

A Study Outline of Job

Introduction

“When one has lost everything he has – his possessions, his children, his health which leaves him suffering excruciating pain – when he loses his wife’s support and faith in God’s concern, endures the accusations of his friends and becomes an outcast from society, how is he to harmonize this with the providence of an all-wise, all-powerful, and loving God?” – Homer Hailey

There are some who charge that this book is nothing more than a parable of the people of Israel suffering during Babylonian captivity.

Is it an actual, historical document?

1. It begins in the same way as other Biblical books (1 Sam. 1:1; Lk. 1:5).
2. Job is mentioned by Ezekiel (14:14, 20) and James (5:11).
3. Uz is mentioned by Jeremiah (25:20; Lam. 4:21).

When did Job live?

1. There is no reference to the Law of Moses.
2. There is no reference to the nation of Israel or the Promised Land.
3. No mention of the tabernacle, temple, or Jerusalem.
4. Job served as the priest for his family (1:5).
5. His longevity is comparable to the patriarchs (42:16).

The setting of the book

1. Job has lost everything (1:13-19), including his own health (2:7-8).
2. His “friends,” Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar come to comfort him.
3. They speak in turn, with Job responding to each speech, in an effort to determine what Job had done to deserve what he was going through.
4. We quickly learn the friends’ belief system: (1) all suffering is a direct result of personal sin; (2) Job is suffering terribly; (3) therefore, Job must be guilty of some terrible sin.

Job, the man – 1:1-5

- Perfect (NKJ – blameless), upright (integrity), feared God (reverent), turned away from evil (v. 1).
- 10 children (v. 2) and very wealthy (v. 3).
- A man who was concerned about the spiritual well-being of his children (v. 4-5).

The beginning of Job's suffering – 1:6-19

- 1:6 and 2:1 both state that Satan was in the presence of God along with the angels. They were there to give an account for what they had been doing. "Sons of God" refers to the angels – 38:7.
- 1:7 shows the realm of Satan's influence/operation. The NT teaches the same thing – Eph. 6:11-12; 1 Pet. 5:8.
- 1:8 and 2:3 – God has faith and joy in Job!
- 1:9-11 – Satan makes 2 charges:
 - Man will not serve God unless he is rewarded.
 - God is not worthy of service.
- 1:12 – Satan is permitted to afflict Job, but is limited as to how.
- 1:13-15 – Job lost his farm equipment.
- 1:16-17 – Job lost his livestock.
- 1:18-19 – Job lost his children.
- Notice how each account ends – v. 16a, 17a, 18a.

Job's response to his losses – 1:20-22

- Mourning and worship – v. 20.
- A misunderstanding of the events – v. 21.
- His integrity – v. 22.
- This section is also an answer to Satan's charges in verses 9-11.

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Job's suffering continues – 2:1-10

- 2:1-3 – Satan appears before God again to give an account. God points out the Job maintained his integrity throughout his great loss.
- 2:3b is spoken by God from Job's perspective. While God permitted Satan to test Job's faith, He was not the cause of the testing.
- 2:4-8 – Satan now attacks Job's body on the premise of self-preservation.
- The results of Job's boils:
 - Itching – 2:8
 - Disfigurement – 2:12
 - Difficulty eating – 3:24
 - Depression – 3:25
 - Broken flesh and worms in his wounds – 7:5
 - Shortness of breath – 9:18
 - Eyes sunken in – 16:16
 - Bad breath – 19:17
 - Weight loss – 19:20
 - Constant pain – 30:17
 - Dying skin – 30:30
 - Lasted from months – 29:2
- 2:9-10 – His wife's response. We must remember that she lost everything that he lost and now she's watching him suffer too. Job's ignorance of the big picture is seen again (v. 10).

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar come to comfort Job - 2:11-13 – Job's three friends show up. They had good intentions (v. 11b)! What can you say to a friend who is suffering from unimaginable loss and physical pain?

Job's expresses his grief – 3

- 3:1-19 – Why didn't I die at birth? 6 times Job asks "Why" (v. 11, 12, 20, 23).
- 3:20-26 – Why not just let me die?

