

The Book of Job

Outline

- I. Satan's challenge (1:1 – 2:10)
 - A. Job's circumstances (1:1-5)
 - B. Satan's assault (1:6 – 2:10)

- II. Job's debates with his friends (2:11 – 37:24)
 - A. Arrival of Job's friends (2:11-13)
 - B. First round of debates (3 – 14)
 - C. Second round of debates (15 – 21)
 - D. Third round of debates (22 – 31)
 - E. Elihu speaks (32 – 37)

- III. Job's deliverance (38 – 42)
 - A. God challenges Job (38:1 – 42:6)
 - B. Job's blessings are returned (42:7-17)

Questions on the text

Section 1 – Satan's challenge

- 1) Describe Job's character (1:1, 5, 8; see Ch. 29) and material prosperity (1:3-4).

- 2) What argument did Satan make to God (1:6-11)? What actions did God allow him to make (1:13-19; 2:4-8)?

- 3) What was Job's response to these actions (1:20-22; 2:3; 2:10)

Section 2 – Job's Debates with his friends

This section of poetry is a series of debates between Job and his friends. The general format is that each friend makes an argument, which is followed by a response from Job. There are three sets of these debates.

BRIEFLY skim this section to get an idea of the arguments of made by Job's friends, and what Job said in response. I have included some verses for reference. After skimming the section answer the questions that follow.

First set of debates

Job (3:3, 11-13, 26)
Eliphaz (4:7-9; 5:17)
Job (6:9-10, 14-15)
Bildad (8:1-6, 20-22)
Job (9:1-2, 14-21, 32-35; 10:2-9)
Zophar (11:2-6)
Job (12:4-5, 13-25; 13:3-5, 15-18)

Second set of debates

Eliphaz (15:1-13)
Job (16:2-5, 11-13; 17:6)
Bildad (18:2, 5, 20-21)
Job (19:2-11, 25-26)
Zophar (20:4-5, 27-29)
Job (21:7, 19-20, 30)

Third set of debates

Eliphaz (22:3-5, 21-23, 29-30)
Job (23:3-7; 24:1-12)
Bildad (25:4-6)
Job (26:2-4; 27:2-6; 28:12-28)

- 1) What arguments did Job's friends make? In their minds why was he suffering? What did he need to do to alleviate his suffering?
- 2) Summarize Job's response to these arguments:
 - What did Job think of his friends (13:3-5; 16:2-5; 26:2-4)?
 - Describe Job's faith and perseverance (12:13-25; 13:15; 27:2-6; 28:12-28).
 - What were some of Job's complaints (10:2-9; 16:11-13; 19:6-11; 23:3-7; 24:1-12)? Were these complaints justified?
 - What was Job's longer-term view (19:25-26)? What did he think would eventually happen to him?
- 3) Who was Elihu and what made him angry (32:2-3)? Why did he not speak earlier (32:4-9)? Summarize his argument (see 34:10-12; 35:13-16; 36:5-12; 37:5, 23-24).

Section 3 – God’s response

- 1) Summarize the argument God made to Job (Chapters 38-41). Did God mention the concepts of suffering and innocence? Instead, what did He focus on? [Note especially 38:2 – 39:30]
- 2) What was Job’s response to God’s arguments (40:3-5; 42:1-6)?
- 3) What was God’s answer to Job’s friends (42:7-9)? Was Elihu mentioned by God?
- 4) What was the end result for Job (42:10-17)?

Themes / applications

From your study of Job, how might you answer the following questions?

- 1) Why do people suffer?
- 2) What should be my attitude toward suffering?
- 3) Why do I serve God?

“Faith fills the gap between our understanding of why something is happening and our acceptance of it. Faith gives us the assurance that God is still in control, and that our service and loyalty to Him is worth whatever comes our way.”