

# **Study Guide**

## **for**

# **Job - Ecclesiastes**

by

Manford George Gutzke

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## How To Use This Study Guide

*Study Guide For Job and Ecclesiastes* is designed to be especially helpful in connection with Dr. Gutzke's teaching of this subject on radio or tape recordings. However, this Guide may also serve as a profitable basis for other individual, group or class study.

In using this Guide, first read through the introductory article on "The Wisdom Literature." Next familiarize yourself with the "Outline" and "Outline of Thought" for each book. Perhaps you would like to mark in your Bible where these divisions occur. Finally, proceed with the "Study Questions," one section at a time.

If you are coordinating this study with Dr. Gutzke's teaching on radio, you can work ahead of him and then check your answers and ideas against what he says. Or, you can jot down notes as he teaches. Or, you can summarize in your own words under each question after Dr. Gutzke has completed his teaching.

Notes of further explanation are provided in most of the sections.

The purpose of the questions is to re-inforce your learning by getting you to summarize the teaching and write it down in your own words. You will then know the material better, understand it more thoroughly, and have it fixed in your memory. We have no set of "correct answers" for you. The object of the questions is to stimulate your thinking while letting God speak to your heart. Approach each time of study both in prayer and in faith.

You will be blessed as you use this study guide . . . in direct proportion to your own active participation. The booklet has been punched to fit a pocket size 3-ring notebook. You may separate the pages and add blank paper, as necessary, in order to develop more fully your own thoughts as you study.

## Organize A Study Group

Why not share this study with others? We recommend that you find 8-12 persons who are interested in Bible study. Your group could plan to meet once each week or every other week in homes. With the consent of the members, send us their names and home addresses and we will send each a copy of this Guide. Or copies could be ordered in bulk for the group as a whole. You could also use this for a substitute study in your church class or group.

Where it is possible to hear the studies by Dr. Gutzke on radio, urge each member of your group to listen faithfully and to take notes of Dr. Gutzke's comments, their own impressions and ways of applying the truths of Scripture. Where the radio broadcasts are not heard, 7 inch tape recordings at 3 3/4 i.p.s. may be ordered. There are 5 tapes in this set @ \$3.00 each. Ask for tape numbers 67-4 through 67-8. If the tapes are used, the appropriate studies could be listened to at each group get-together. (Also, each of the 13 study sections could be divided into a large number of sections in order to reduce the number of taped studies needed to be played at each meeting. Dividing into 26 sections is suggested.)

After having heard Dr. Gutzke present his study of the section, with each person taking notes, let the group go over the passage together and answer the "study questions." Encourage each member to join in the discussion and to share matters from his own personal applications. Close with a period of group prayer.

Make your sessions informal but in order. Have some refreshments as you come together each time. Set a time limit on each meeting. We suggest an hour and a half. Encourage faithful attendance. Be considerate of your host and of one another.

When a group has a clear sense of purpose and calling in the Lord, it will provide added blessing and growth. And members of your original group, after a time, may want to start additional groups so that the study may multiply. Whenever average attendance exceeds 12, plan to divide into two groups.

## The Wisdom Literature

Not much of the Bible is given over to philosophizing. Nowhere in the Bible is any reflection recorded from the point of view of unbelief. The Bible never argues the existence of God. The Bible never argues the holiness of God. The Bible never argues the power of God. The Bible never argues the will of God.

Job presents the most extended philosophical reflection on the ways of God, raising the question of the problem of evil: "Why do the righteous suffer?"

Psalms presents expressions of worship formulated in the consciousness of believing souls: "What shall I say to God?"

Proverbs presents insights into the structure of relationships in living in this world: "What will happen in this case?"

Ecclesiastes presents the classic experimental research in ethics in seeking the answer to "What is the greatest good?"

Song of Solomon presents a classic description of true love showing the personal nature of total commitment to another: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."

All this is written within the perspective of faith in God, and represents the classic mental processes in human experience when the soul is believing in God according to His promise to Abraham. This material is not dated nor datable in Scripture. Its position in the Canon is a matter of topical arrangement. It is particularly useful today in providing verbalization of the consciousness of a believing soul living in this world.

