

JOB: A MESSY FAITH

There is no testimony without a test

INTRODUCTION

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY?

Who wrote it? **Unknown**, but here are a few famous opinions:

1. Martin Luther: Solomon
2. Ancient Jews: Moses
3. Modern commentators: Elihu (based on [Job 32:15](#))
4. Others: Isaiah, Job, Ezekiel, etc.

What is it about? Job's testing, response, **discussion**, and understanding of his situation

Shepherd's Notes: Job has . . . many features that are found in other books:

- **Hymn.** The book has many psalm-like hymns that praise God for His power and justice (e.g., [5:9-16](#) and [26:5-14](#)). See [Psalms 94](#) and [97](#).
- **Proverb.** The Speakers often use pithy saying to make their points or to appeal to traditional wisdom. One can compare [Job 5:2](#) to [Proverbs 29:11](#) and [Job 28:28](#) to [Proverbs 1:7](#).
- **Lamentation.** Job repeatedly bewails what has befallen him, as in [3:1-26](#); [6:2-7](#); [10:1-12](#); [19:1-21](#). We see similar passages in [Psalm 22:1-18](#) and the entire book of [Lamentations](#).
- **Questioning of Traditions.** Job sometimes bluntly challenged conventional wisdom. One can compare his outburst in [21:17-19](#) to [Ecclesiastes 9:2-3](#).
- **Wisdom Poem.** Job has several lengthy poems on the value of wisdom and right behavior. One can compare [Job 28](#) to [Proverbs 30:2-4](#) and [Job 8:11-22](#) to [Psalm 1:3-6](#).
- **Prophetic Ecstasy.** The friends sometimes claimed to have had prophetic visions and revelations. See [Job 4:12-14](#) and [32:18-20](#) and compare [Isaiah 6](#).

Where does the story take place? According to [Job 1:1](#), "The land of **Uz**" (which, according to [Lamentations 4:21](#), contains Edom—which is modern-day southern Israel, western Jordan, and western Saudi Arabia (this is consistent geographically with where Job's friends came from as well as the proximity of his enemies))

When did it occur? Commentators disagree, but most likely within 200 years of **Abraham**, because:

1. Job offered sacrifices as the head of his family (rather than a priest, implying pre-Exodus)
2. No mention of Israel, the Law, or any other Bible character (implying pre-Law)
3. Job lived to be at least 180 years old (implying relative closeness to the post-Flood events)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
Methuselah	969	Enoch	365	Aaron	123
Noah	950	Isaac	180	Moses	120
Adam	930	Abraham	175	Joseph	110
Shem	600	Jacob	147	Joshua	110

Timeline and additional historical events: 3000 BC – cuneiform writing, 2700 BC – Pyramids, 2300 BC – Stonehenge built, 1800 BC – Hammurabi

Why was it written? To show the sovereignty and incomparable **wisdom** of God in all things

Warren Wiersbe: Yes, many people have heard about Job and his trials; but not many people understand what those trials were all about and what God was trying to accomplish. (page 9)

Most people think Job answers the question of why people suffer. **Warren Wiersbe: There is nothing wrong with asking why, as long as we don't get the idea that God owes us an answer.** I'm not so sure it does (we'll look more at that in week three), but C. S. Lewis was asked one time why the righteous suffered. His response? "Why not? They're the only ones that can handle it."

OUTLINE

Act 1: Job 1:1-2:10
(Prologue)

Scene 1: Job 1:1-5: Earth

Scene 2: Job 1:6-12: Heaven

Scene 3: Job 1:13-22: Earth

Scene 4: Job 2:1-6: Heaven

Scene 5: Job 2:7-10: Earth

Act 2: Job 2:11-4:2:6
(Dialogue)

Intro: Job 2:11-13

Scene 1: Job 3-14:
Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar

Scene 2: Job 15-21:
Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Zophar

Scene 3: Job 22-37:
Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Elihu

Scene 4: Job 38:1-42:6:
God, Job

Act 3: Job 42:7-16
(Epilogue)

SCHEDULE

Week 1: **Job 1:1-2:10:** Job's **Calamity**

Week 3: **Job 38:1-42:6:** Jehovah's Comeback

Week 2: **Job 2:11-37:24:** Job's **Conversations**

Week 4: **Job 42:7-16:** Job's Conclusion

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

1. To be prepared in the day of calamity not to curse God [**John Piper: not just keeping a stiff upper lip but bowing reverently and trustingly before the sovereign goodness of God**]
2. To illuminate God's perspective [**Shepherd's Notes: Only God can manage the world and bring all things to a just ending. He knows what He is doing, and He will not fail. The righteous have to trust in His goodness and wisdom even when they do not understand what He is doing. And their greatest reward is simply this, that they know God.**]
3. To see that God does not behave as a man. God's actions will seem strange and even cruel at times, but we must remember that His ways are higher than our ways.

Ron Keck: God doesn't have a problem with messiness. We're the only ones that have a problem when faith gets messy.

David Guzik: The Book of Job is not primarily about one man's suffering and pain; Job's problem is not so much financial or social or medical; his central problem is *theological*. Job must deal with the fact that in his life, God does not act the way he always thought God would and should act.