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The first attempt at explaining Job's situation – 4-5

- 4:1-6 – Eliphaz builds him up to tear him down!
- 4:7-11 – You must have done something wrong!
- 4:12-16 – Eliphaz claims to have received a revelation.
- 4:17-21 – Did Job ever claim to be purer than God (v. 17)?
- 5:1-7 – Calls Job foolish and simple (v. 2). This is a classic example of passive-aggression.
- 5:8-16 – If I were you, I'd repent. This is Job's dilemma! Repent from what?
- 5:17-27 – God is punishing you now, but if you repent He will bless you.
- These two chapters lay out Job's friends messed up theology. You're suffering, therefore, you sinned.

Job's response to Eliphaz – 6-7

- 6:1-7 – I'm going through just about more than I can take! I'm not complaining for no reason (v. 5)!
- 6:8-13 – Job's wish that God would "cut him off."
- 6:14-23 – His friends are as useless as a frozen river or a dried up river.
- 6:24-30 – You say that I am guilty of sin...show me!
- 7:1-10 – Life is hard enough, but mine is harder and I'm about to die!
- 7:11-21 – Job begins to question God asking, "What have I done to you?"
- So far, all he has found from his friends (Eliphaz) are insults and accusations.

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Job's response – 7

- 7:1-10 – Life is hard enough, but mine is harder and I'm about to die!
- 7:11-21 – Job begins to question God asking, "What have I done to you?"
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Bildad's first speech – 8

- 8:1-7 – Compares Job's complaints to "strong wind" (v. 2). Job never made the claim of verse 3. Gets very personal in verse 4. Repent (v. 5-7)!
- 8:8-10 – Seek knowledge from the past.
- 8:11-18 – You are getting what you deserve. Says Job has forgotten God and is a hypocrite (v. 13).
- 8:19-22 – You are an evildoer!

Job's response to Bildad – 9-10

- 9:1-12 – Man is nothing in comparison to God. Job believes what Bildad just said (8:19-22), but he wants to know how to accomplish that. Job proclaims the power of God and even mentions the constellations (v. 9).
- 9:13-24 – Job discusses God's government of human affairs and it does not seem fair to him. He wants to speak to God, but he cannot because of his relentless suffering (v. 17-18). From his perspective the wicked were not suffering at all (v. 24).
- 9:25-35 – My life is slipping away quickly (v. 25-31) and there is no one to stand by my side as a mediator (v. 32-35).
- 10:1-7 – Since I have no mediator I will speak on my own behalf to God.
- 10:8-17 – You made me, now why are you destroying me? He feels that there is nothing he could say or do to show his innocence because of the amount of suffering God is putting him through (v. 15-17).
- 10:18-22 – I wish I had never been born! Why don't you let me die?

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Zophar's first speech - 11

- 11:1-6 – Zophar feels he has to respond (v. 3) and tells Job that God is being kind to him (v. 6b).
- 11:7-12 – Zophar has a good description of God: He is higher than the heavens, deeper than the grave, longer than the earth, and wider than the sea (v. 8-9). He claims that Job is vain (empty-headed). The NKJ verse 12 reads, “For an empty-headed man will be wise, when a wild donkey’s colt is born a man.”
- 11:13-20 – If you would just repent you would have hope!

Job's response – 12-14

- 12:1-6 – Job uses sarcasm to answer his friends and he is still struggling to understand why he is suffering so badly.
- 12:7-25 – Job confesses the wisdom and power of God. Job has never questioned the power and knowledge of God.

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Job's response to Zophar's first speech – 12-14...continued

- 13:1-2 – I am not inferior to you in knowledge.
- 13:3-12 – Job has heard from all three “friends” now and wants them to be quiet. They did not have the proper respect for and view of God (v. 8-12).
- 13:13-19 – Job proclaims his faith in God and the fact that he was not a hypocrite.
- 13:20-28 – Job directly addresses God and requests that God (1) don't forsake me and (2) don't make me afraid of you (v. 21). He wants to know, if he is guilty, what it is he has done (v. 23-24). I can't escape my trouble (v. 27)!
- 14:1-6 – Life is short and man is weak, so why would an all-powerful, eternal God punish him so extremely?
- 14:7-12 – A cut down tree can regrow, but when man is “cut down” he is no more.
- 14:13-17 – Job's hope and optimism for vindication.
- 14:18-22 – Job's depression because he feels that he is being carried away in a flood (v. 18-19).

