lose everything: his children, his health, his reputation, his status? The most important question is: why did Job lose everything? Job was a man

of God. Isn't God supposed to protect those who love and cherish Him?

The story of Job is also set outside the confines of this world. While the main stage takes place here on earth, there is a spiritual backdrop for why these things are happening. God Himself is the One who brought Job up to satan, to which satan responds, *'You're just protecting him!'* God claims that Job will love and serve Him no matter what.

As we read this story, pray that the Holy Spirit moves in our mind, in our heart, in our soul, and gives us strength to hear what God is saying. This is the story of God's overcoming power in a time of great distress, and then is followed by the revitalizing and soothing power of the Psalms.



Rod Hembree, Th.D, DE.



**CHARLES ROD HEMBREE** is the founding pastor of *Good Friends Fellowship* in Ontario, Canada. He brings his extensive production background and Biblical training together to serve the Body of Christ as the Executive Director of Bible Discovery.

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# How to use this Guide

Make the most of your devotional time with our Guide to the Bible in a year. Each Guide provides valuable context and theological insight to help strengthen your faith and dig deeper into the richness of God's Word every day.

The following three tips will help you make the most of your daily Bible reading and Guide:



## SPOTLIGHT ON...

In every Guide, you'll find a section with specific highlights from the perspectives of history, apologetics, theology, and more. These viewpoints provide a holistic context from which to view the month's Bible reading, giving us a greater understanding of the Word, and equipping us to grasp the impact of the Bible in these important fields.



## DAILY READING

The readings are in traditional order, with a date corresponding to the Hebrew calendar. Each reading consists of a daily insight and a focus on three major takeaways from the day's Bible passage. Challenge yourself to meditate on the *Discovering The Truth* and *Today's Prayer* sections as you go about your day.



## WATCH THE DAILY SHOW

Catch our companion TV series for even more valuable insight and theological discussion, hosted daily by the Hembree family. Join Rod, Janice, Ryan and Corie in this thirty-minute devotional show that will change the way you see and read the Bible. Visit **BibleDiscoveryTv.com** to watch our show online or to find a TV channel in your area.



# Relativity vs. Revelation

by Ryan Hembree



**A**lthough Albert Einstein's theories of general and special relativity were very important developments in our understanding of how the universe operates, infinitely more important is God's unveiling of Himself through both general and special *revelation*—that is, revelation through Creation as well as revelation through His Word, the Bible.

One of the places in Scripture these two modes of revelation are beautifully displayed is in Psalm 19. In fact, in this Psalm there is a very clear division between verses 1-6 and verses 7-14 which are, by design, placed in juxtaposition in order to compare and contrast general revelation (v.1-6) and special revelation (v.7-14).

According to this Psalm, both modes of revelation are legitimate ways in which God reveals Himself, yet special revelation is undoubtably greater than general revelation.<sup>1</sup> This is because while general revelation only provides basic and broad information *about* God (i.e., God exists), the special revelation of God's Word gives us the specific information we need to *know* God (i.e., Trinity). Because nature speaks no words it is naturally subjective or relative and must be interpreted.

Psalm 19:3 seems to especially attest to the silent witness of Creation. Indeed,

although the NKJV translation of this verse implies otherwise—"There is no speech nor language *where* their voice is not heard"—the italicized word "where" isn't present in the original Hebrew. Though added for clarity, many translators believe it shouldn't be there and thus be rendered, "There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard" (NASB). In other words, "the testimony of the heavens is a silent, non-verbal, witness. In contrast, the Bible gives us the very words of God, dynamically transforming words."<sup>2</sup> Additionally, while the Scriptures are "perfect" and "pure" (PSALMS 19:7, PROVERBS 30:5), the current Creation is imperfect and impure because it is under God's curse (GENESIS 3).

Of course, even in its current state, studying nature and God's creation through science remains a legitimate mode of revelation, to know that God is real. However, this awareness about God should lead a person to want to know God and, therefore, it must be subject to and interpreted in light of the authoritative Scriptures.■

## SPOTLIGHT FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Danny Faulkner, *The Created Cosmos*, 268

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 269

# Ancient Pottery

by Corie Bobechko



A very natural association is made in the Bible between God and the professional potter. The Biblical belief of God creating man from the dirt of the ground (GEN 2:7) mimicked the creative act of the potter, who after sourcing natural clay, then formed it and fired it to make a useful thing. This creative comparison between potters and God is made in books like Job coming from the mouth of Elihu, “I am just like you before God; I was also pinched off from a piece of clay.” (JOB 33:6) and Jeremiah coming from the mouth of God, “Just like clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, house of Israel.” (JEREMIAH 18:6)