4. To know that God is in charge right now of all things and always will be in charge of all things

ACT 1: JOB 1

SCENE 1: JOB AND HIS FAMILY IN UZ

1 There was a man in the land of Uz [wooded], **whose name was Job** [**hated**; the root word means to be hostile to or to be an enemy to]; **and that man was blameless** [complete, having integrity; **David Guzik: Sin is vertical, blameless is horizontal**] **and upright** [straight (as opposed to crooked)], **and one who feared God** [elohiyim] **and shunned** [turned aside from, avoided] **evil** [see **Proverbs 8:13** for more on this concept]. **2 And seven sons and three daughters were born to him.** **3 Also, his possessions** [cattle/livestock] **were seven thousand sheep** [sheep and goats], **three thousand camels** [**Jamieson, Fausset, Brown: Camels are well called "ships of the desert," especially valuable for caravans**], **five hundred yoke** [pairs] **of oxen** [note: oxen were only used to plough land, so how much land did he have that he needed 500 pair of oxen?], **five hundred female donkeys** [probably primarily used for their milk], **and a very** [exceedingly] **large household** [number of servants], **so that this man was the greatest** [could also be translated, most important] **of all the people of the East.**

4 And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day [perhaps on each one's **birthday?**], **and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink** [note: there is a special Hebrew stem that could have been used here to articulate drunkenness and that stem is not used here] **with them.** [**David Guzik: Spurgeon saw Job 1:4-5 as permission for feasting and celebration among believers; he preached a Christmas sermon upon this very text and used it as proof that God allows and enjoys such celebrations among His people.**] **5 So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send** [stretch out] **and sanctify** [set apart] **them, and he would rise early**

in the morning and offer burnt offerings *according to the number of them all*. For Job said, "It may be [perhaps] that my sons have sinned [taken a wrong turn] and cursed [*barak*, normally the word for bless, but here used sarcastically and translated curse (also translated this way in [Job 1:11](#) and [Job 2:5, 9](#)) God [elohiyim] in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly [when their birthdays concluded—a wonderful testimony to his children].

Ray C. Stedman: Viewpoint makes a tremendous difference. I was at a church yesterday, listening to a young man leading us in songs and playing his guitar. He told us about a meeting he had recently where he was to sing for some high school students. His four-year-old daughter asked, "Daddy, where are you going?" He replied, "I'm going to go sing for the kids." She asked could she come so he took her along. When they got to the meeting, he was surrounded by all the high school kids and his little girl looked up at him and said, "Well, Daddy, where are all the kids?" He said, "Well, there they are, out there." She looked at him and said, "Daddy, those aren't kids—those are baby sitters!"

Ron Keck: God graciously pulls back the curtain to reveal the unseen and shows how deeply it impacts our stories. . . . In so many ways life is more complicated than we realize. We play a part but we don't always know what part or how it fits with all the others.

SCENE 2: SATAN ATTACKS JOB'S CHARACTER

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God [elohiyim; 'sons of God' most likely means [angels](#) (by far the most common view of the commentators) as it provides few interpretational issues (similarly in [Genesis 6:2](#))] came to present themselves before the LORD [Jehovah], and Satan [the adversary] also came [note the 'also' in that Satan is not among the 'sons of God'] among [in the middle of] them [this should shatter the unbiblical view that those that oppose God cannot be present in heaven—both sin and sinners can be present in heaven, but they won't be present in heaven for all of eternity—as is validated by [Revelation 12:7-9](#)]. 7 And the LORD [Jehovah] said to Satan, "From where do you come?" [Obviously, God knew the answer to this question. In the New Testament, Jesus would ask an initial question in order to lead the conversation in a particular direction. Like Father like Son?]

So Satan answered [answered, testified, witnessed] the LORD [Jehovah] and said, "From going to and fro [roving about] on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

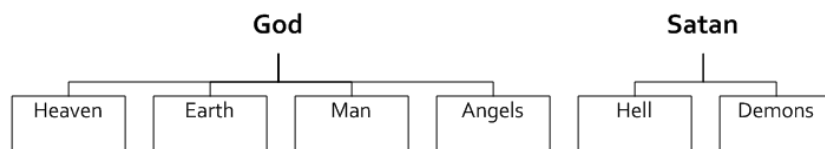
8 Then the LORD [Jehovah] said to Satan, "Have you considered [literally, 'Have you put your understanding on'] My servant [slave/servant] Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless [complete, having integrity—the same word used in [Job 1:1](#)] and upright [straight (as opposed to crooked)—the same word used in [Job 1:1](#)] man, one who fears God [elohiyim] and shuns [turns aside from, avoids—the same word used in [Job 1:1](#)] evil?" [We must keep God's assessment of Job in mind as we go through Act 2 in the following weeks. John Piper: It's as though a diamond thief should meet the owner at the back of a jewelry store late at night. The owner says, "What are you doing?" And the thief answers, "Just walking around in your store." And then the owner says, "Did you see our most precious diamond up there at the front?"]

9 **So Satan answered** [answered, testified, witnessed] **the LORD** [Jehovah] **and said, “Does Job fear God** [elohiym] **for nothing** [for free, without cause; this word is used in [2 Samuel 24:24](#)?] [Notice that Satan did not dispute God’s claims about Job—there was nothing visible to dispute with. Satan is attacking God here—Job is not his real target.] 10 **Have You not made a hedge** [fence—it is not clear if this is a normal act of God or if this was a special act of God—Jesus gives Peter a similar story in [Luke 22:31-32](#)] **around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed** [*barak*, the same word used in [Job 1:5](#), this time used non-sarcastically] **the work of his hands, and his possessions** [cattle/livestock] **have increased** [burst open—referring to their growth] **in the land.** 11 **But now** [However], **stretch out Your hand and touch** [touch/strike] **all that he has, and he will surely curse** [literally, ‘not bless’] **You to Your face!”** [Unfortunately, this statement is true of many due to a misconception of God and His nature and sovereignty.]

12 **And the LORD** [Jehovah] **said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power** [literally, hand—we know that we are always in God’s hand, so if God put Job in Satan’s hand, then whose hand is Satan in? God’s]; **only do not lay a hand on his person** [literally, ‘stretch out your hand’].”

