



Introduction to the Wisdom Literature

Introduction to Job

Theme

God is completely sovereign over all the affairs of his universe, for his own glory. But often his motives, reasons, and goals behind what he does are not revealed to us. Yet we find in his character, and in our Redeemer, reason to trust in his care.

We Often Suffer

Chapters 1-2

Job loses:

- His wealth
- His family
- His health

We Only Sometimes Understand

Overview of the book of Job
(See outline on back of handout)

God's verdict on each player in the story

- Job's three friends: rebuke
- Job: affirmation of his statements about God; blessing
- Elihu: silence

Cycles of dialog

- Assumption of Job's friends
- Job's response

Four logical pillars

- The reality of Job's suffering
- God's sovereignty
- God's goodness
- Job's innocence

Summary: there *is* no satisfying explanation for Job or his friends **We Can Always Trust**

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:7

God's reasons for trusting his character (chapters 38-41)

Additional reasons to trust (chapters 1-2)

Job's suffering was because of his *virtue*.

Our reasons to trust: progression of revelation through Scripture

- Naomi's reason to trust
- Job's reason to trust
- Habakkuk's reason to trust
- The ultimate evidence: the cross of Jesus Christ

Conclusion

“Have you considered my servant?”

Study Outline for Job

- I. Job 1-2 – God sets His plan in action
- II. Job 3-14 – First Round of Discussion:*
Job’s friends insist that this calamity has come upon him because he’s sinned, and therefore must repent. Job maintains that he is innocent in this situation.
- III. Job 15-21 – Second Round of Discussion:
Job’s friends insist that his speech is wrong (i.e.: he either doesn’t know what he’s talking about, or he’s lying). But Job insists that he’s right.
- IV. Job 22-26 – Third Round of Discussion:
Job’s friends say he’s hiding something. But Job says he’s righteous.
- V. Job 27-31 – Two Monologues by Job:
Man cannot discover God’s wisdom.
- VI. Job 32-37 – Four Monologues by Elihu:
Human observers cannot expect to adequately understand God’s dealings in justice and mercy, for indeed, God might have a loving purpose after all in Job’s sufferings. Even still, in this suffering, it is still of great value to lead a godly life.
- VII. Job 38-42 – God questions Job:
“Who are you, oh man, to doubt and question the wisdom and workings of the Almighty?”

* Each round of discussion follows this pattern: one of Job’s friends speaks, then Job responds to that friend before another friend speaks, then Job responds to that friend, and so forth.