The craft of forming and firing pottery is extremely ancient, the raw clay is either dug from the ground or settled out of clay sediment rich waters, depending on where you were in the world. The clay would then be hand cleared of any impurities like stones or sticks, mixed with water to the perfect consistency and kneaded by foot in large piles, to rid it of air bubbles and achieve good forming texture. The potter would then form his vessels. There were several ways to do this: by hand and with scrapers and sticks to beat, while using mats or wheels to turn, and/or holes in the ground to help shape the clay.

During the Biblical time period, potters in the

ancient Middle East generally used wheels, some turned by apprentices for the potter and others turned by the foot of the potter. Once a vessel was just the way the potter wanted, it was pinched off of the wheel by hand, knife, or string and set aside to dry for several days, leaving a leathery type of vessel. Next, it would be fired in a kiln. In the Biblical Levant many remains of permanent kilns have been found that show this was the preferred and most often used method there. These permanent kilns were composed of a fire box underneath that would be tended by the potter and pottery apprentices, above the firebox pottery could be stacked in the enclosed kiln and baked until perfectly durable.

Clay pottery was economical and tremendously useful to ancient man, and today it helps the modern archaeologist to assign dates to excavation sites. ■

<http://www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2011/07/05/The-Master-Potter-Pottery-Making-in-the-Bible.aspx> The Master Potter: Pottery making in the Bible Bryant Wood

<https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/16/4/7> Small Inventions? They Changed How People Lived in the Hellenistic Age By Abraham Levy

<http://www.newton.k12.in.us/art/archive/07-08/3d/images/historyofwheel/index.html> The Origins of the Potter’s Wheel by Victor Bryant

[http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Potter%27s\\_wheel](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Potter%27s_wheel) Potter’s wheel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGQM3136pzg>

<https://www.penn.museum/sites/canaan/Pottery.html> Economy Pottery



2021 BIBLE DISCOVERY GUIDE

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JOB — PSALMS



# Job's Trial

## JOB 1-3

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The book of Job does not come with a claim of authorship or a date attached to it, but it is often thought that it represents a very old time in history. One of the theories is that it comes from around the second millennium BC, roughly the time of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This date would make sense of many of the things we see in Job's life; the offering of personal sacrifices and lack of centralized worship, the measuring of his wealth by his livestock, and the total lack of references to Israel or any of her tribes. Job's friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar are leaders who come and pontificate about the plight of Job. Chapter 1 explains that Job was a great man, concerned about his children and trying to honour God. From our privileged position, we can see into heaven, we know that what is really happening is a testing of Job. But to Job and his friends there is no obvious reason for suffering to so overtake him. So, the question they wrestle with is that familiar, "Why?"

### DISCOVERING GOD – JOB 3:1-10

#### – 1 –

**Job is convinced that his life is a waste of time!**

When things are very bad, remember that we do not see the entire picture.

(v. 1-5)

#### – 2 –

**Job speaks of the great evil of Leviathan, the most terrifying animal there was.**

God can keep us close to Him, despite our emotions and feelings.

(v. 6-8)

#### – 3 –

**Job does not have the ability to navigate through difficult times.**

The troubles of life can overtake us; we need Jesus Christ to bring us through and be healed. (v. 9-10)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God is the only One who gives us the ability to navigate through life and continually be helped and healed as we have trouble. We should remember that the LORD uses events in our lives to show us that He can heal us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO RELEASE MY LIFE TO YOUR HEALING AND HELP. I NEED IT!**



# Eliphaz

## JOB 4-7

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In Job 5, Eliphaz tried to encourage Job with a long speech about the correction of God bringing healing. But these ideas are easy to misunderstand when we are hurting. When the present is devastated, no one has a clear view of the future. Job had been a great man who loved the LORD with all he had. So, when everything failed there seemed to be only one way to explain what was happening: God had forsaken him. We, the reader, are given the inside story, we know that Job has been swept up in a spiritual battle of sorts, but how could Job know this? Or his “wise” friends? For us today, we live in a time when God has changed the conditions of the world through Jesus Christ. We have a clearer picture, a more explained plan of God for the world. God knows our future, past and present. Help and hope is available to us as we trust in God and develop our relationship with Him. Long ago, Eliphaz attempted to paint Job a similar picture of God’s mercy and justice, but Job was hurting too much to listen to arguments.