# Job

## OUTLINE OF JOB

- 1 - 3 Job and his trouble
- 4 - 31 Explanations of three friends and Job's replies
  - Eliphaz, 4 - 7
  - Bildad, 8 - 10
  - Zophar, 11 - 14
  - Eliphaz, 15 - 17
  - Bildad, 18 - 19
  - Zophar, 20 - 21
  - Eliphaz, 22 - 24
  - Bildad, 25 - 31
- 32 - 37 Elihu's comments
- 38 - 41 The Lord convinces Job
- 42 Job's Blessing

## OUTLINE OF THOUGHT

1. The question raised: "Why does a just God afflict a God-fearing man?"
2. The friends offer the natural view that affliction is punishment
  - (a) because you are wicked and have sinned.
  - (b) because you have not helped others in distress.
  - (c) because after you have been chastened, you may be healed.
3. Job argues against this explanation
  - (a) Some wicked prosper, and besides I am righteous.
  - (b) This is simply not true: I have always helped others.
  - (c) God forgives sin: Why should I suffer so much?
4. Elihu
  - (a) rebukes the friends because they persist in condemning Job even though they cannot answer his arguments.
  - (b) rebukes Job for claiming to be righteous, and for presuming that he should be able to understand God.
5. The Lord shows Job that His ways are too wonderful to be understood by man, but He should be trusted.
6. When Job humbles himself in the matter of trying to understand, and trusts God, he is richly blessed.
7. The real meaning of suffering lies in the Spiritual world.

# Ecclesiastes

## OUTLINE OF ECCLESIASTES

- 1 - 4 The vanities of life
- 5 - 7 Practical wisdom
- 8 -11 Rules for a happy life
- 12 Conclusion of the whole matter

## OUTLINE OF THOUGHT

This is the factual report and interpretation of an experimental investigation into human experience to discover "What is the greatest good?" Being concerned with the human need for basic satisfaction in living, this investigation pursues the several lines of possible procedure which are open to men. The key phrase is "under the sun," and the whole discussion should be recognized as being within the perspective of human consciousness.

The writer, who identifies himself only as "the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem," observes:

1. The consistent course of experience is depressing.
2. To learn wisdom does not guarantee happiness.
3. To cultivate mirth does not bring happiness.
4. To accumulate wealth does not secure happiness.
5. Constructive labor is the least disappointing, but the pleasure is only in the doing.
6. The exercise of wisdom reduces the distress.
7. The only sound procedure is "Fear God, and keep His Commandments."

It is interesting to note that No. 7 was not discovered by any investigation or experimentation as described in Chapters 1-11. This was apparently some insight the writer had been taught, perhaps as a child; or it may be an expression of an intuitive knowledge of God which all men have. It may well include both.

This book presents no truth about the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ but clarifies much that is true in nature. Insofar as the hidden things of the Godhead are clearly seen from the creation of the world, and are understood by the things that are made, this whole presentation of the situation in human experience is properly related to the purpose of Scripture.

## Organization of Studies

Forty-five studies are planned by Dr. Gutzke in this series. Use this chart to keep track of your place with his teaching and for reading ahead. From this you should turn to the appropriate section of the study guide questions.

Why do we try to understand?	Introduction to Job	Job 4-5
How do we understand?	Job 1	6-7
Understanding and the Bible	2	8
Understanding and the Old Testament	3	9-10
Understanding and the Wisdom Literature	The problem of pain	11
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Job 12-14	Job 20	Job 26-31
15	21	32-37
16-17	22	38-41
18	23-24	42:1-6
19	25	42:7-17
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The meaning of value	Eccl. 2:1-17	Eccl. 6
The scientific approach	2:18-26	7
Introduction to Ecclesiastes	3	8:1-9:6
Eccl. 1:1-11	4	9:7-10:20
1.-13-18	5	11:12

## Study Questions

This guide is divided into 13 sections for the convenience of classes or groups. Used weekly, study material for one quarter will be provided. On a monthly usage, combine sections 5 and 6 to make one year.

In studying each section, select a key verse that has particular meaning or application to you. Write this out on a card and carry it with you or put it up in some conspicuous place. Commit it to memory and ask God to bring it to practice in your life.

### SECTION 1 --- Introduction to "Understanding the Ways of God."

Why do we try to understand?

How do we understand?

What are some important facts found only in the Bible?

How does the story of Creation help in understanding?

How does the history of Israel help?

Where does the Old Testament stop short?

What books of the Bible are called "The Wisdom Literature"?

What question does each book deal with, respectively?

How is this material related to the gospel of salvation?

What is known about the author?

What is the main idea in the book?

What is the style used in this book?