Eliphaz's second speech – 15

- Eliphaz gets very harsh!
- 15:1-6 – You claim to be a wise man, but your words betray that claim. He questions Job's devotion to God (v. 4) and says that his mouth is led by his sin (v. 5-6).
- 15:7-16 – A series of ridiculing questions. Eliphaz feels that he and his friends are giving Job the “consolations of God” (v. 11). That shows their level of arrogance and lack of sympathy. Has Job “turned against God” (v. 13)? Verses 14-16 show that the friends have wrong views of both man and God. “Holy one” is a reference to angels who had fallen (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). God does trust angels because they are His servants who are doing His will (Heb. 1:14). Man is the highest order of God's physical creation and are made in His image (Gen. 1:26-27).
- 15:17-35 – Eliphaz expounds upon his view of wickedness. Verse 20 begins the discussion of what Eliphaz believes happens to evil men. Again, the belief of sin leads directly to suffering is brought forth by Eliphaz.

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Job's response to Eliphaz's second speech – 16-17

- Eliphaz has just implied that man (Job) is totally corrupt (15:16) and that Job is in pain because of his wickedness (15:20).
- 16:1-6 – My friends are miserable comforters! He tells them what he would do if they were in his shoes.
- 16:7-14 – Job feels that God is attacking him like a wild animal (v. 9), that He had betrayed him (v. 11), pulled the rug out from under him (v. 12), was shooting at him like a target (v. 13), and had besieged him (v. 14).
- 16:15-22 – Job reaction to what has happened to him and he again states his desire to have someone who could approach God for him (v. 21).
- 17:1-5 – Job laments his current circumstances, especially with his “friends.”
- 17:6-16 – Job seems to have lost all hope.

Bildad's second speech – 18

- 18:1-4 – Job, when are you going to be quiet?
- 18:5-21 – Bildad describes the condition of the wicked:
 - His light put out (v. 5-6).
 - He will be caught in his own trap (v. 7-10).
 - He will be paranoid (v. 11).
 - He will lose his strength (v. 12-13).
 - He will be rooted up and another shall have his stuff (v. 14-16).
 - He will not be remembered (v.17-20).
 - Job, you're wicked and you don't know God (v. 21)!

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Job's response to Bildad – 19

Bildad had just told Job that he was wicked and didn't know God (18:21).

19:1-6 – Job's complaint about his friends.

- He had earlier challenged them to show what his sins were (13:23) and they were unable to do so.
- Verse 3 shows that they had fully (10 times) rebuked him and were very harsh towards him.

19:7-12 – Job complains of what he believes is God's treatment of him.

- God won't listen to me (v. 7).
- He has hedged me in (v. 8).
- He has broken me (v. 9-10).
- His army has surrounded me (v. 11-12).

19:13-22 – The social consequences of Job's suffering. His ordeal has consumed every bit of his public and private life.

19:23-29 – Job's optimistic hope.

- Since none of his acquaintances would hear him (13-22) he desires that his sufferings could be recorded so that one day he could be vindicated (v. 23-24).
- What is a redeemer? Deuteronomy 25:5-10 explains the meaning of a redeemer under the Law of Moses. As an example, Boaz served as a redeemer for Ruth (3:10-4:12). The redeemer under the Law was the next of kin, but Job's had forsaken him. Job has faith that God would deliver/redeem him from his misery.
- Verses 25-27 shows that even in the early times of God's people there was an anticipation of the resurrection of the body and judgment.
- He (Job) would see God as Job (v. 27). We are who we are for eternity. We do not lose consciousness or our identity at the time of death.
- He warns his friends about being too judgmental (v. 28-29).

