

Bible Study – Outline

JOB

The Hardest Question
Why Do the Righteous Suffer?

Summary

Time Period Sometime between 2000 – 1800 BC

Author Unknown – possibly Job, Moses, Solomon, or Elihu

Major Theme(s)

1. Why suffering
2. How to comfort those who are suffering
 - a) Listen
 - b) Pray
 - c) Serve
 - d) Empathize
 - e) Love
3. God’s ways are beyond our understanding
4. Don’t let go of God
5. This life with all its pain is not our final destiny

Key People

God	Job	Eliphaz	Elihu
Satan		Bildad	
		Zophar	

Key Scriptures

Job 2:3 “Have you considered my servant Job?....”
Job 7:17 Asks, “why man” Ps. 8:4, 144:3 Heb. 2:6
Job’s request for
 A mediator – Job 9:33
 To argue/reason with God Job 13:3
 An advocate – Job 16:19
 A redeemer – Job 19:25-26

Job 19:25-26

"I know my redeemer lives and that in the end he will stand upon the earth...."

Job 23:3-4

"If only I knew where to find Him, if only I could go to his dwelling"

Job 23:10

"He knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold."

Job 28:12 But where can wisdom be found - Job 28:23-27, **Prov. 1:7**

Job 28:28

The fear of the Lord – that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.

Job 31 Jobs defence

Job 32:8

"But it is the Spirit in a person, the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding."

Job 36:22 – 37:24 Elihu's hymn

Job 38:2-3

"Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? Brace yourself like a man; I will question you and you shall answer me"

God takes Job on a tour of nature

Job 38:4-12

Job 38:17

Job 38:31-33

Job 38:34-35

Job 39:26

Job 41:1

God's penetrating questions:

Job 38: 4 – 38 God's wisdom is displayed in the creation of the universe

Job 38:39 – 39:30 God's care for the animal kingdom

Job 38:36 God puts wisdom and understanding in man

Job 40-41:34 God's restraint of the forces of evil in the world

Job 42:5-6

"My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes"

James 5:11 "You have heard of Job's perseverance and seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."

Romans 8:28 "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His promise."

THE BOOK OF JOB

THE LOSSES AND SUFFERINGS OF JOB	1 - 2
The Abundance of Job	1:1-5
The Attacks of Satan; Job loses everything	1:6 – 2:10
Job’s Friends Arrive and Silently Mourn with Him	2:11-13
C. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem	2:9-20
THE CONVERSATIONS OF JOB AND HIS THREE “FRIENDS”	3 - 37
THE FIRST DEBATE	3 - 14
A. Job’s first speech	3
B. Eliphaz: The innocent do not suffer	4 - 5
C. Job’s anguished reply and plea for empathy	6 - 7
D. Bildad: Job must have sinned	8
E. Job replies, questioning God’s apparent affliction of him.	9 – 10
F. Zophar’s accusations	11
G. Job: Only God knows ; he asks God to speak to him; he mourns the disastrous turn of his life	12 - 14
THE SECOND DEBATE	15 - 21
A. Eliphaz’s second accusation	15
B. Job speaks to his “miserable comforters”, maintains his innocence	16 – 17
C. Bildad’s second accusation	18
D. Job responds to Bildad	19
E. Zophar’s second accusation	20
F. Job’s response to Zophar	21
THE THIRD DEBATE	22 - 26
A. Eliphaz’s third accusation	22
B. Job responds to Eliphaz	23 - 24
1. “I will come forth as gold”	23
2. The wicked do not seem to suffer	24
C. Bildad’s third accusation	25
D. Job responds to Bildad	26
JOB’S ULTIMATE DEFENSE	27 - 37
A. Job’s first monologue	27 – 28
1. He defends his innocence	27
2. “Where can wisdom be found”	28

B. Job's second monologue	29 – 37
1. Job reminisces over past joys	29
2. Job laments his pain and humiliation	30
3. Job again defends his innocence	31:1 -34
4. Job prays to meet God face to face	31:35-40
5. The interruption and monologue of Elihu	32 - 37
GOD'S DIALOGUE WITH JOB	38 – 42:6
God speaks to Job from the whirlwind	38 – 40:5
A. God confronts and questions Job	38
1. The realm of creation	38:1-38
2. The animal kingdom	38:39-39:30
B. Job's response	40:1-5
C. God confronts Job	40:6-41:34
1. Can Job save himself?	40:6-14
2. The power of the behemoth	40:15-24
3. The power of the leviathan	41
D. Job's second response	42:1-6
1. Job admits finiteness and ignorance	42:1-3
2. Job repents	42:4-6
THE DELIVERANCE AND RESTORATION OF JOB	42:7-17

Lessons Learned

1. God was not created for humanity – humanity was created for God
2. God's ways are beyond our understanding – Isa. 55:8-9
3. Suffering is not always a penalty because of sin
4. Prosperity is not always a reward for righteousness
5. You cannot control how you are attacked – but you can control how you respond
6. God is working out a great and mighty purpose in human history
7. God wants us to find our resources and strength in God alone
8. Where is wisdom found – Job 28 and Job 33:31-33
9. Wisdom is given by God – to young and old (Elihu's example) 32:8
10. The prophecy of Elihu Job 33:23-25
11. The magnificence of creation – Job 38
12. Those who wish to comfort those who are suffering should consider
 - a. Silence before speech
 - b. Empathy before explanation
 - c. Patience with their pain
13. The folly of self defense – Job 31 sin is in us Jer. 17:9, I Cor. 4:3-4
14. God allows the innocent to suffer to achieve His purposes. The most innocent man ever, Jesus Christ, suffered for us.

WHEN WE SUFFER

Job 42:1-17

Here are six questions to ask ourselves when we suffer, and what to do if the answer is yes.

Questions: Am I being punished by God for sin?

Our Response: Confess known sin.

Questions: Is Satan attacking me as I try to survive as a Christian?

Our Response: Call on God for strength.

Questions: Am I being prepared for a special service, learning to be compassionate to those who suffer?

Our Response: Resist self-pity. Ask God to open up doors of opportunity and help you discover others who suffer as you do.

Questions: Am I specifically selected for testing, like Job?

Our Response: Accept help from the body of believers. Trust God to work his purpose through you.

Questions: Is my suffering a result of natural consequences for which I am not directly responsible?

Our Response: Recognize that in a sinful world, both good and evil people will suffer. But the good person has a promise from God that his or her suffering will one day come to an end.

Questions: Is my suffering due to some unknown reason?

Our Response: Don't draw inward from the pain. Proclaim your faith in God, know that he cares, and wait patiently for his aid.

Source: Life Application Bible – Charts and Notes – by Zondervan and Tyndale House Publishers

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever gone through a trial or suffering so severe you doubted God's love? What helped you get through that trial of pain and doubt?
2. Why do we have suffering at all, and whom is the author of this senseless suffering (Job 1:8-12)?
3. Based on the events in Job, what would you recommend as to the best way to comfort a suffering friend?
4. What are the lessons learned from the examples of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar?
5. Elihu – what is the lesson(s) to be learned from his monologue?
6. Although Job's possessions were doubled after his trial, why did he not have children to replace those he lost?

Resources Used

www.biblestudytools.com

www.biblegateway.com

www.biblehub.com

www.raystedman.org

Adventuring Through the Bible by Ray Stedman

Let God be God – Life Changing Truths from the Book of Job by Ray Stedman