### **Job 1**

What kind of character was Job? (1: 1-5)

What insinuation against Job was made by Satan (1: 6- 12)

What happened to Job's affairs? (1:13-22)

### **SECTION 2 --- Job 2-3**

What further insinuation was made against Job by Satan? (2: 1-6)

What happened next to Job? (2:7-8)

What did Job's wife advise him to do (2:9-10)

Why did the friends come to Job? (2:11-13)

What was Job's first reaction to his suffering? (3:1-12)

What did Job wish had happened to him? (3:13-22)

What does Job wish he knew? (3:23)

What was tragic in Job's experience? (3:24-26)

How is pain involved in the problem of evil?

What is the natural reaction to tragic suffering?

Why is suffering a problem to a believing person?

### **SECTION 3 --- Job 4-7**

What does Eliphaz imply must be the cause? (4:7)

What causes Eliphaz to feel confident he knows the truth? (4:12-16)

What does Eliphaz advise Job to do? (5:8)

What general truth does Eliphaz propose to Job to encourage him? (5:17)

What then is the opinion of Eliphaz?

How does Job express his personal distress? (6:1-9)

What is Job's reaction to the speech of Eliphaz? (6:25)

How does Job feel about living in this world? (7:1-19)

How does Job show that he knows about the grace of God? (7:20-21)

**SECTION 4 --- Job 8.14**

What does Bildad think about God? (8:3-10)

What does Bildad imply must be true about Job? (8:11-19)

How does Bildad arrive at the conclusion Job must be at fault? (8:20-22)

How does Job concede that God is beyond man? (9:1-21)

What puzzles Job about the ways of God? (9:22-35).

What causes Job to have confusion in his mind? (10:1-17)

What does Job wish had been his fate? (10:18-22)

What does Zophar think about Job? (11:1-4)

What does Zophar think about God? (11: 5-11)

What does Zophar advise Job to do? (11:12-20)

What is the common opinion of the three friends?

What is Job's reaction to their talk with God? (12:1-25)

How does Job feel about the validity of their advice? (13:4)

How does Job express his own confidence in God? (13:15)

How does Job express his own utter dependence upon God? (14:13)

#### **SECTION 5 - Job 15-20**

How does Eliphaz evaluate Job's remarks? (15:1-8)

How does Eliphaz argue their own superiority? (15:9-16)

What general truth does Eliphaz emphasize? (15:20)

How does Job express his opinion of their advice? (16: 1-5)

How does Job feel about his afflictions (16:6-17)

How does Job express his despair? (16:18-17:16)

How does Bildad imply Job is arrogant? (18:1-4)

What does Bildad emphasize that God will do to the wicked? (18:5-21)

By this speech what is Bildad implying about Job?

How does Job express his impatience with their persistent accusations? (19:4)

How does Job show that he knows he is dealing with God? (19:5-20)

How does Job express his abiding faith in God despite all his suffering? (19:25-27)

#### **SECTION 6 -- Job 20-24**

What is the central theme of all Zophar has to say? (20: 1-29)

What can be seen in this as to Zophar's attitude toward Job?

What seems to be indicated in the fact that Zophar does not answer any remark of Job's?

Why does the prosperity of the wicked refute the argument of the friends? (21:1-15)

How does the providence of God refute the argument of the friends? (21:22-26)

How does Job evaluate the advice of his friends? (21: 27-34)

How does Eliphaz belittle Job's problem? (22:1-4)

How does Eliphaz persist in his judgment that Job must have sinned to cause his trouble? (22:5-11)

How does Eliphaz imply that Job cannot expect to understand God? (22:12-20)

What does Eliphaz advise Job to do? (22:21-30)

How does Job show what he thinks of the remarks of Ellphaz? (23:1-7)

What does Job believe about the end of the wicked? (21: 16-21)

How does Job express his basic trust in God? (23:8-17)

How does Job describe the prosperity of the wicked? (24:1-12)

How does Job show his confidence in God's final judgment of the wicked? (24:13-25)

#### **SECTION 7 -- Job 25-31**

What does Bildad say about God? (25:1-3)

What does Bildad say about the sin of man? (25:4-6)

What does Bildad imply about Job and his trouble?