### DISCOVERING GOD – JOB 6:1-10

#### – 1 –

#### **Job tries to explain the weight of his troubles.**

When things are awful, we are often consumed with feelings of horror.

(v. 1-3)

#### – 2 –

#### **Job speaks of God as if He is the one who struck him.**

We often blame God when terror comes, but remember that evil is from satan, not God.

(v. 4-7)

#### – 3 –

#### **Job claims that God has not answered him.**

We must wait for God to speak.

(v. 8-10)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Believers in Jesus Christ have experienced great joy and wonder. When our life takes a difficult turn, we should remember our faith in God and choose to hold on to Him. If we can accept times of great joy, then we can accept times of distress with God’s help. He has conquered all!

### TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO FOLLOW YOU  
FAITHFULLY THROUGH THE HARD  
TIMES AND THE GOOD TIMES.**

# Bildad

## JOB 8-11

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Job's second friend, Bildad, claims that Job should repent! The problem was that Job was not hiding some secret sin, and he had been careful to give offerings to God as a sign of his daily repentance and concern for righteousness. It is a very easy thing to claim to know what's what and pronounce judgment on a situation. None of us like it when we are on the receiving end of an unjust judgment, so we should be careful how we proceed. A serious breach of common sense is to not pay attention to the needs of others, keeping their well-being and interests in mind. Bildad, in his attempted common-sense method actually fails to consider the true position of Job, putting what he believes to be true above the reality of the situation. This is easy to see in Bildad's case, but harder to see in our own lives. There are many people who are hurt and in damaging positions today. Can we see them?

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOB 10:1-12

#### — 1 —

**Job opens his heart and tells God of his complaint.** We should be patient with people who speak in pain.

(v. 1-3)

#### — 2 —

**Job tells the truth, which he will later discover.** We must be careful what we pray and how we talk. God always hears us.

(v. 4-7)

#### — 3 —

**Job tells us that he is alive because of God!** We are alive because of the LORD, and His plan for us is greater than pain and suffering.

(v. 8-12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

This life, very obviously, comes with struggles and troubles. We may not be able to achieve God's heavenly perspective, but we can stand strong in our trust of God. He loves us, brings us through all things and has a future for us that is not even worth comparing to our present sufferings.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I MUST LEARN TO LOVE YOU AND WHAT YOU HAVE MADE.**

# Zophar

## JOB 12–15

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

How should we communicate God's life-giving power? Zophar chose to tell Job that it was time for him to repent; that the troubles he was having was due to his own problems and inadequacy when measured against the holiness of God. These friends of Job are great examples for us. When we discover that someone is going through terrible suffering, what will we do? Zophar's tactic pushed Job into a discussion about life and death. Job seems to assume that man is finished when he dies, but Christ tells us something different. Jesus promises that those who follow Him will live with Him eternally. We have a higher purpose than what we can fulfill here on earth. Let's follow Him in the here and now because that affects the way we will live the rest of our lives after death.

### DISCOVERING GOD – JOB 14:1–12

#### – 1 –

**Job says in his heart, that man is hopeless!**

We are nothing without the healing of Jesus Christ.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**Job believes that when a man dies, he is done.**

Jesus Christ explains that when a Christian dies, he is with the LORD in his eternal life.

(v. 5–6)

#### – 3 –

**Job tells us that man's life is limited and he will not come back.**

God tells us about eternity through Jesus Christ!

(v. 7–12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Eternity is a hard concept to grasp. One thing we know for sure is that our decision to follow Jesus and then all of our decisions afterwards to follow Jesus, do affect our entrance into eternal life. Let's follow Christ with all of our lives and spread the message to all those around us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WILL EXPLAIN MY  
TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST,  
YOUR SON, PLEASE HELP ME.**

# Terror

## JOB 16–19

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

There is a time when terror is good for us! It's good for us to know and feel that we should dodge away from a car travelling fast; being hit by a speeding vehicle is good for us to avoid. It would be even better that next time we do not walk on the road! Fear can be a powerful force of motivation in the right direction. Fear and terror can also be unhelpful. These emotions can become motivators in the wrong direction. It's up to us to determine between helpful and unhelpful fear. In our reading this week we see Job's friend Bildad attempting to apply fear to Job in the wrong way. He assumed Job's guilt and was trying to motivate a confession through the terror of what, in his opinion, would still occur to Job. The problem is that Bildad was wrong. In the next chapter, Job answers him harshly. The story of Job is a test for humanity. There is hardship and evil in this world that is created by satan. The only way to survive is through Jesus Christ.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOB 18:1–12