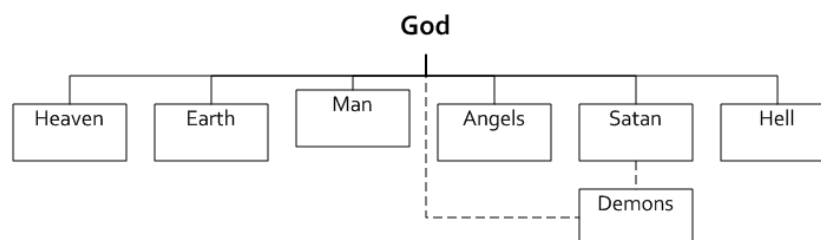
Organizational Structure of the Universe

Prior



Organizational Structure of the Universe

Current



Ray C. Stedman: [The book of Job] **is given to us to reveal the relationship of Satan and God, so that we are not confused about the power of this vicious enemy against whom we all wrestle. Satan is not the equivalent of God. We do not have two gods, a good god and a bad god, struggling against each other. This book helps us to understand right from the start that God is in control of all things. All forces are at his command, and nothing ever takes him by surprise—nothing goes beyond his word and his will, including Satan.**

So Satan went out from the presence [the face] **of the LORD** [Jehovah]. We had to have the Act 1: Scene 2 to understand Act 1: Scene 3. **John Piper: This world alone never answers the great questions of life.**

SCENE 3: JOB LOSES HIS PROPERTY AND CHILDREN

13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking [again note (just as in **Job 1:4**): there is a special Hebrew stem that could have been used here to articulate drunkenness and that stem is not used here] **wine in their oldest brother's house; 14 and a messenger** [translated both angel and messenger in the Old Testament—the delineation coming from the context] **came to Job and said, "The oxen** [cattle/oxen] **were plowing and the** [*female*] **donkeys feeding beside them, 15 when the Sabeans** [literally, Sheba; a nation in southern Arabia] **raided** [fell on, attacked] **them and took** [took, captured] **them away—indeed they have killed the servants** [servant boys] **with the edge of the sword** [sword/knife]; **and I alone have escaped** [escaped, slipped away, delivered] **to tell you!"**

16 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God [elohiym; sometimes Satan will work in a way that God can be blamed—we must use extreme caution in attributing God's hand to events] **fell** [fell on, attacked—same word as in **Job 1:15**] **from heaven** [used of both Heaven (the place) and the sky] **and burned up the sheep** [sheep and goats] **and the servants** [servant boys], **and consumed them; and I alone have escaped** [escaped, slipped away, delivered] **to tell you!"** [**J. Vernon McGee: We talk about the crash of the stock market. I tell you, Job had real stock, and it was all taken away. Everything was wiped out.**]

17 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans [clod-breakers; a territory in lower Mesopotamia bordering on the Persian Gulf] **formed** [put together] **three bands** [divisions of men], **raided** [fell, stripped off with] **the camels and took** [took, captured] **them away, yes, and killed the servants** [servant boys] **with the edge of the sword** [sword/knife]; **and I alone have escaped** [escaped, slipped away, delivered] **to tell you!"**

18 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 19 and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck [touched/struck; the same word used in **Job 1:11** that described what God told Satan to do to Job's possessions—we see the obedience of Satan when God sets out requirements] **the four corners of the house, and it fell** [fell on, attacked—same word used in **Job 1:15** and **Job 1:16**] **on the young people** [literally, 'servant boys,' but the word is also translated 'children' elsewhere in Scripture], **and they are dead; and I alone have escaped** [escaped, slipped away, delivered] **to tell you!"** [**David Guzik: We should expect that** [Satan] **will maximize any advantage given to him. Ron Keck: The enemy is real and uses live ammunition**]

J. Vernon McGee: Whatever you have, the Lord gave it to you. And he can take it away if He wishes.

John Gill: It may be observed, among all Job's losses, he did not lose anything of a spiritual nature, not one spiritual blessing; though he lost all his outward mercies, yet not the God of his mercies;

not his covenant interest in him, nor his share in his love, favor, and acceptance, which all still continued; he did not lose his interest in a living Redeemer; his children were all dead, but his Redeemer lived, and he knew it; he did not lose the principle of grace in him, the root of the matter was still with him; nor anyone particular grace, not his faith and confidence in God, nor his hope of eternal life, nor his love and affection to God, and desire after him; nor his patience and humility; nor his integrity, faithfulness, and honesty, which he retained and held fast; nor any of his spiritual riches, which are durable; he had riches in heaven, where thieves cannot break through and steal, a better and a more enduring substance there, an inheritance incorruptible, reserved in the heavens.

20 **Then Job arose** [arose, stood, was fixed, persisted—the idea being solidity], **tore his robe** [garment worn over a tunic—this does not indicate Job stripped down naked, but was rather an outward symbol of mourning], **and shaved his head** [another outward symbol of mourning]; **and he fell** [fell on, attacked—same word used in [Job 1:15](#), [Job 1:16](#), and [Job 1:18](#), but here used in the sense of the result of the fall in the sense that he prostrated himself] **to the ground and worshiped** [literally, ‘prostrated’—an act of physical submission]. 21 **And he said:**

“Naked [Naked, Bare] **I came from my mother’s womb,**

And naked [naked, bare] **shall I return there.**

The LORD [Jehovah] **gave, and the LORD** [Jehovah] **has taken away** [taken, captured]; [this sentence lends credence to a post-Exilic timeline for Job because of [Exodus 6:2-3](#)]

Blessed be the name [name, reputation, glory] **of the LORD** [Jehovah].” [This was a victory for God. After round one, the score is God **1**, Satan **0**. **John Piper: The magnificence of his worship is because it was in grief, not because it replaced grief. Let your tears flow freely when your calamity comes.**]

Ron Keck: Grieving is a gift from God to help us cope and begin to heal from losses in our lives. Somewhere along the way we got the idea that God is without emotion so we should always relate to Him in a sterile, reverent fashion. Lament and complaint are some of the vehicles God provided to help us stay engaged with Him even when we carry deep pain and frustration.

