

JOB

INTRODUCTION

1. AUTHOR – Unknown. Some feel Moses may have translated material he found.
2. DATE – Seems written and lived out sometime prior to the time of Moses. Job is priest for his family.
3. THEME – The book deals with the theoretical problem of pain in the life of the godly. The answer is given against the background of the limited understanding of three of Job's "comforters" and comes in three forms:
 - A) God is worthy of love even apart from the blessings He gives.
 - B) God may permit suffering to purify and strengthen us in godliness.
 - C) God's thoughts and ways are too great for puny humans to comprehend.

OUTLINE

CHAPTER

- 1 – Job's 1st testing – Satan challenges God regarding Job. Job loses all he has but praises God. V21
- 2 – Job's 2nd testing – Job loses health but remains faithful. V10
- 3 – Job expresses his despair – He regrets being born because his suffering is so great. V2-4

SPEECHES - ROUND ONE - CH. 4-14

CHAPTER

- 4-5 ELIPHAZ – God is disciplining you for your wrong. 4:7-8, 5:17
- 6-7 JOB – Show me where I have done wrong. 6:24, 29-30
- 8 BILDAD – If Job were innocent, God would vindicate him. 3,6,20
- 9-10 JOB – God is so awesome He would always find fault, but Job would like to ask God what is his fault. 9:33-35, 10:1-7
- 11 ZOPHAR – If Job will admit his certain sin, God will lift him up. V6, 13-15
- 12-14 JOB – knows his trials are from God (12:9-10), his hope is in God (13:15) but he still maintains his innocence. (13:22)

SPEECHES – ROUND TWO CH. 15-21

CHAPTER

- 15 ELIPHAZ – Gets more personal – What makes Job think he knows more than they do? No man is innocent and God judges the guilty. V24-26
- 16-17 JOB – God has brought this trouble but he is innocent. V17
- 18 BILDAD – Why should the world's pattern be changed just for Job? V4
- 19 JOB – asks relief from harassment of friends - he will be vindicated. V21-27
- 20 ZOPHAR – Job's pride will not save from God. V4-8
- 21 JOB – has seen wicked prosper and end is same for all, death. V22-26

SPEECHES – ROUND THREE – CH 22-31

CHAPTER

- 22 ELIPHAZ – Job's sins are sins of omission. V5-11 – If Job will remove wickedness, God will bless. V21-25
- 23-24 JOB – God's judgment is always just but not always immediate. The righteous will be vindicated (23:7-10) and wicked are punished. 24:23-24
- 25 BILDAD – How can any human be pure to God? V4-6
- 26-31 JOB – Still maintains innocence and trust in God. 27:6, 31:5-8

SPEECH – ROUND FOUR – ELIHU SPEAKS - CH 32-37

CHAPTER

- 32 He waited because of youth but is upset because friends condemned Job could find no fault in him. V12
- 33 God speaks in different ways. He feels Job has ignored God's grace. V23-30
- 34 Job is wrong thinking God is not just. He always is. V12
- 35 God is not restricted by right or wrong. Job needs to wait for justice. V6-8
- 36-37 If Job cannot understand God in nature, how can he expect to know God's work in moral world? 37:14-24

THE ULTIMATE SPEECH - GOD SPEAKS – CH 38-42

CHAPTER

- 38-39 God reminds Job of His great power of creation and control of world.
- 40 God challenges Job to answer - Job refuses 40:1-7. God continues.
- 40:15-41:34 God's greatness is seen in 2 great untamable creatures.
- 42 Job repents – God restores Job's possessions two fold.

