



Student's Guide

THE BOOK OF JOB



as taught by

Dr. Duanne Garrett

The Book of Job

as taught by
Dr. Duane Garrett

BiblicalTraining.org
Because Your Spiritual Growth Matters



The Book of Job

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

BiblicalTraining.org
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Camas WA 98607

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Your Speaker

Dr. Garrett has been the John R. Sampey Professor Of Old Testament Interpretation and Professor Of Biblical Theology since 2004. He brings many years of teaching, writing, research, and pastoral experience. He has served on the faculty of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Bethel Seminary, Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary, Mid-America Baptist Seminary, and Korea Baptist Seminary. Along with his writings, he is the general editor for *The Archaeology Study Bible* from HarperCollins Christian Publishing.

Education

Ph.D., Baylor University

M.Div., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

B.A., Rice University

Major publications (partial listing)

Song of Songs, Word Biblical Commentary (HarperCollins Christian Publishing)

Hosea and Joel in the New American Commentary (Broadman Press)

Amos: An Analysis of the Hebrew Text (Baylor University Press)

Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, Zondervan Illustrated Biblical Backgrounds Commentary (HarperCollins Christian Publishing)

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. NAC (Broadman Press)

A Modern Grammar for Classical Hebrew (Broadman Press)

Overview

Speaker: Dr. Duane Garrett

GOALS

1. To learn the structure and meaning of the book of Job
2. To wrestle with the problem of pain and God's answer.

REQUIREMENTS

1. 40 lessons
2. 30 minutes per lesson (on average)

PREREQUISITES

None, but it is an Institute-level class

FORMAT

Video/Audio

The message of the book of Job is central to understanding who God is and how he works in the world. The whole book focuses on the story of one person and the dialogue he has with his friends and with God about one subject: "Why is there evil and injustice in the world?"

BiblicalTraining.org

BiblicalTraining.org is not-for-profit ministry that gives all people access to a world-class Christian education at no cost. Our classes range from new believers to biblical literacy (“Foundations”), deeper Bible study (“Academy”), and seminary-level training (“Institute”).

We are a 501(c)3 not-for-profit and rely solely on the donations of our users. All donations are tax deductible according to the current US tax codes.

DISTINCTIVES

World class. All Bible classes are taught by world-class professors from major seminaries.

Holistic. We want to see students move through content to deep reflection and application.

Configurable. Ministries can use BT lectures as well as their own to design their educational program.

Accessible. BiblicalTraining is a web-based ministry whose content is provided at no cost.

Community-based. We encourage people to learn together, in mentor/apprentice relationships.

Broadly evangelical. Our materials are broadly evangelical, governed by our Statement of Faith, and are not tied to any one church, denomination or tradition.

Partners. We provide the content and delivery mechanisms, and our partner organizations provide the community and mentoring.

Weekly schedule

Listen or watch the lesson. The lesson for each chapter is designed to be listened to outside of your meeting. Each lesson lasts for an hour. This is a crucial step. If the meeting time with your fellow students is going to be productive and encouraging, everyone in the group needs to have listened to and wrestled with the lesson.

Take notes. This guide has the outline for each lesson with a summary of the teaching for each major point. If you are unable to take notes while listening to the lesson, please work through the guide at some point before your meeting.

Questions. Each chapter closes with a series of questions. Some of the questions are data based, confirming that you understand the information. Other questions are more reflective, helping you move beyond the important accumulation of knowledge to challenging you to think through what you are learning about God, yourself and others, and finally to application. Our encouragement is to think through your answers before your meeting and then use the meeting to share your thoughts and interact with others.

MEETING TOGETHER

While some people may have to study on their own, we strongly recommend finding a group with which you can study.

A group provides encouragement to finish the class.

Interacting with others, their understanding and insight, is the most effective way to sharpen your own thoughts and beliefs.

Just as you will need the help of others from time to time, so also they will need your help.

Facilitator's Guide

If you are leading the group or mentoring an individual, here are some suggestions that should help you.

Your role is to facilitate. This is not an opportunity for you to teach. In fact, the less visible role you take, the better. Your role is to listen and bring out the best in the other people.

Preparation. Be sure to have done your homework thoroughly. Have listened to the lesson and think carefully through the questions. Have an answer for each question that will get the conversation going. A great question is, "What is the Lord teaching you this week?"

Creativity. What works to help one person understand may not help another. So listen to the conversation and pray that the Lord help you bring out the greatest interaction among all the people.