22 **In all this Job did not sin** [take a wrong turn] **nor charge** [give] **God** [elohiym] **with wrong** [foolishness, emptiness, silliness]. Job’s response here may seem too good to be true—he doesn’t sin at all. How could he submit to this kind of God? Job’s view of God was very, very big (and good). The bigger our view of God, the easier it is to **submit** to Him. **Oswald Chambers: The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else.**

Adam Clarke: This is the transaction that gave the strong and vivid coloring to the character of Job; in this, and in *this alone*, he was a *pattern of patience and resignation*. In this Satan was utterly disappointed; he found a man who loved his God more than his earthly portion.

JOB 2

SCENE 4: SATAN ATTACKS JOB'S HEALTH

1 Again there was a day when the sons of God [elohiyim] **came to present themselves before the LORD** [Jehovah], **and Satan came also among them to present himself** [this is different than in **Job 1**—here Satan is presenting himself instead of just showing up with the others] **before the LORD** [Jehovah]. [Satan, because of his prior assignment by God, now has to report on the status] **2 And the LORD** [Jehovah] **said to Satan, “From where do you come?”**

Satan answered [answered, testified, witnessed] **the LORD** [Jehovah] **and said, “From going to and fro** [roving about] **on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”**

3 Then the LORD [Jehovah] **said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?*** [These are the exact words God used in **Job 1:8**] **And still he holds fast** [strengthened, hardened, holding on to] **to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy** [swallow, squander] **him without cause** [for free, without cause; the same word used in **Job 1:9**].”

4 So Satan answered [answered, testified, witnessed] **the LORD** [Jehovah] **and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life.** [Notice that Satan’s fundamental philosophy is that man is self-centered and can be turned if the right switch is flipped] **5 But** [However] **stretch out Your hand now, and touch** [touch/strike] **his bone** [bone, essence, substance] **and his flesh** [*basar*, the same word used in **Genesis 2:24** where God describes the ‘one flesh’ concept], **and he will surely curse** [*barak*, normally the word for bless, but here used sarcastically and translated curse (also translated this way in **Job 1:11** and **Job 2:9**] **You to Your face!”**

6 And the LORD [Jehovah] **said to Satan, “Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare** [protect, keep guard, save, watch—the implication is that Satan is responsible for it] **his life.”** [Notice the lack of a negative consequence if Satan were to kill him—perhaps Satan was already familiar with consequences of disobedience and there was no need to plough the same ground twice.]

SCENE 5

7 So Satan went out from the presence [face] **of the LORD** [Jehovah], **and struck** [struck, attacked, ravaged, punished, subjugated] **Job with painful** [malignant, painful, distressing] **boils** [**Brittney Hamby**/a skin disease caused by infection of hair follicles—can cause extreme pain, swollen lymph nodes, fever, and foul smell when the pus discharges from the sores; **Job 7:5** gives us more on what he experienced; it is interesting to note that the Hebrew word is singular—implying one enormously large boil covering his entire body] **from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.** **8 And he took for himself a potsherd** [clay pot] **with which to scrape** [scrape, scratch] **himself while he sat** [stayed, remained, dwelled] **in the midst of the ashes.** [**Shepherd’s Notes: The skin disease with which Satan afflicted Job was particularly cruel. He was apparently covered with boils and oozing sores. This would have been extremely painful, but it would neither be fatal nor render him delirious or mentally incapacitated. Thus, he would experience the full fury of his pain but have no reason to**

suppose that it would soon all be over, and he would not lose the ability to brood over why all this had happened to him. That is, his consciousness of his condition was part of his affliction.]

9 **Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to** [make strong, hold on to, sustain, contain] **your integrity? Curse** [*barak*, normally the word for bless, but here used sarcastically and translated curse (also translated this way in [Job 1:11](#) and [Job 2:5](#)) **God** [elohiyim] **and die!"** [Notice that she does not say this after they lose their possessions, their servants, or their children. She says this when her husband is in pain. She endured, but not as long as he did. **Shepherd's Notes: We do not have enough information to enable us to evaluate Job's wife's character. Her words could be read, at worst, as bitter rejection of God on her part or, at best, as compassion for Job and a desire to see his misery ended. . . . Even against her counsel he remained devout. The focus of this text is not on the disposition of his wife but on the faithfulness of [Job](#) against all odds.**]

Ray C. Stedman: The reason we are here is not necessarily to have a good time. There are meaningful objectives to be attained in life, even when it all turns sour. When the pressure comes, when living is no longer fun, life is still worth living. A philosophy that wants to abandon everything as soon as things become unpleasant is a shallow, mistaken, distorted view of life.

10 **But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish** [foolish, senseless] **women speaks.** [Job is cautious in his rebuke—he doesn't call her foolish, he says she speaks 'as' one of the foolish speaks (the implication is that this is not how she would normally speak)] **Shall we indeed accept** [receive, accept] **good** [agreeable things, beneficial things] **from God** [elohiyim], **and shall we not accept** [receive, accept] **adversity** [evil, distress, misery, injury, calamity, unhappiness]?" **In all this Job did not sin** [take a wrong turn] **with his lips.** [**David Guzik: We must always worship the Giver and not the gifts. The Giver is greater than the gifts He gives.** Again, it's hard to see, but this was a victory for God. After round two, the score is God [2](#), Satan [0](#). And at this point we here no more from Satan for the remainder of the story—he is a defeated foe at this point and leaves. From here on out, the story becomes about Job's understanding of God.]