LESSONS FROM JOB

1. Suffering is not necessarily due to personal sin. God defended Job to Satan yet he still suffered so much.
The real story of the book is that it is God who is on trial, not Job. God claimed Job would not turn from him no matter what he suffered.
2. God is Sovereign over all nature (Ch 38-41) and over Satan. (Ch 1-2) God will never allow us to go through more than by His grace we can bear. 1 Corinthians 10:13
3. God is personally concerned - He knows our way even if we don't feel Him there. Ch 23:7-10
4. The problem with the speeches of the friends is not that what they say is wrong. It is that they only have one model for suffering, that it is the result of sin. Job says, "That model does not seem to fit my circumstance. I am not aware of any sin especially of this magnitude." He appeals to God to explain either what his sin is or what else is going on. "There must be another model." God answers that there can be as many models as he wants because he is sovereign. He is so much greater than we are as humans. We can trust him that his ways are right no matter how it appears to us. And we are so puny and helpless that we do not know enough to understand what he does.
5. How should we treat suffering personally?
 - a) Ask God to show you if it is because of sin. See James 5:15-16.
 - b) If it is He will show you, and then confess it and put the sin away. 1 John 1:8-10
 - c) If it is not because of personal sin, don't get hung up looking for a lesson to be learned. Job was never given the real answer (Ch 1-2). He was only reminded of God's great power and concern for him and that God does always do right.
 - d) Turn to God in trust and faith. God in Jesus suffered incomprehensible pain, unjustly so that someday we might be able to live with Him in a world free from pain and sorrow.
6. Suggested Reading: "Where is God When It Hurts?" by Philip Yancey; "Disappointment with God," by Philip Yancey, Zondervan, 1988; "Finding God" by Larry Crabb; "When God Doesn't Make Sense" by Dr. James Dobson

JOB

1 – The story is that God and Satan have a conversation about Job. Satan accuses God of so protecting Job and blessing his life that Job's loyalty to God is "purchased" or "bribed." Job only worships God for what he gets out of it. God answers this accusation by permitting a test of Job. First Satan is allowed to touch to any extent all of Job's possessions. We can only admire Job's responses. In V20, "He fell on the ground and worshipped." In V22, "In all this, Job did not sin or charge God with wrong."

The description of Job seems only ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He was "blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil." All that happened to Job feels like what happened to Jesus in that none of it was deserved, it was carried out by Satan in opposition to God and it cost him everything he had. Job exhibits Christ-like faith in God, not blaming him for anything. The key verse is V21. "And he (Job) said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

2 – God tells Satan, V3 "You incited me against him (Job) to destroy him without reason." The second test is more personal. Not only does Job lose all his possessions, now he suffers physically with painful sores. Still his reaction is, V10 "Shall we receive good from God and shall we not receive evil?" Then we read, "In all this Job did not sin with his lips." Three of Job's friends arrived to comfort him but when they saw how he suffered, V13 "they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him."

Do we see Jesus in this chapter? Job lost even more with the sores. He still refused to curse God. We deserve no good at all and yet God works in us and then through us into the lives of others. Let us praise your name today.

3 – This is the first extended speech by Job. In it he regrets the day or night in which he was born because if he had known all the trouble he would face in his life, he would not have wanted to go ahead with it. He calls on curses for that day. He wishes that he had not been born. He is very complete and graphic in his description. Scripture implies that none of this broke the statement that he did not sin in what he said. The key verses are V2-4.

Jesus came knowing all the troubles he would face. Yet he kept his eyes on the "joy that was set before him and endured the cross, despising its shame" (Hebrews 12:2). Help us keep our eyes on your grace and what you have ahead for us whenever we go through difficulties.

ROUND ONE OF SPEECHES – CH 4-14

4-5 – This is Eliphaz's first speech. His point is that God is disciplining Job for his sin or wrongdoing. See 4:17, "Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker?" The answer to this is "Yes!" It is not because of us but because of Jesus' death for us that we fulfill this perfection, not in ourselves but in him. See also 5:17 where Eliphaz suggests that God is reproving Job. "Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves; therefore despise not the discipline of the Lord Almighty."

6-7 – We can summarize Job's answer by saying that he challenges anyone to point out any sin on his part. 6:24 "Teach me and I will be silent; make me understand how I have gone wrong." While this seems contrary to Romans 1-3, Job is simply saying that he is not aware of any sin that would be the cause of this entire calamity. He begins his cry out to God, which is capped by asking God, 7:17-18 "What is man, that you make so much of him, and that you set your heart on him, visit him every morning and test him every moment?" Our only hope is Jesus Christ. He is the proof that God knows about us, cares for us and makes provision for our sins.

8 – Bildad speaks up for the fact that God always does right. V3 "Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert the right?" V6 "If you are pure and upright, surely then he will rouse himself for you and restore your rightful habitation." God's ultimate validation of his righteousness is demonstrated in Christ's death on the cross. Bildad's problem is that he assumes that God always treats us as our sins deserve. In his mercy expressed through Christ, God treats us better than we deserve.