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Zophar's second speech – 20

- Job, I've just got to say this (v. 1-3)!
- Your time as a wicked man is going to be brief (v. 4-11). Calls Job wicked (v. 5), hypocritical (v. 5), and arrogant (v. 6).
- Though you prospered in your wickedness for a time, now it's over (v.12-19).
- You have been left empty, destroyed, and in fear because of your own wickedness (v.20-29).

Job's Response – 21

- 21:1-16 - Job struggles with the seeming peace and prosperity of the wicked. Job contradicts what his friends have said about the wicked (5:2-7; 20:11). Their thinking is flawed and Job knows it! Job is showing the contradiction in their beliefs – v. 7, 14-15.
- 21:17-26 – His friends have claimed that God destroys all wicked people and he questions that conclusion in these verses. Both the prosperous and the poor have the same ultimate end (v. 26).
- 21:27-34 – Job knows how they think (v. 27) and he knows that their thinking is “empty words” (v. 34 – NKJ).

Eliphaz's third and final speech – 22

- 22:1-11 – His charges against Job. He asks the question, “are you being punished because you're good” (v. 4)?
- 22:12-20 – Charges Job with questioning the knowledge of God. Job, will you keep living in the sins that have put you where you are (v. 15-16)?
- 22:21-30 – His last pleading with Job to return to God.

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Job responds to Eliphaz – 23-24

23:1-9 – Job expresses his desire to stand before God and speak.

- In 22:21-23 Eliphaz instructed him to return to the Almighty and here he is seeming to say that that is exactly what he wants to do. He seems to feel confident that if he could stand before God he would be vindicated and that God would be on his side (v. 5-6).
- 23:10-17 – Job states his confidence in the fact that he has been faithful to God, but it seems that God's mind is made up against him (v. 13-15).
- 24:1-17 – Why aren't the wicked being punished as I am? He sees wickedness all around him, yet he says, "God layeth not folly to them" (v. 12).
- 24:18-25 – Job's perspective on how God deals with the wicked. If what he is saying is not true, he wants someone to tell him (v. 25). His friends have provided no answer as to why the wicked live and prosper and why the righteous, himself included, suffer.

Bildad's final speech – 25

- 25:1-3 – He opens by speaking of the power of God. Job has never questioned this.
- 25:4-6 – He then wonders if man can be right (just) with God. On writer noted that Bildad spoke of the power of God, but did not mention His love, mercy, grace, and readiness to forgive. He used two words to describe man: first worm – maggot – a reference to rot and decay; second worm – larvae – a reference to lowliness or insignificance.
- Genesis 1:26; Psalm 8:4-5

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Job's final response to his friends – 26-31

26:1-4 – A sarcastic response from Job.

26:5-14 – The power and wisdom of God.

27:1-10 – Job maintains that he is innocent.

27:11-23 – The end of the wicked man.

28:1-11 – Man's wisdom and ability.

28:12-28 – But true wisdom and power can only be found with God.

29-31 – Job looks back on his life before everything fell apart.

- 29:1-6 – God and my family were with me.
- 29:7-17 – I was respected in the community.
- 29:18-25 – The prosperity and wisdom he enjoyed.
- 30:1-15 – Now the lowest members of society mock him.
- 30:16-31 – I am suffering terrible, physical pain and God has left me.
- 31:1-4 – A covenant with his eyes.
- 31:5-8 – He had been an honest person in life.
- 31:9-12 – He had been faithful to his wife.
- 31:13-23 – He had helped the needy.
- 31:24-28 – His faith was not in his wealth.
- 31:29-34, 38-40 – He had not been spiteful or sneaky.
- 31:35-37 – One more time he expresses his desire to stand before God and speak.

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The fourth friend, Elihu speaks – 32-37

32 – Elihu has apparently been listening to Job and his friends the whole time (v. 4-5). This chapter is just Elihu saying that the friends couldn't answer Job and he feels compelled to do it for them (v. 18-20).

33 – Starts out with arrogance (v. 1-5). He states what Job has been saying (v.8-11) and then speaks of how God communicates to man:

- Through dreams – 13-18.
- Through suffering – 19-22.
- A messenger – 23-28.
- Elihu ends with arrogance – 29-33.