Correct error. This is difficult. If someone says something that isn't right, you don't want to come down on them, telling them they are wrong and shutting down their participation. On the other hand, if you let an obvious error pass, the rest of the group may think you agree and what was said was correct. So look for gracious ways to suggest that perhaps the person's comment was incorrect.

Focus. Stay focused on Jesus and the Bible, not on church or religious traditions.

Lead the discussion. People don't want to listen to a sharing of common ignorance. Lead by asking questions that will prompt others to think.

Silence. Don't be afraid of silence. It may mean nothing more than people are thinking. But if the conversation lags, then ask thought-provoking questions to get the discussion started, and then step out of the way.

Discipleship. Be acutely aware of how you can mentor the

people in the group. Meet with them for coffee. Share some life with them. Jesus' Great Commission is to teach people to obey, and the only way this happens is in relationship.

Different perspectives. People process information and express themselves in different ways based on their background, previous experience, culture, religion and other factors. Encourage an atmosphere that allows people to share honestly and respectfully.

Privacy. All discussions are private, not to be shared outside the group unless otherwise specified.

Goal. The goal of this study is not just increased knowledge; it is transformation. Don't be content with people getting the "right" answers. The Pharisees got the "right" answer, and many of them never made it to heaven (Matt 5:20).

Relationships. Share everyone's name, email and phone number so people can communicate during the week and follow up on prayer requests. You may want to set up a way to share throughout the week using Slack or WhatsApp.

Finish well. Encourage the people to make the necessary commitment to do the work, think reflectively over the questions, and complete the class.

Prayer. Begin and end every meeting with prayer. Please don't do the quick "one-prayer-covers-all" approach. Manage the time so all of you can pray over what you have learned and with what you have been challenged. Pray regularly for each individual in the meeting.

1

Approaching the Book of Job

When you see what you would describe as evil and injustice in the world, how does that affect your view of God? When someone is suffering, do you assume that it's because they are getting what they deserve? This lecture gives you an overview of book of Job by describing his situation, how he interacts with his friends and God, and what we can learn about how God is managing the world.

I. BASIC STORY

A. Why is there evil and injustice in the world?

Job is a righteous person that suffers. His story is the answer to this question that the Old Testament provides.

B. Satan confronts God and God responds

Satan says that Job only serves God because God has blessed Job. God allows Satan to take everything away from Job.

C. Three friends confront Job

Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar confront Job and Job responds

D. Elihu confronts Job and Job does not respond

Elihu is confident that he has the answers to Job's situation

E. God addresses Job and Job responds

God answers Job, refutes the friends and restores Job's possessions and family

II. CENTRAL PROBLEM OF THE BOOK OF JOB

A. It does not address the problem of why the righteous suffer

Job addresses the subject of why there is evil in the world

1. Some reasons why there is evil and suffering in the world

People experience suffering as part of the natural world and as a result of what they do to themselves and others

2. The prologue of the book does not explain the problem of suffering

Job's situation is unique

B. For Job's friends, the answer to the problem of evil is the doctrine of retribution

God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked

C. Satan's challenge is that people only serve God out of self-interest

It is part of the motivation but not the only motivation

III. ESSENTIALS FOR A VALID INTERPRETATION OF JOB

A. Job is declared to be righteous

God is not punishing Job for sin or to prevent him from sinning

B. Satan's challenge to God is not the solution

The solution is not that Job sinned and should repent

C. The three friends voice orthodoxy but in this debate they are wrong

Job's situation is unique

D. To understand the arguments, you must look for veiled connections within the book of Job

Some of the arguments refer to statements they have already made

E. The reader must be prepared to face hard facts

There is evil and injustice in the world and Job is willing to confront it

IV. THREE LEVELS OF WISDOM

A. Level one: academic knowledge or artisan skill

Abilities that God gives people to perform specific tasks

B. Level two: knowing how to deal with life

This includes ethics, social interaction, personal responsibility, common sense and family responsibilities

C. Level three: God's secret ways

God's often-surprising way of resolving the problem of evil

Reflection Questions

1. When you see what you would describe as suffering, evil and injustice in the world, how does that affect your view of God?

2. When you are talking to a person who is not a Christian, how do you explain evil in the world if God is good and loving? [Compare your answer after you have listened to the class.]

(For someone who believes there is no objective standard for right and wrong, on what basis can anything be considered evil?)

3. What is the principle of, "retribution?" According to this principle, why is Job's situation unique?

2

Introductory Matters for Job

Because there is nothing specific in the text that tells you when the book of Job was written, the sections in Job that allude to other passages of scripture give you some helpful clues. The structure of the book of Job focuses your attention on the main subject of the book which is God's wisdom.