9-10 – Job answers V2, "But how can a man be in the right before God?" The answer is through Jesus. Job goes on to ask to "contend with" God. V32-33 again point to the need for Jesus. "For he is not a man, as I am, that I might answer him, that we should come to trial together. There is no arbiter between us, who might lay his hand on us both." Job is not functioning well in his thoughts. He is honest though. He feels like no matter what he does God will find fault with it and God will be right. V15 "If I am guilty, woe to me! If I am in the right, I cannot lift up my head, for I am filled with disgrace and look on my affliction." Job's point is that God is able to do anything he wants and decides to do. Job has no chance either in a contest of strength or of justice. He still desires to make his case before God because as far as he knows, he is not guilty of wrongdoing or sin in this matter. What a privilege that through Jesus we have instant access to the heavenly realms!

11 – Zophar speaks and basically says that if Job would only put away his sin, everything in his life would turn out great. In V6 he says, “Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.” That is totally false in that God never lowers his standard of holiness or righteousness. We are able to meet that standard not in our own righteousness but in that of Jesus Christ. In V14 he advises Job, “If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, and let not injustice dwell in your tents.”

12-14 – Job answers his friends by saying that all they say is obvious. Everyone knows that. V9-10 “Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.” That is why he wants to speak with God directly because as far as he knows, there is no sin that is the cause of all his suffering. 13:15 “Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face.” 13:21 “Withdraw your hand far from me and let not dread of you terrify me.” 13:23 “How many are my iniquities and my sins? Make me know my transgression and my sin.” Only in Jesus is there safety from the terrible hand of God’s judgment. Job thinks that the only answer is to ask God to leave him alone but the answer will be provided in Jesus and it will be far better. In 14:4 Job asks, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one.” Job does not realize this is what God does through Jesus when he makes those of us who are sinners clean before him. We can even stand up to the scrutiny of God in his holiness through Jesus and what he did for us on the cross. Job’s prayer is in 14:13, “Oh that you would hide me in Sheol, that you would conceal me until your wrath be past, that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me!”

ROUND TWO OF SPEECHES – CH 15-21

15 – This begins the second round of Eliphaz. In this speech he presses the point that a human cannot be pure or righteous before God. V14-16 “What is man, that he can be pure? Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous? Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in his sight; how much less one who is abominable and corrupt, a man who drinks injustice like water!” Eliphaz is correct if we are only in ourselves. But in Christ even the most sinful person can stand before God by God’s grace in the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

16-17 – Job answers. He feels like God is against him. V16-17 “My face is red with weeping, and on my eyelids is deep darkness, although there is no violence in my hands, and my prayer is pure.” What he does not realize is that if God really were against him, it would be much worse. In Christ all God’s anger that would be taken out against us, in our sin, is taken out against Christ in his death on the cross. In 16:19 Job states, “Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and he who testifies for me is on high.” Did he know about Jesus, our Intercessor and Advocate? In chapter 17, Job despairs of hope. In V15 he says, “Where then is my hope? Who will see my hope?” Our hope is only in Christ. Otherwise we have no hope at all.

18 – Bildad gives his second speech. In this speech he challenges Job, V4 “You who tear yourself in your anger, shall the earth be forsaken for you, or the rock be removed out of its place?” Why should the way the world has always been not apply to Job? He also speaks strongly for the righteousness of God in that the wicked have no hope at all and all kinds of bad things happen to them. What he does not recognize is that there are other reasons for bad things happening to people and God has other ways of dealing with people besides justice. Through Christ he treats some in mercy and grace and though they remain wicked, they are forgiven and blessed.

19 – Job answers that from his perspective all that has happened to him has come from God. V4 “And even if it be true that I have erred, my error remains with myself.” His desire is to be able to talk with God and plead his case. In V25-27 he says, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.” The NT tells us that this Redeemer is Jesus.

20 – Zophar gives another speech. His point seems to be that God always punishes the wicked and Job’s pride will not allow him to escape from God. The climax is V29. “This is the wicked man’s portion from God, the heritage decreed for him by God.” The problem with all three friends is that they assume wrongly that Job is suffering due to his own sin.

21 – Job does not see things this way. His observation is that much of the time the wicked seem to get away with their wickedness. V29-30 “Have you not asked those who travel the roads, and do you not accept their testimony that the evil man is spared in the day of calamity, that he is rescued in the day of wrath?” Are there not two explanations for this? One is that God’s general grace allows the wicked to live to have a chance to repent. The second is that God forgives wicked people in Christ and through his death.