#### – 1 –

**Bildad claims that Job is wrong, he has done wrong and should repent!** We often make fast judgments; we should not.  
(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**Bildad says that evil will overtake those who do evil.** The truth is more complicated; sometimes evil happens to the righteous, but we are delivered through Christ. (v. 5–9)

#### – 3 –

**Bildad says that destruction will happen to Job if he does not repent.** We must be very careful with the kind of judgment we give. Remember that God is the only true Judge. (v. 10–12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Old and New Testament were terms used by a minister named Tertullian in the third century AD. Today, we use these terms to distinguish between God's covenant with Israel through the law and God's covenant with all mankind through Jesus Christ. Job is a part of that Old Covenant. Thank God the conditions today are set by Jesus Christ, our strength!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I NEED TO SEE THE DIFFERENCE THAT YOU SET THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, GOD ON EARTH.**

# Thinking We're Helping

## JOB 20–23

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

What does it mean to be in the right or righteous? Is it obeying the law or being spiritual? A prevalent theme throughout the Old and New Testament is law and spirit are married like our thought and behaviour, and it is impossible to be right with God without the promise and provision of Messiah: Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came as truly man and truly God, died on the cross and paid the price of sin for us. This is not about the institution of the Church; it's about your relationship with Jesus Christ: God. In a similar way, Eliphaz poses a rhetorical question: "Can a man be profitable to God?" The short and obvious answer is no, but how is this relevant to the situation that Job finds himself in? Like following the law without spirit, or being spiritual without law, there are times when we make statements that are true, but they are irrelevant to the circumstance we are applying them to. We, too, are disconnected from the situation and do not understand. Don't react like Eliphaz, act wise in Christ.

### DISCOVERING GOD – JOB 22:1–7

#### – 1 –

**Eliphaz tells the truth, but that truth is not applicable to Job.** Too many times we apply statements that are true but not applicable to what we are speaking to. (v. 1–3)

#### – 2 –

**Eliphaz speaks the obvious truth, but out of context.** We must never speak God's truth out of context!  
(v. 4–5)

#### – 3 –

**Eliphaz accuses Job of injustice without knowing Job's situation.** Remember, when we are comforting someone, do so with gentleness and respect. (v. 6–7)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When someone is in the midst of suffering, it does not help to hypothesize or point out why they're suffering. Instead, we have to help them see that God loves them and He will help them. We do that by pointing to sin and our sinfulness, and telling them how Jesus Christ forgave us and helped us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I MUST ALWAYS LIVE OUT YOUR GRACE! STEER ME AWAY FROM SIN.**



# Understanding God

## JOB 24–28

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

One of the ways we learn about God is to look at nature. Through His creation, we know that we cannot even grasp the edges of God's unlimited power. But, through the power of His Word, we are able to learn about and listen to God's character. This is the amazing thing about the LORD. God, through His Holy Spirit teaches us who He is and what is important to Him. The will of God is the best thing for humanity. But many times, we do not want the will of God, we desire to do our own things our own way. The greatest mind in the universe is the mind of God. You cannot know who God is through the study of nature or observing the stars, but you can know what you are not: God. Too often we rely on our brains and not our heart. The sciences can only look at the world from the bottom up, whereas the spirit looks at the world from the top down. Job begins to highlight the edges of God's power, when Job is in a great deal of loss and pain. It is in these moments of suffering and desperation that we learn about who God truly is.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOB 26:1–14

#### – 1 –

**Job continues to suffer because his so-called friends do not understand God.** We learn more about God when we suffer than when we are in a good place. (v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**Job speaks to us about the matrix of God's creation.** Science can never understand the limitless mysteries of God's creation, the universe. (v. 5–8)

#### – 3 –

**Job says that God's Holy Spirit adorns His heavens!** When Jesus Christ came, died and rose again, He gave us the same Holy Spirit! (v. 9–14)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Holy Spirit is critical to understanding the ways and will of God. We must seek to do the ways of God and begin to learn about His will in our life. It is not a one-time thing. How God works in our life is an ongoing learning experience.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I MUST LEARN TO KNOW  
YOUR WILL AND YOUR WAYS OF  
DOING THINGS. THANK YOU FOR  
HELPING ME.**