Where does Job look to see the greatness of God? (Chapter 26)

How does Job indicate his rejection of the opinion of his friends? (27:5)

How does Job express his continuing problem? (28:12)

How does Job indicate his deep distress?  
(29:2 - His former glory)

(30: 1 - His present affliction)

(31 - His personal integrity)

**SECTION 8 -- Job 32-37**

Why was Elihu aroused to speak? (32:6-14)

What did Elihu hold against Job? (33:12)

How does Elihu show God's ways of chastening man? (33:14-22, 27-28) (33:27-28)

How does Elihu chide Job for suggesting God was unfair? (34:10-12)

How does Elihu show Job that his problem is not so important? (35:6-8)

What should Job be thinking about? (36:5, 26; 37:5, 23-24)

**SECTION 9 -- Job 38-42**

What is the Lord emphasizing in chapters 38-39?

What aspect of Job's thought does the Lord challenge? (40-8)

How does the Lord answer Job from nature? (40:6 - 41:34)

What does Job say about the power of God? (42:1-2)

How does Job now feel about his own thoughts? (42:3)

How was Job affected by his understanding about God? (42:4-6)

How did Job show the sincerity of his righteousness? (42:7-10)

What was "the latter end of Job"? (42:11-17)

How is the problem of suffering finally solved? in reasoning or in worshipping?

## **SECTION 10 -- Introduction to Ecclesiastes**

What is the meaning of value?

What is the scientific approach?

What does Ecclesiastes discuss?

What approach is used?

### **Ecclesiastes 1**

What impressed the Preacher about the course of natural events? (1:4-6)

What is the end of all natural activity? (1:7-8)

Is there any evidence of progress? (1:9-10)

Can human efforts achieve lasting results? (1:11)

How did the Preacher proceed to find out wisdom? (1:13-14)

What did the Preacher see about the results of human effort? (1:15)

How far did the Preacher go in his search for wisdom? (1:16-17)

What value did the Preacher find in learning? (1:18)

#### **SECTION 11 -- Ecclesiastes 2-4**

Why did the Preacher experiment with pleasure? (2:1-3)

How did the Preacher prepare for pleasure? (2:4-8)

How did the Preacher proceed to test pleasure? (2:9-11)

What conclusions did the Preacher come to? (2:12-17)

Why is all effort to achieve results so useless? (2:18-19)

What is the reason for such despair? (2:20-21)

How is human effort costly? (2:22-23)

Is there any chance of any good in labor? (2:24-26)

What does the course of providence give? (3:1-8)

What profit can any man find in his work? (3:9-13)

What is the nature of the work of God? (3:14-15)

What is the nature of the works of man? (3:16-22)

What effect did it have upon the mind of the Preacher when he saw:

-- oppression of the poor and the weak? (4:1-3)

-- the results of work? (4:4-6)

-- the futility of living alone? (4:7-8)

-- the advantage of fellowship? (4:9-12)

-- changing fortunes in this passing world? (4:13-16)

**SECTION 12 -- Ecclesiastes 5-7**

What did the Preacher learn about:

-- importance of reverent humility in the worship of God? (5:1-7)

-- cruel injustice? (5:8)

-- the accumulation of wealth? (5:9-17)

-- the importance of getting joy day by day? (5:18-20)

-- the tragedy of not enjoying what one has? (6:1-2)

-- the vanity of living without virtue? (6:3-5)

-- the vanity of living? (6:6-8)

-- the benefit of understanding? (6:9-10)

-- the value of a good name? (6:11-7:1)

-- the value of sadness and sorrow? (7:2-6)

-- the value of patience and meekness? (7:7-10)

-- the value of wisdom? (7:11-22)

-- the conclusion of his learning by logical reflection? (7:23-29)

### **SECTION 13 -- Ecclesiastes 8-12**

What did the Preacher note when he considered:

-- the wise man? (8:1-5)

-- the misery of man? (8:6-11)

-- the vanishing of the wicked? (8:12-15)

-- the infinite range of the works of God? (8:16-17)

-- the mortal nature of man? (9:1-3)

-- the value in being alive? (9:4-6)

-- the value of the here and now? (9:7-10)

-- the uncertainty of affairs? (9:11-12)

-- the true value of good judgment? (9:13-18)

-- the contrast between a fool and a wise man? (10: 1-15)

-- the value of good leaders? (10:16-17)

-- the loss in laziness? (10:18)

-- the value of money? (10: 19)

-- the value of silence? (10:20)

What did the Preacher conclude concerning:

-- the limitations of human knowledge? (11:1-6)

-- the limitations of light in this world? (11:7-8)

-- the limitations of youth? (11:9-10)

-- the limitations of age? (12:1-7)

-- the limitations of human understanding? (12:8-12)

-- the conclusion of the research? (12 :13-14)