ROUND THREE OF SPEECHES – CH22-31

22 – Eliphaz makes a third speech appealing to Job to change, return to God and things will be well again. V23-25 “If you return to the Almighty you will be built up; if you remove injustice far from your tents, if you lay gold in the dust, and gold of Ophir among the stones of the torrent bed, then the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver.”

Once more what he says sounds so right yet he does not understand that there are other options. Jesus is the one way to be in perfect standing with God. Otherwise we fail and fall.

23-24 – In chapter 23, Job appeals for the opportunity to appear before God to make his case. V4 says, “I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.” He does not know that he will lose his case. He seeks to find God. V8-10 “Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I do not perceive him; on the left hand when he is working I do not behold him; he turns to the right hand but I do not see him. But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.” In Christ, not only are we righteous but also Christ stands before God to make our case on our behalf. In Chapter 24, Job disagrees with their conclusion that the wicked always get punished for their sin. His observation is that many times they appear to get away with it. This is an aspect of the general grace given by God because of Christ that allows him to give opportunities to turn from wickedness only to find that no human ever does choose God.

25 – Bildad speaks and sounds like he has not been listening to Job’s case and plea. He says, V4-5 “How then can man be in the right before God? How can he who is born of woman be pure? Behold, even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in his eyes; how much less man, who is a maggot, and the son of man who is a worm!” This reminds us of the statement in Psalm 8 that asks, “What is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings, and crowned him with glory and honor.” The scriptural thought here is that man is actually over creation and the Son of Man, Jesus is over all creation, humans and the church as seen in Colossians 1.

26-27 – Job continues to plead his innocence. He says that God knows all things. V6 “Sheol is naked before God, and Abaddon has no covering.” 27:6 “I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.” As Job contemplates the vastness of the universe, he says that this is only a whisper of the voice of God. 26:14 “Behold, these are but the outskirts of his ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of him! But the thunder of his power who can understand?” What would we ever do if he thundered his power? The NT seems to say that God did that in Jesus and especially in his resurrection. Job does point to God as the cause of his trouble but continues to proclaim his integrity. We will learn later that only in Jesus do we have any standing before God.

28 – This is a great chapter. In this chapter, Job searches for wisdom all over the earth, below, above, and with the animals. Then he asks, V13 “But where can wisdom be found?” It is found only in the Lord. V23 “God understands the way to it, and he knows its place.” V28 “And he said to man, ‘Behold, The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.’” That wisdom of God is expressed best in and through his Son, Jesus and the salvation obtained on the cross.

29-30 – These two chapters contain the before and the after of how Job was regarded and treated around his calamity. In chapter 29 he begins with God’s favor on him. V2 “Oh, that I were as in the months of old, as in the days when God watched over me.” In chapter 30 the situation changed as he begins, “But now...” He is clear in that he attributes his situation to God. V19-20 “God has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes. I cry to you for help and you do not answer me; I stand, and you only look at me.” He appeals for someone to grasp the hand that he holds up from the ruins. In spite of how we feel in situations like this, in Christ this is not the truth of how God is treating us.

31 – In this chapter Job makes one final appeal that he is innocent of anything that might cause this calamity as judgment from God. He again makes an appeal to appear before God to argue his case. V35 “Oh, that I had one to hear me! (Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!) Oh that I had the indictment written by my adversary!” In the end, after God speaks, Job realizes that he is far guiltier than he ever realized.

Again the thought is that in ourselves, we are far guiltier than we ever realize. But in Christ, we are justified and far more forgiven than we realize as well. We spend the rest of our days and all of eternity coming to a better understanding of God’s grace and how it has blessed in our lives.

32 – Elihu speaks for the next six chapters. He had waited because of his youth in deference to the older men. He is upset at the friends because they condemned Job but could not find any fault in him that would stick. V2b “He burned with anger at Job because he justified himself rather than God.” V12 “I gave you my attention, and, behold, there was none among you who refuted Job or who answered his words.” It is hard to read this because so much of it sounds right. Yet God breaks in on this one and rebukes him as opposed to God’s ways. This reminds me of Jesus because only in him is THE truth.