34 – Listen to me (v. 1-4)! Elihu states that Job is self-righteous and misconstrues what Job had been saying (v. 5-9). Elihu speaks some truths about God, but misapplies these truths to Job's situation (v. 10-30). He then accuses Job of having no knowledge (v. 35) and being comparable to wicked men (v. 36-37).

35 – A strong rebuke of Job's words. What benefit are you to God (v. 1-8)? He states that God is not hurt when we sin and not happy when we are righteous (v.6-8). God does not answer you because you are evil (v. 9-16).

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Elihu's speech continued – 36-37

36:1-4 – My knowledge comes directly from God and is perfect.

36:5-16 – Elihu's views on God's justice.

36:17-37:24 – Encourages Job to recognize the power of God and turn to Him.

Finally, God speaks – 38-41


38:1-3 – Jehovah's introduction. Job, pull yourself together and answer me!

God uses different aspects of His creation to show His power and wisdom:

- The creation – 4-7.
 - The sea – 8-11.
 - The sunrise – 12-15.
 - Springs of the sea – 16-18.
 - Light and darkness – 19-21.
 - Snow and hail – 22-24.
 - Rain, lightning, thunder – 25-30.
 - Constellations – 31-33.
 - Clouds – 34-38.
 - The lioness – 39-40.
 - The raven – 41.
 - Wild goats – 39:1-4.
 - Wild donkey – 5-8.
 - Wild ox – 9-12.
 - Ostrich – 13-18.
 - War horse – 19-25.
 - Hawk – 26.
 - Eagle – 27-30.
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- Inanimate creation
- Animate creation

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- 
- Animate creation

God gives Job a chance to speak – 40

- God's purpose in speaking in such a way was to humble Job by showing the great contrast between the Infinite and the finite (40:1-2).
- Job's opportunity to speak was used to admit that he understood God's point and was incapable of standing before God with questions (40:3-5).
- 40:6-14 – Job was challenged to play the role of judge.
- 40:15-24 – God uses one part of the physical creation as evidence that Job is "out of his league." Behemoth is the "chief of the ways of God" (v. 19).

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God questions Job about leviathan – 41

God has questioned Job about His inanimate creation (38:1-38), and the animated creation (38:39-39:30).

God now uses two examples of His power from creation – behemoth (40:15-24) and leviathan (41:1-34).

Notice the description of this animal:

- You cannot capture him or tame him (1-10a). If you cannot do this to this one creature Job, how do you hope to stand before Me (10b-11)?
- He has an “outer coat” (NKJ), “garment” (KJV).
- Terrible teeth (14).
- Scales that are sealed up (15-17, 23, 26-30).
- He breathed fire (18-21).
- A powerful neck (22).
- He is unmovable (24-25).
- He could swim (31-32).
- No other creature is comparable (33-34).

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Job is restored – 42

42:1-6 - In view of all the creation that God had spoken of, Job realized God's mighty power and wisdom. He now realized that God and His ability is far too magnificent for man to understand and question.

42:7-9 – The three friends rebuked. The text twice states that “the Lord accepted Job” (v. 8-9).

42:10-17 – Job is blessed with “twice as much as he had before.” Verse 16 also gives us an indication as concerning the date of the book.

Learning from the book of Job

1. People suffer because of personal wrong choices – Judges 6:1; 1 Peter 4:15.
2. People suffer because of personal wrong choices of others – drinking, murder/assault.
3. People suffer because of the choices of former generations – Exodus 20:5-6; Romans 5:12.
4. People suffer because of natural law – gravity; Luke 13:4.
5. Suffering reminds us that this world was never designed or intended to be our eternal home.
6. Sometimes we will never know the “whys” of our suffering. Job reminds us of how man often believes he knows more than God or better than God.
7. We also learn about the nature of Satan – Job 1:9-11; 2:4-5.
 - a. He is called the Devil (slanderer, accuser) – Revelation 12:10.
 - b. He is called Satan (adversary) – Luke 10:18.
 - c. He is called the god of this world – 2 Corinthians 4:4.
 - d. He is called the prince of the power of the air – Ephesians 2:2.