

## Step Into Scripture: Shadows

### Day 15 Reading: Job 40—42 and Day 15 of Step Into Scripture

#### Week 3 Lesson: God's Sovereignty in Suffering

This week, we're delving into the Book of Job, emphasizing its importance in understanding suffering and the character of God. We will discuss how Job's friends misinterpret his suffering as punishment for sin, while Job himself struggles with feelings of abandonment and the quest for vindication. Suffering can serve as a form of discipline to cultivate accountability and perseverance, not just punishment. Ultimately, we need to direct our pain and questions to God, remembering the hope found in trusting God's sovereignty and the promise of ultimate vindication in His perfect timing.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. How does the story of Job challenge our understanding of suffering and why sometimes good people face hardships while others seem to prosper?
  - Job's friends wrongly assumed that his suffering was a result of sin, which reflects a common misunderstanding about why suffering occurs.
  - Can you think of a time in your life when you saw someone you considered to be a good person struggle while others who seemed to do wrong thrived? How did that impact your view of fairness in life?
2. Job's friends tried to box God in by saying he was punishing Job for his sins. What does it mean to box God in, and why is this a dangerous mentality?
  - It is a mistake to try to define God's actions strictly based on human understanding and circumstances.
  - How do you sometimes find yourself putting God in a box in your own life? What can you do to have a more open perspective of God's character?
3. Reflecting on James 1:2-4, why do you think suffering is said to produce perseverance and maturity in a person's faith?
  - Suffering can lead to growth in our character and faith, similar to how the book of James teaches about the importance of trials.
  - Can you identify a situation or challenge in your life that later became a source of strength or growth? How did that experience shape who you are today?
4. How does Job's cry for a mediator relate to our faith in Jesus as our advocate?
  - Job's longing for someone to mediate his relationship with God is fulfilled in Jesus, who serves as our mediator today.
  - Do you feel comfortable bringing your struggles and questions to God? Why or why not? How does knowing that Jesus understands your pain help you in your relationship with God?
5. In what ways can suffering serve as instructive discipline rather than punishment?
  - Suffering can help us grow and keep us accountable, rather than just being seen as a punishment from God.
  - Think of a time when you faced a hard situation that taught you a valuable lesson. How did that moment help you grow in ways you didn't expect?

#### Prayer:

- Ask for guidance in applying the lessons from Job to personal struggles.
- Request strength to endure difficulties and maintain righteousness.
- Pray for discernment to see how suffering can be a teacher in our lives.
- Share any personal prayer requests and intercede for each other.