33 – It looks like Elihu says that it is OK for man to admit his sin because God has sent an angel to provide redemption for his sin, to bring him back. It could point to Jesus as the one who not only announces redemption but also provides it. V29-30 may be the key in that what he may be saying is that there is limited redemption. “Behold, God does all these things, twice, three times, with a man, to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be lighted

with the light of life." In Jesus there is no limit except that by which we impose upon ourselves in our response to God's grace.

34 – Elihu's basic point in this chapter is that despite Job's protests that he is innocent he is actually guilty. It is the same speech as the other three. In reality, the fault with their thinking is that God has ways beyond what they understand. Only in Jesus are we safe to know God's ways. V11-12 "For according to the work of a man he will repay him, and according to his ways he will make it befall him. Of a truth, God will not do wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice."

35 – Elihu continues and his point seems to be that the reason we do not see God react to sin or our righteousness is that what we do does not make that much difference to God. V5-6 "Look at the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds, which are higher than you. If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him? And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to him?" This totally leaves out God's answer of Jesus. He demonstrates that what we do does make a difference to God. He will not stand for any wickedness or unrighteousness. He is holy and demands perfect holiness that can only be met through Jesus' sacrifice.

36-37 – Elihu finishes his speech. He continues to claim that God is always in the right and so therefore Job must be in the wrong. The fault with his thinking is that he does not understand what God is doing in Job's case. There is not much here that seems to point to Jesus except that all of his wisdom appears to be incorrect. Even though some of it seems to be the same as what God says about the phenomenon of the weather, God says he is wrong. Only in Jesus is the truth of God revealed accurately.

38 – Finally God speaks. Note first that God V1 "answered Job out of the whirlwind" even though it is the speeches of Elihu that he interrupts. For all the information about God that this book has contained that God rejects as inaccurate, this speech must happen to give God's perspective. Note that God does not answer the specific questions. Nowhere does he tell about the conversation with Satan at the beginning of the book. Job never learns why this happens, that it is God who is on trial not Job. God lists aspects of nature that are far beyond our understanding never mind ability to duplicate. V4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding." V33 "Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth?" Also note V36. "Who has put wisdom in the inward parts, or given understanding to the mind?" Only God does this.

The incredible thing about Jesus is that he is the one person who knows the answer to all these questions. All creation was done through him. He knows the boundaries of the sea, the storehouses of snow and hail and he knows the habits of animals. Praise him!

39 – This chapter looks at the uncontrolled aspect of wild animals like the mountain goat, donkey, ox, ostrich, horse, and hawk. V26-27 "Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high?" Once again they are way beyond human understanding yet God created them through Jesus (John 1:3) and he understands them.

40 – V2 is the challenge to Job and his friends. "Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it." Job displays the attitude we all need before God, that of total humility and submission. That is the attitude Jesus demonstrated as seen in Philippians 2. God issues a challenge to see if Job can respond to any of the elements of God that God does all the time. He says that if Job (or we) can respond, "Then will I also acknowledge to you that your own right hand can save you." (V14) Obviously this means that we cannot save ourselves.

41 – In this chapter, God sets up one creature, created being, that is so terrifying to humans that there is no thought at all of controlling it. V5 "Will you play with him as with a bird, or will you put him on a leash for your girls?" God's point is that if such a created being terrifies us. What would we do before the one who is the Creator? God also asks in V11, "Who has first given to me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine." This reminds us that when we think of Jesus we must remember that he is God. When he was on earth he showed such great humility and trust in God that he allowed all those oppositions and did not fight them. How gracious he is.

42 – Job responds to God's presentation with humility and brokenness. V3b "Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." Jesus shows here that when we trust God and his ways, we will bow before him and worship him, clapping our hand over our mouth when we see what he did and what his plans were. This is most obvious in the most evil event of human history, the crucifixion of God's Son Jesus. God turned it into salvation for all, even for those who crucified him. Note that in V11 the expression is used that all this evil was what the Lord brought him. "And they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil (disaster) that the Lord had brought upon him." There is no mediator as Satan in between. That is the correct way to look at evil. It comes from God as evil even though from God it is always good for us or he will always turn it to good for us. Praise him! His answers are so much greater than our questions that they answer our questions far more than we ask. Note

that God rebuked Job's friends. V8b "For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." V10 "And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." They did not have the correct perspective even though they were loud and long in their counsel. Does that not challenge us to be very careful when we try to interpret God's motives in an action, especially toward someone else?