Ron Keck: Our individual stories—our lives—can seem random. But the truth is that we're entangled in a story much larger than our individual stories. There is a much greater reality beyond what we see and touch in our daily lives. It can either be scary or inspiring to think that we're part of a larger, unpredictable, unseen story. Occasionally we catch glimpses of a backstory or foreshadowings of a future story. It feels like something must connect these glimpses and every individual's experiences into the most complex novel ever written. Job's story is one chapter in this mega-novel in which God pulls back the curtain to reveal the epic struggle. (page 25)

CLOSING PRAYER

Ray C. Stedman: Our heavenly Father, we are grateful that we have so much blessing in our lives. How much your hand has given! How much it has poured into our life already, in terms of joy, pleasure, peace, relationship, warmth and love. We can only give thanks, Lord. And rather than complain about what we do not have, Lord, help our hearts to be filled with gratitude for what we

have. Help us to know that your heart of love is watching over us, and protecting us from a vicious and evil being who would destroy us in a second if he could. Make us grateful for that. . . . Father, we are sobered by this book. We see something of the blood and tears that life can confront us with, and of the ruthless pressures to which we can sometimes be subjected, and still be in your will and in your hand, guarded and guided by your love. Lord, we do not understand that, but that is because our understanding is so limited. We pray that as we go through this book we will have our eyes opened to the kind of a God we deal with, and to the ways you work, and what the ultimate meaning will be in our own lives. Teach us now by your Spirit, in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen.

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INTRODUCTION

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY?

Who wrote it? Unknown

What is it about? Job's testing, response, discussion, and understanding of his situation

Where does the story take place? According to [Job 1:1](#), "The land of Uz"

When did it occur? Commentators disagree, but most likely within 200 years of Abraham (important as this timeline implies that there was no special revelation (e.g., Bible) in existence at this time—oral tradition was how God's expectations were communicated to the next generation)

Why was it written? To show the sovereignty and incomparable wisdom of God in all things

OUTLINE

Act 1: [Job 1:1-2:10](#)

(Prologue)

Scene 1: [Job 1:1-5](#): Earth

Scene 2: [Job 1:6-12](#): Heaven

Scene 3: [Job 1:13-22](#): Earth

Scene 4: [Job 2:1-6](#): Heaven

Scene 5: [Job 2:7-10](#): Earth

Act 2: [Job 2:11-42:6](#)

(Dialogue)

Intro: [Job 2:11-13](#)

Scene 1: [Job 3-14](#):

Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar

Scene 2: [Job 15-21](#):

Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Zophar

Scene 3: [Job 22-37](#):

Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Elihu

Scene 4: [Job 38:1-42:6](#):

God, Job

Act 3: [Job 42:7-16](#)

(Epilogue)

SCHEDULE

Week 1: [Job 1:1-2:10](#): Job's **Calamity**

Week 3: [Job 38:1-42:6](#): Jehovah's **Comeback**

Week 2: [Job 2:11-37:24](#): Job's **Conversations**

Week 4: [Job 42:7-16](#): Job's Conclusion

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

1. To value the ministry of **presence** (both when practiced and when received)
2. To understand that we do not **understand** [Ron Keck: **God doesn't have a problem with messiness. We're the only ones that have a problem when faith gets messy.**]
3. To witness the importance of accurate theology (specifically, an accurate view of **God**) [Duane Olcsvary: **When things turn from bad to worse, sound theology helps us remain stable.**]
4. To see that discernment is needed to detect **unbiblical** advice from well-meaning people
5. To learn the **danger** of quoting verses out of context from the book of **Job** (always look them up!)

REVIEW OF LAST WEEK:

1. Job was a **blameless** man (not sinless, but blameless), and sinless to this point in the story (**Job 2:10**)

David Guzik: "Much later in the book we will catch a glimpse of what Job actually did with his money, and with his time and energy: he rescued the needy; he cared personally for the handicapped and the dying; he brought orphans into his home; he even took the power barons of his day to court and argued the case for the underprivileged (see 29:12-17; 31:16-21)." (Mason)

2. Job has lost his **children** (no matter his relationship with God, his loss was real and painful)

Ron Keck: Job is most affected by the drama in the heavens, but knows least about what's going on. (page 31)

3. Job was in tremendous **pain** (afflicted with boils)—see **Job 2:12; 7:3, 5; 19:17, 20; 30:17, 30**

ACT 2: JOB 2:11-13

INTRO: JOB'S THREE FRIENDS

11 When Job's three friends, Eliphaz [my God is (fine) gold] **the Temanite, Bildad** [confusing (by mingling) love] **the Shuhite and Zophar** [sparrow] **the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize** [literally, to waver, to show grief, to mourn] **with him and comfort** [comfort, console] **him. 12 When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled** [sprinkled, scattered] **dust** [dust, ashes] **on their heads. 13 Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great** [exceedingly and abundantly magnified] **his suffering** [pain (mental and physical), sorrow—only used six times in the Old Testament—two of which are in **Job**] **was.**

Question: What have his friends done right at this point? (paid attention; came; mourned; shut up)

I do not want to quickly rush by this point—these are real friends who really care. They put aside their lives, their families, their issues to come and administer the ministry of presence (just showing up).

Rob Bell: When it all falls apart, who are the people that would sit with you? What sorts of perspectives would they offer?

Read through two chapters to see what you can determine about these men and their theologies.

(as an aside, our pastor, Gary Jared, asked me to read through Rabbi Harold Kushner’s classic work, “When Bad Things Happen to Good People” to see the ‘other side of the theological fence.’—It is a treatise on Job that lays waste to God’s goodness and character and scoffs at the authority of Scripture)

JOB 3-37 (NEW KING JAMES VERSION CHAPTER HEADINGS)

SCENE 1: JOB 3-14:

3: Job Deplores His Birth
(**Job 3:1-3** sets the stage for the entire discussion)

4: Eliphaz: Job Has Sinned

5: Eliphaz: Job Is Chastened by God

6: Job: My Complaint Is Just

7: Job: My Suffering Is Comfortless

8: Bildad: Job Should Repent

9: Job: There Is No Mediator

10: Job: I Would Plead with God

11: Zophar Urges Job to Repent

12: Job Answers His Critics

13-14: Job’s Despondent Prayer (**Job 13:15**)

SCENE 2: JOB 15-21:

15: Eliphaz Accuses Job of Folly

16: Job Reproaches His Pitiless Friends

17: Job Prays for Relief

18: Bildad: The Wicked Are Punished

19: Job Trusts in His Redeemer (**Job 19:25**)

20: Zophar’s Sermon on the Wicked Man

21: Job’s Discourse on the Wicked

SCENE 3: JOB 22-37:

22: Eliphaz Accuses Job of Wickedness

23: Job Proclaims God’s Righteous Judgments

24: Job Complains of Violence on the Earth

25: Bildad: How Can Man Be Righteous?

