

# Job

## *Why do we suffer?*

GOSPEL GROWTH | OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY |  
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## Introduction to Job

### Context and Literary Genre

- Epic lyrical poetry (the only one of its kind in the Bible)
- Author – anonymous
- Setting – during the time of Abraham (and possibly before then)

### Theme

- Why do we suffer, why do the righteous suffer in the same way as the unrighteous, and how should the righteous respond to suffering?
  - It's a book about trust, not about perfect explanation.
- Theme Statement: 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.

# The Big Idea

We often Suffer. Sometimes we understand. We can always trust.

## We Often Suffer

*Chapters 1-2*

Job loses:

- His wealth
- His family
- His health

Note: Job probably suffered more *suddenly* than we will, but he didn't suffer more comprehensively than we will suffer. We will all face disease, disaster, disappointment and ultimately death.

## We Only Sometimes Understand

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

God's verdict on each player in the story

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

Three logical pillars

- God's sovereignty
- God's goodness
- Job's innocence

Summary: There is *no* satisfying answer for Job or his friends

## We Can Always trust

The pattern set in Job is what we get throughout the Bible. How does suffering of God's people jive with his sovereignty and mercy? No explanation is ever given. Only the call to trust. And yet through the centuries, compounding more and more evidence on which to base that trust, culminating in the suffering of Christ and his glory.

*"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth"*  
Job 19:25

### 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?"

## **Additional Resources**

Tim Keller, [“Questions On Suffering”](#) [sermon]

The Gospel Project (book overview video) - [Job](#)

[Job poem](#), by John Piper [video – illustrated poem]

