

60 Thoughts on  
Life's Temptations, Trials,  
and Triumphs

# OVERCOMING *the* HURT

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## IS LIFE PEACEFUL? IT'LL CHANGE

*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.*

JOB 1:1

### Faith Quest

*Read Job 1:1–3*

Where is your focus when life is peaceful?

### Faith Trek

In just a few short verses, we learn much about Job. He lived in the land of Uz, part of modern-day Saudi Arabia. And, in short, he had it all: family, material goods, and prestige. He was a father of ten, a landowner, and an employer. His fields were teeming with thousands and thousands of livestock, from sheep and camels to oxen and donkeys. Job, in fact, was the wealthiest man in his region.

Such bounty often comes with a heavy dose of temptation, and Job likely faced his share. Perhaps he was tempted to amass more wealth. Overlooking his vast land and flocks, Job could have congratulated himself on his success. He could have fixed his thoughts and energies on how to grow his riches even more.

Perhaps the siren song of pride rang in his ears. As the richest man in town, he must have received much flattery and many compliments from his friends and neighbors. These words brought the temptation to believe that he alone had created his peaceful and rich life.

Yet Job remained a devout man of faith, with his eyes fixed firmly on his Lord. He lived with integrity, dealing honestly in all his affairs. He deliberately avoided evil. Job feared God, and this awe and reverence for his Creator fueled a life of obedience.

Jesus cautioned that it is very difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:23). So then, is wealth and the peaceful life it brings inherently evil? Not necessarily. Rather, Jesus is cautioning us about how a comfortable life can lull us spiritually. We may become so focused on enjoying our family, home, and material things that our eyes stray from our Creator. We can, in essence, lose our bearings and compass.

Keeping our focus on God also helps us maintain an eternal perspective and hold the things we have with open hands. Surrounded by his family and his wealth, Job may have been tempted to believe that his life would always be that way. He could have thought that he had “achieved” this good life and thus it was his forever.

As a man of faith, though, he knew that his earthly life was only a small sliver compared to eternity. Similarly, I (Pam) sometimes catch myself clinging to the good times in my life, hoping that the seas will remain smooth. Yet in my heart I know better. Inevitably, a medical test comes back positive, a job ends, or some other storm enters our lives. I’ve learned that keeping the Lord as the center of my life in peaceful times is critical to weathering these storms.

Through consistent nurturing of our relationship with our Lord, we come to know who He is. We develop a deep understanding of His character, that He is eternal, faithful, and loving. Daily encounters remind us that He is with us always (Matthew 28:20). Walking closely with God during the peaceful times of life provides an anchor for our soul, an anchor that is sorely needed because a storm could be just over the horizon.

## Faith Tools

- The peaceful times in life are a blessing to enjoy with the understanding that things will not always be so.
- Staying focused on our relationship with the Lord during the peaceful times of life prepares us to face the coming storms.

- **Pray:** “Lord, help me focus on You during the peaceful times.” Thank God for the many blessings in your life. Ask Him for the strength and perseverance to avoid the temptations that come with a peaceful life. Seek His strength to walk in obedience and remain focused on Him in all seasons.

## Notes for Growth

*A Key Point I Learned Today:*

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*How I Want to Grow:*

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*My Prayer List:*

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## SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN THE GOOD TIMES

*And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did continually.*

JOB 1:5 ESV

### Faith Quest

*Read Job 1:4–5*

How do I lead spiritually in the “good times”?

### Faith Trek

Job’s wealth provided an easy life for him—and an easy life for his ten children. While others were striving for their livelihood, whether out in the field with the sheep or in a trade, Job’s adult sons and daughters had time to spare. Some of that time was spent holding extravagant parties. Not only did these parties span many days, but they also rotated among the sons’ houses.

These two verses give a glimpse of Job as a father and a spiritual leader. We can glean that he was generous with his children, sharing the wealth that he had accumulated. His sons presumably had married and established their own homes. Whether directly or indirectly, his riches likely provided for the food and drink at their bashes.

Job understood that his children needed times of fun and relaxation. But, as a spiritual leader, he also understood that they needed God. He reflected on how his children’s easy lives could have tempted them to sin. He knew they needed cleansing from their sins.

Thus, Job was proactive in nurturing the spiritual lives of his children. Scripture does not tell us the details of their daily lives. I (Pam)



imagine that Job led his children by example in his own prayer life and devotion to his Lord. I can just picture him sitting around the campfire surrounded by his sons and daughters, sharing with them about God.

His spiritual leadership didn't stop once they were grown and off on their own. Verse 5 points out that his regular practice was to call them to a time of worship and cleansing when their celebrations were completed.

How does Job's example fit with how we as parents disciple our children today? One difference is that our society focuses quite a bit on happiness—our own and our children's. As some psychologists note, many homes have become child-centric, with the primary focus on the children's needs, wants, and activities. Giving our children things they enjoy, seeing their smiles, and hearing their laughter warms our hearts. Yet we can't let providing these pleasures and comforts distract us from our primary purpose.

In these verses from Job, we're reminded that, just as an easy life can make us spiritually lazy, it can also have the same effect on our children. They need us to care for them, lead them, and teach them about the risks that come with an easy life. Just as Job did, we must keep pointing them to God, the One who loves them, saves them, and will sustain them in the not-so-easy times.

## Faith Tools

- Spiritual leadership includes helping our children nurture their relationships with God when life is easy.
- Just as Job, we can lead by example and by actively calling our children to worship.
- **Pray:** “Lord, strengthen me to lead others during the peaceful times.” Thank God for the people He has put in your life to lead and disciple. Ask Him for the sensitivity to know where each person is spiritually and the wisdom to guide them. Encourage those you are leading to walk in obedience and remain focused on Him in all seasons.

## Notes for Growth

*A Key Point I Learned Today:*

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*How I Want to Grow:*

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*My Prayer List:*

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