26: Job: Man’s Frailty and God’s Majesty

27: Job Maintains His Integrity

28: Job’s Discourse on Wisdom

29-31: Job’s Summary Defense

32: Elihu Contradicts Job’s Friends (Elihu is a new character—see **Job 32:1-5** for his introduction)

33: Elihu Contradicts Job

34: Elihu Proclaims God’s Justice

35: Elihu Condemns Self-Righteousness

36-37: Elihu Proclaims God’s Goodness and God’s Majesty

Chapter: _____

Verses with questionable theology: _____

Verses with good theology: _____

Chapter: _____

Verses with good theology: _____

Verses with questionable theology: _____

Warren Wiersbe: All three men said some good and true things, as well as some foolish things; but they were no use to Job because their viewpoint was too narrow. . . . Their theology was not vital and vibrant but dead and rigid, and the God they tried to defend was small enough to be understood and explained. . . . Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar have many disciples today. (page 25)

Warren Wiersbe: All three of the men were old (Job 32:6), older than Job (15:10), but we assume that Eliphaz was the oldest. He is named first (2:11), [and] he spoke first. . . . He was associated with Teman, a place known for its wisdom (Jeremiah 49:7). Eliphaz based his speeches on two things: his own observations of life ("I have seen" – Job 4:8, 5:3), and a frightening personal experience he had one night (4:12-21). Eliphaz put great faith in tradition (15:18-19), and the God he worshiped was an inflexible Lawgiver. "Who ever perished being innocent?" he asked (4:7); and a host of martyrs could have answered, "We have!" (And what about our Lord Jesus Christ?) Eliphaz had a rigid theology that left little or no room for the grace of God.

Bildad . . . was a legalist. His life-text was "Behold, God will not cast away the blameless, Nor will He uphold the evildoers" (8:20). He could quote ancient proverbs and, like Eliphaz, he had great respect for tradition. For some reason, Bildad was sure that Job's children died because they also were sinners (8:4). The man seemed to have no feeling for his hurting friend.

Zophar was . . . surely the most dogmatic. He speaks like a schoolmaster addressing a group of ignorant freshmen. "Know!" is his unfeeling approach (11:6, 20:4). He is merciless and tells Job that God was giving him far less than he deserved for his sins! (11:6) His key test is, "Do you not know this of old, Since man was placed on earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment?" (20:4-5). Interestingly enough, Zophar speaks to Job only twice. Either he decided he was unable to answer Job's arguments or felt that it was a waste of time trying to help Job. (page 24)

Shepherd's Notes: Job was "blameless and upright", and he "feared God and shunned evil." The reader, in order to understand this book, must always keep this piece of information in mind. Job did not suffer because he was evil, because he had some important lessons to learn, or because he in any sense needed chastisement as a spiritual discipline. Job was blameless. Too often interpreters are frustrated by their inability to resolve the enigmas posed by this book and unwittingly fall into the error of Job's three friends. They argue that Job must have somehow been at fault, and thus, in some manner he deserved his adversity. The opening verse could hardly have stated it more directly, however. Job feared God to the uttermost. Furthermore, as the rest of the prologue indicates, all of Job's afflictions came upon him because of his great righteousness, not because of any character flaw on his part.

Warren Wiersbe: Their mistake was in thinking they had to explain Job's situation and tell him to change it. (page 14)

Ron Keck: For Job's friends, there is no story, no mystery, no messiness...just futile attempts to control blessing and suffering. They are adamant about preventing suffering and increasing blessing. (page 88) Millions and millions of people adhere to this

J. Vernon McGee: We have no right to say that God has let something happen to So-and-so for such-and-such a reason. We may think it is a good reason, but the problem is that we really don't know the reason. . . . Sometimes we point our finger at some believer and say that God is whipping him, which may not be true at all. It may be that God is testing him in a way He cannot test you or me, because He couldn't trust us with that much trouble.

Shepherd's Notes: But one can say this: Does God govern justly? And why serve God? The answer the three friends provide is straightforward: Yes, God governs justly because everyone is a sinner and He never punishes someone unless that person is wicked; and yes, one should serve God because those who serve Him have happy prosperous lives, but those who do not serve Him suffer the consequences. And the only problem with that is that . . .

Ron Keck: God is infinitely more complex than we realize and the story has far more layers than we can even conceive. . . . God's redemptive plan is complex beyond imagination. (page 90)

Closing Prayer: Ray C. Stedman: Our Father, thank you for the sufferings of Job. What marvelous lessons they teach us about our own lives and our own sufferings. Grant to us . . . strength to stand in the midst of pressure. . . . help us to be understanding about the nature of life, and learn from this book, that we might better handle that which comes to us. . . . Help us to accept . . . what is happening to us as your hand works out vast and wonderful patterns in our lives. . . . Help us also to cry, with Job, "**But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.**" . . . this marvelous book has taken us through deep waters indeed, and has deepened our understanding and our knowledge of you. We pray that, like Job, we will realize that there is no solution to the riddles and mysteries of life apart from a trust in your wisdom and your grace, and obedience to your Word. Help us then to lay aside all our flaunting schemes for self-improvement and defense of ourselves, and stand naked before you . . . trusting your loving grace to give us all we need. . . . our hearts are humble as we see how mighty are your ways. We pray that, if nothing else, this great book will teach us the majesty and the glory and the wonder of our God. What a marvelous Being you are. . . . Help us to take the place of the learner and be taught out of humility and weakness, that we might be strong, because of the grace of our loving God. Teach us . . . to accept what comes from your hand. . . . We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

JOB: A MESSY FAITH

There is no testimony without a test

INTRODUCTION

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY?

