

THE BOOK OF JOB

The seventeen Books we have covered so far have all been historical. The Books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon are poetical. These five concern *individuals* whereas the first seventeen concerned a *nation*.

The Book of Job is **FACTUAL**. Some have suggested that it is fiction, but the witness of Scripture. **Ezekiel 14:14** and **James 5:11** speak to the authenticity of the Book of Job.

Before going deeper, we need to look at a brief explanation in order to better understand this Book. Chapters 1 and 2 are **NOT** Poetry, but a historical prologue to the poem. The poem begins in Chapter 3 and ends in Chapter 42:6. The final eleven verses are not poetry but a historical epilogue to the poem.

What gives the whole Book meaning is that Job did not know the divine counsel of God. The prologue shows how Job's trials originated and the epilogue shows how Job was enriched by the experience. In between these two, we see a group of older men giving "advice" on **WHY** these things happened to Job. They knew nothing of God's reasoning and Job was not meant to know the reasons.

This brings us to the message of the Book: **"Blessing Through Suffering"**. Please read **Romans 8:28** and **Hebrews 12:11**.

PROLOGUE — Chapters 1 & 2	DIALOGUE — Chapters 3 — 42:6	EPILOGUE — Chapter 42:7-17
	Job — Opening Lamentation — C-3	
	FIRST TRIAD	
Job — devotion in prosperity 1:1-5	Eliphaz vs. Job — Chapters 4-7 Bildad vs. Job — Chapters 8-10 Zophar vs. Job — Chapters 11-14	Job — his proven integrity — 42:7
Satan — his lie and malignity 1:6-19	SECOND TRIAD	Friends — their rebuke — 42:8
Job — his devotion in adversity — 1:20-22	Eliphaz vs. Job — Chapters 15-17 Bildad vs. Job — Chapters 18-19 Zophar vs. Job — Chapters 20-21	Job — his trial ended — 42:10
Satan — his further malignity — 2:1-8	THIRD TRIAD	Family — restored 42:11
Job — his devotion in extremity — 2:9-13	Eliphaz vs. Job — Chapters 22-24 Bildad vs. Job — Chapters 25-31 <i>Elihu</i> speaks — Chapters 32-37 <i>God: Closing Intervention:</i> Chapters 38-41	Job — his prosperity — 42:12-17

The Prologue - Chapters 1 and 2

Here we find the conversation between God and Satan. We find this account to be quite similar to what we find in other places in Scripture. In **Revelation 12:10** we see that Satan has access to God as the "accuser" of the brethren. In **Zechariah 3:1-2** we see a similar circumstance as Satan is accusing Joshua. Perhaps the most striking example is found in **Luke 22:31** in reference to Peter.

There are some important things to remember about Satan:

- * Satan is accountable to God.
- * Satan is not omnipresent nor omniscient. Only God knows all and is always present.
- * Satan can do nothing without God's permission - Job 38:11.
- * In every permission there is limitation : Job 1:12; 2:6.

The Dialogue

The main body of the Book is in dramatic form with three successive rounds or triads. There are six speakers: Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Elihu and God.

The theme of the discussion is, "Why does Job suffer?". The first three friends try to analyze Job's case. They are deadlocked until the voice of Elihu enters, but God speaks and brings to a climax what man could not solve.

ELIPHAZ - He is the first to speak to "console" Job. He delivers 3 speeches.

He is the oldest and "wisest". His argument is based on EXPERIENCE.

He was sure Job was suffering because of sin.

Job 4:8, 5:17-27, 22:5-9.

BILDAD - He bases his argument on TRADITION. He infers that Job must be hypocrite. Job 8:8, 18:5-20, 8:20, 8:6.

ZOPHAR - He only speaks twice for in the third round he is replaced by Elihu. He bases his theory and argument on ASSUMPTION. His THEORY is found in Job 11:6 and his OPINION is found in Job 20:5.

JOB'S RESPONSE

Job refutes the theory of the three in the first round; that God always prospers the upright and punishes the sinner. Job knew he was upright and yet he suffered. (6:22-28; 12:3; 13:2-5, 15, 16)

In the second triad, all three insist that the wicked always suffer and only the wicked. Job's response was that the righteous suffer also (19:25-26 and 21:7).

In the third triad the same theory is restated and Job declares his innocence of being wicked. He stated that the wicked often prosper in the world (24:6).

Job was broken - 16:12-14

Job was melted - 23:10

Job was softened - 19:21 and 23:16

ELIHU - His approach was different as he tries to convince Job that he must become humble, teachable and more patient. He says Job is sinning because of suffering and not suffering because of sinning (33:8-11; 35:15,16).

GOD - THE VOICE IN THE WHIRLWIND

Job needed more than a human voice and God begins to speak about the power of God as compared to the smallness of man:

In relation to the Earth - 38:1-18.

In relation to the heavens - 38:19-38.

In relation to living beings - 38:39-Chapter 39.

In relation to special cases - 40-42:6.

God clearly had to get Job to the end of himself: 40:1-5, 42:5-6.

The Epilogue - 42:7-17

God spoke wrath upon the three "friends" because they had done as much damage to Job's soul as Satan had done.

God transforms, vindicates and restores Job.

Transformation - "him will I accept" (8).

Vindication - "my servant" (8).

Restoration - "the Lord gave Job twice as much" (10).

Let every godly sufferer "rest in the Lord and patiently wait for Him".

Psalm 37:7. Often quoted passages of Job:

1:21; 5:17; 13:15; 14:14; 16:21; 19:23-27; 23:10; 42:1-6.

FOR NEXT WEEK

PSALMS