Who wrote it? Unknown

What is it about? Job's testing, response, discussion, and understanding of his situation

Where does the story take place? According to [Job 1:1](#), "The land of Uz"

When did it occur? Commentators disagree, but most likely within 200 years of Abraham

Why was it written? To show the sovereignty and incomparable wisdom of God in all things

OUTLINE

Act 1: [Job 1:1-2:10](#)
(Prologue)

Scene 1: [Job 1:1-5](#): Earth

Scene 2: [Job 1:6-12](#): Heaven

Scene 3: [Job 1:13-22](#): Earth

Scene 4: [Job 2:1-6](#): Heaven

Scene 5: [Job 2:7-10](#): Earth

Act 2: [Job 2:11-42:6](#)
(Dialogue)

Intro: [Job 2:11-13](#)

Scene 1: [Job 3-14](#):
Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar

Scene 2: [Job 15-21](#):
Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Zophar

Scene 3: [Job 22-37](#):
Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Elihu

Scene 4: [Job 38:1-42:6](#):
God, Job

Act 3: [Job 42:7-16](#)
(Epilogue)

SCHEDULE

Week 1: [Job 1:1-2:10](#): Job's Calamity

Week 3: [Job 38:1-42:6](#): Jehovah's **Comeback**

Week 2: [Job 2:11-37:24](#): Job's **Conversations**

Week 4: [Job 42:7-16](#): Job's **Conclusion**

REVIEW OF PRIOR WEEKS:

1. Job was a **blameless** man (not sinless, but blameless), and sinless to this point in the story ([Job 2:10](#))
2. Job has lost his **children** (no matter his relationship with God, his loss was real and painful)

Warren Wiersbe: The fundamental reason for Job's suffering was to silence the blasphemous accusations of Satan and prove that a man would honor God even though he had lost everything. (page 16) See if you can determine if God gives Job an answer during his speeches (hint: He doesn't).

3. Job was in tremendous **pain** (afflicted with boils)
4. Job's friends were accusing him of **sin** (to varying degrees, but they were certainly not supportive)
5. Job did not **curse** God during his testing

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

1. To know our **place** before a holy God
2. To value God's sovereignty more than human **understanding**
3. To understand the difference between asking and **accusing**
4. To see that having all the answers does not fix all the **problems**

LESSON

Warren Wiersbe: If you could face God and ask two questions, what would they be? (page 168)

Warren Wiersbe: What member of the animal kingdom speaks to you most about God's presence and His greatness in the world? (page 168)

Ron Keck: We search for formulas to fix the messes all around us—in our world, neighborhoods, families, and hearts. The problem is that the Larger Story into which we've been born is in turmoil. As we open the pages of Job's life, we find order, prosperity, peace, balance, and happiness—the life we long to live. God created us for joy and adventure, intimacy and ecstasy—for paradise, for Eden. Something inside us cries out for what's good and noble. . . . But just as in Job's story, life has been temporarily derailed. (page 11)

Ron Keck: Burger King has an enticing slogan: "Have it your way." While this line might sell food, it just doesn't describe the way life typically works. (page 12)

Show *Whirlwind* Nooma DVD, [here](#)

Rob Bell: What do we do when we don't get the answers we are hoping for?

ACT 2: JOB 38:1-42:6

SCENE 4: GOD ANSWERS

Part 1: **Job 38:1-40:2**: The LORD Reveals His Omnipotence to Job

Shepherd's Notes: The ability to survive and even bear young among the crags of the mountains is a miracle in itself. The implied point is that God is able to sustain life even in the midst of the most hostile settings, and thus God can manage all forces hostile to life.

Shepherd's Notes: These creatures are proverbial for being unmanageable.

Part 2: [Job 40:3-5](#): Job's Response to God

3 Then Job answered the LORD and said: 4 "Behold, I am vile [slight, of little account, trifling]; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. 5 Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further."

Warren Wiersbe: Until we are silenced before God, He can't do for us what needs to be done. As long as we defend ourselves and argue with God, He can't work for us and in us to accomplish His plan through us. . . . But Job was not quite broken and at the place of sincere repentance. He was silent but not yet submissive; so, God continued His address. (page 150)

Part 3: [Job 40:6-41:34](#): God's Challenge to Job

Shepherd's Notes: God's speeches are perhaps not what the reader expected. They have almost nothing to say about justice, sin, or punishment. They do not, in fact, seem to address the fundamental questions of Job at all. Nevertheless, Job himself finds them totally compelling, so we must assume that God's words somehow answer the challenge Job intended to lay at God's feet.

Shepherd's Notes: Many people smugly say something like, "if I ruled the world, it would be a better place than this, I can tell you!" God replies, "You do not have a clue about what you are saying. You have neither the power to manage the world nor the wisdom to comprehend what using that power is all about."

Part 4: [Job 42:1-6](#): Job's Repentance

2 "I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. 3 You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.' 5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. 6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."

Shepherd's Notes: Strangely, however, Job finds this bombast to be a complete and altogether satisfactory answer to his concerns, and he humbly bows his head before God.

J. Vernon McGee: As someone has said, if we could see ourselves as God sees us, we couldn't stand ourselves. When we get into the presence of God, we will acknowledge that we are vile.

J. Vernon McGee: Job did not recognize that he needed to repent—until God dealt with him.

Warren Wiersbe: Job thought he knew about God, but he didn't realize how much he didn't know about God. . . . Knowledge of our own ignorance is the first step toward true wisdom. (page 145)

Rob Bell: Wisdom knows when to speak and when to be silent.

Rob Bell: Your story is not over. The last word has not been spoken. And there may be way more going on here than any of us realize.

Closing Prayer: (paraphrased from Rob Bell's closing words in *Whirlwind*): Father, please help us to understand that we do not always have to understand why things happen the way they do. Grant to us freedom from the added stress and anxiety of trying to figure every aspect of your great and marvelous plan of redemption out. May we have the wisdom to know when to say, "I spoke once, but now I will say no more." In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

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REVIEW OF PRIOR WEEKS:

1. Job was a **blameless** man (not sinless, but blameless) and did not curse God during his testing
2. Job lost his **children** (no matter his relationship with God, his loss was real and painful)

Warren Wiersbe: Whatever God does is right and man must accept it by faith. (page 153)

Warren Wiersbe: The fundamental reason for Job's suffering was to silence the blasphemous accusations of Satan and prove that a man would honor God even though he had lost everything. (page 16)

3. Job was in tremendous **pain** (afflicted with boils)

Ron Keck: God allows things He hates, sometimes choosing not to intervene. God never promises to protect us 100% of the time. (page 94)

Warren Wiersbe: Words of Swiss psychologist, Paul Tournier: We are nearly always longing for an easy religion, easy to understand and easy to follow; a religion with no mystery, no insoluble problems, no snags; a religion that would allow us to escape from our miserable human condition; a religion in which contact with God spares us all strife, all uncertainty, all suffering and all doubt; in short, a religion without the Cross. (page 26)

4. Job's friends had accused him of **sin** (to varying degrees, but they were certainly not supportive)

5. God showed up and overwhelmed Job with questions, but no **answers**

Ron Keck: How does accepting that you're not the central figure in the story—that it's not all about you—affect the way you approach life? (page 35)

6. Job repented of his **pride**

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

1. What we say about **God** is important (implying that if we are not sure what to say about God we should not say anything—blasphemy is mixing up God in Satan's hands: God-Satan-T chart)

2. Praying for our **friends** (especially for those that are wrong) impacts our relationship with God

3. Job did **not** get back the things that he lost (God just blessed him twice as much the second time—the things that he lost were lost forever)

4. We will experience seasons of loss in our lives. We will experience seasons of gain in our lives. God is just and sovereign through all the **seasons**.

5. God's **character** is not dependent upon our observation of it (Job never knew why this all happened)

6. No one can be compared to God when it comes to **blessing**

LESSON

Shepherd's Notes: Job entered the story with substantially the same theology of retribution that his friends espoused. He, too, supposed that good and evil people got what they deserved. Job, however, correctly and courageously faced the fact that his theology had failed him; he had not deserved what had befallen him. The sin of the friends was not that their theology was altogether false but that they had refused to admit that Job had done nothing wrong. Supposing themselves to be defending God, they denied the truth. Job was angry but honest, and he quickly yielded

when his broader vision of God enabled him to see that the triumph of God's justice over evil involved more than he had realized. There is truth in the theology of retribution, but it is not the whole truth. The greater truth is that God is bringing the chaotic story of the world to a just conclusion.

Ron Keck: Theology is not just theory, and the Bible's stories are not whimsical accounts. The unseen reality deeply affects our lives. (page 43)

Ron Keck: We carry an illusion that our lives are safe and supposed to be predictable. But we love stories of danger and intrigue. The Villain is at work. Pain and sorrow are real and raw! God yearns for us to open our hearts—the real and the raw—to Him. (page 71)

ACT 3: JOB 42:7-17

7 And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me *what is right, as My servant Job has*. [God did not address Elihu's speech. Perhaps it was a mixture of both?] 8 Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you *according to your folly*; because you have not spoken of Me *what is right, as My servant Job has*."

Shepherd's Notes: These champions of orthodoxy who upheld traditional theology in their passionate speeches confront an angry God who regards them as no better than liars! As a result, they must make an enormous and expensive sacrifice and suffer the humiliation of asking the man whom they had accused of being a reprobate to pray for them.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD commanded them; for the LORD had accepted Job. 10 And the LORD restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. [Does this include his bodily losses as well? No other part of the text indicates that Job was ever healed] **Indeed the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.** 11 Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and all those who had been his acquaintances before, came to him and ate food with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversity that the LORD had brought upon him. Each one gave him a piece of silver and each a ring of gold. [Even in seasons of loss, we still have much for which to be thankful]

12 Now the LORD blessed the latter *days* of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. [Compare Exodus 22:4 and Job 1:3—is there a comparison here?] 13 He also had seven sons and three daughters. [It appears as though Job's wife stuck around despite her bad advice in Job chapter 2. Children (in the OT specifically) were believed to be God's hand of blessing on both the mother and the father.] 14 And he called the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-Happuch. 15 In all the land were found no women so

beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers.

[Truly amazing as daughters were not given inheritances—only sons]

16 After this Job lived one hundred and forty years [if God gave Job twice as much age as he had before, then this makes Job 210 when he died], **and saw his children and grandchildren for four generations.** **17 So Job died, old and full of days.** [The Biblical equivalent of, "And they lived **happily** ever after. THE END"]

Ron Keck: What Job received at the end of all his suffering was the most precious gift of all—He got God! In Job 19:26-27, Job yearned to "see God" Later in the story (Job 42:5) when Job was ready, God lovingly granted his heart's desire: "now my eye sees You." (page 111)

Ron Keck: Our relationship with God is not fragile! He cares deeply about each one of us. Working through the raw stuff of the heart is faith. Being careful and covering up is fearful and faithless. (page 85)

Ron Keck: God is always focused on **relationship. (page 111)**

Question: Would you still serve God if you went through what Job went through (and never had the answer)? Why or why not?