I. DATE AND AUTHORSHIP

A. No evidence in the text of when Job was written

Some of the allusions and the literary style give us some clues

B. Job alludes to passages from other books of the Bible

Some verses in Job seem to allude to passages in Genesis and Psalms

II. BASIC OUTLINE

The book begins with the reason for Job's affliction and how it happens. Then there is dialogue with Job and three of his friends about why Job is suffering and what he should do about it. One more person summarizes the arguments, God responds, Job prays for his friends, then Job is restored. In the middle of the book is a poem about wisdom.

A. The prologue which describes Job's affliction (Chapters 1-2)

B. Job curses the day of his birth (Chapter 3)

C. Three cycles of debate (Chapters 4-27)

D. The inaccessibility of wisdom (Chapter 28)

E. The three major speeches (Chapters 29-41)

F. Job intercedes for the three friends (42:7-9)

G. Restoration of Job's prosperity

III. CHIASTIC STRUCTURE

The book's arguments are chiastic, rather than linear, so the main focus of the book is in the middle, not at the end.

A. Job's affliction (1-2)

B. Job curses the day of his birth (3)

C. The three cycles of debate (4-27)

D. The inaccessibility of wisdom (28)

C'. The three major speeches (29:1-42:6)

B'. Job intercedes for the three friends (42:7-9)

A'. Job's prosperity (42:10-17)

IV. UNITY AND INTEGRITY OF THE BOOK OF JOB

A. Some scholars assert that portions of the book are later additions

Some scholars question the authorship of a few parts of the book because of content and style.

1. Prologue and epilogue

2. Elihu speeches

B. The book makes no sense without the prologue and epilogue

The epilogue does not address the story line of the prologue.

C. Elihu's statement is critical to the argument of the book of Job

Elihu brings up some arguments that the three friends did not.

V. CONCLUSION

Reflection questions

1. Why is it likely that Job was written after David lived and before the Babylonian exile?
2. What is significant about the position of the poem about wisdom in the structure of the book of Job?
3. Does Dr. Garrett think that the book of Job was written by one author? Why or why not?

3

Ancient Near Eastern Literary Parallels

Other cultures in the ancient near east created literature with themes that are similar to the book of Job. The book of Job is unique because of his character and the answer that the book provides for the situation he is in.

I. PARALLELS IN LITERATURE OUTSIDE THE BIBLE

A. Mesopotamian myth of Atrahasis

A story of human affliction by the apparently blind wrath of the gods

B. Babylonian prayer to Marduk

A sufferer bewails their losses

C. Babylonian “Ludlul bel nemeqi” (“I will praise the lord of wisdom”)

Parallels to the suffering and deliverance themes in Job

D. Sumerian “A Man and His God”

Someone complains to their god when calamity strikes

E. Canaanite, describes the trials of “King Keret,” who like Job, lost 7 sons

The loss of children is a theme of Job

F. Egyptian “Protests of the Eloquent Peasant”

Arguments challenging social injustice by a peasant character to an Egyptian ruler

II. DIFFERENCES FROM JOB

A. In no case is the sufferer absolutely righteous

God describes Job as righteous

B. The god does not appear and give an answer

In Job, God does appear and give an answer

C. The text in Job is more compelling and balanced

Foundational issues are raised and are dealt with in a comprehensive way

III. SIGNIFICANCE

A. The ancient literature of lamentation influenced Job

This is particularly true in the way Job addresses his complaints

B. The book of Job answers the question that other literature only raises

God gives a real answer at the end

Reflection questions

1. Why is it not surprising that other cultures in the ancient near east had stories dealing with the question of human suffering? What is unique about the story of Job that makes it profound compared to similar stories in other cultures at the time?

4

Biblical Genres in Job

Job is one of the wisdom books of the Old Testament. It covers more “advanced” topics than Proverbs and uses a variety of literary genres and allusions to other Biblical passages to explain and illustrate profound truths about God’s nature and his involvement in the world.

I. JOB WITHIN THE BIBLICAL CANON

A. A wisdom book

It’s a book that’s focused on issues regarding how you should live your life

B. It is “advanced” wisdom

It’s similar to Ecclesiastes but at a different level than Proverbs

II. BIBLICAL GENRES IN JOB

A. Lamentation

Job bewails what he is experiencing

B. Hymn

Speakers in Job often praise God for his power and righteousness

C. Proverb

Pithy statements of wisdom and metaphor

D. Prophetic inspiration

Speakers sometimes claim to have prophetic visions

E. Wisdom poem

Job 28 is about the value of wisdom, similar to passages in Proverbs

F. Numeric saying

Some passages are introduced with numeric patterns

G. Reflective questioning

Job bluntly challenges conventional wisdom

5

The Historical Setting of Job

There is limited information in the book of Job about its geographical and historical background. However, it can be helpful to understand general information about the geography and history of the area to give you a context for reading and studying the book of Job. The author of the book of Job was a Hebrew poet who had an extensive vocabulary. Being uncertain about history and geography is good because the message is timeless.

I. GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

Summary of the geography of the ancient near east

II. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A. Overview of the political empires of the ancient near east

Sumerians and Egyptians (3rd Millennium BC)

B. Early Assyrian (2350-2050)

C. Early Babylonia (1800-1700)

D. Egypt

E. Elam (2700-540)

F. Middle Assyrian (1392-1056)

G. Hittites (1600-1200)

H. Mitanni (1500-1300)

I. Syria and Damascus (1000-730)

J. Arabia

K. Neo-Assyrian Empire (911-609)

L. Neo-Babylonian (612-539)

M. Media and Persia (600-331)

N. Israel

**III. JOB DOES NOT LOCATE ITS STORY
GEOGRAPHICALLY OR HISTORICALLY**

There is nothing in the text of Job that mentions facts to identify a specific date or location

IV. THE RAIDERS WHO ATTACKED JOB WERE SABEANS AND CHALDEANS

A. Sabeans

People from a location possibly in South Arabia or near Ethiopia

B. Chaldeans

Possibly Neo Babylonian empire

V. MAJOR CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK OF JOB

A. Job

The main character of the book

B. Eliphaz

One of Job's three friends from Teman

C. Bildad

Another of Job's three friends from Shua, a province of Assyria

D. Zophar

Another of Job's three friends

E. Elihu

The last person to give a speech to Job

VI. BEING UNCERTAIN OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF JOB DOES NOT AFFECT THE MESSAGE

The message is for everyone regardless of time or culture

VII. LANGUAGE OF JOB

A. The Hebrew is difficult to interpret

There are Hebrew words and grammatical constructions unique to Job

B. Possible explanations

- 1. Possibly a dialect**
- 2. Artificially literary language**
- 3. Influenced by other languages**
- 4. Job was translated from Arabic or Aramaic**

5. Summary about the language of Job

C. The language of the book of Job gives some clues about when it was written

Some of the literary allusions are similar to other known literature

D. Some scholars think that the text is corrupted

Some people think that the unique style and vocabulary means that translators added or changed the text along the way.

E. Ancient translations of Job

Some ancient translations follow the Greek more than the Hebrew

3. How does being uncertain about the specific geographical and historical background of the book of Job become an advantage, rather than a limitation, when interpreting and implying the message of the book?

6

Job and Apocalyptic Literature

Job contains literary elements that are similar to what you find in other Biblical books that are Apocalyptic. These elements include depictions of events in heaven and on earth, the emphasis on specific numbers and persevering in your faith in God, the references to mythological animals and God's supernatural control of all events.

I. PARALLELS BETWEEN JOB AND APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

A. Both deal with reality on the heavenly and earthly levels

Conflicts in heaven that we don't see often cause conflicts on earth that we do see

B. Apocalyptic deals in special numbers, especially 3 and 7

The numbers 3 and 7 appear often in Job and in apocalyptic literature

C. Apocalyptic literature acknowledges the reader's inability to decipher the meaning of the text and calls them to deeper understanding

The speeches of Elihu are an example

D. Apocalyptic literature uses fantastic or mythological animals as symbols to get its message across

In Job, you have Behemoth and Leviathan

E. Apocalyptic often includes a cataclysmic undoing of creation

That's what Job is wishing for in his speech in chapter 3

F. Apocalyptic sometimes contains a doxological intermission

It's a pivot point in the story

G. In Apocalyptic literature, divine intervention concludes the conflict

God's speech is at the end of the book of Job

H. Apocalyptic literature calls the believer to endurance in the face of severe suffering

Job is called to be faithful as he suffers

I. Apocalyptic literature concludes with the faithful believer having entered into bliss

Job is restored

II. SIGNIFICANCE

A. There is a reality beyond appearances

The spiritual world is real

B. There is a reality to supernatural evil

Evil forces are present in the world

C. Endurance of the saints

We are called to endure by being faithful

7

The Prologue of Job (1-2)

Satan appears before God with an accusation against Job. Even though Job is described as, "upright and blameless," Satan accuses Job of serving God only because Job is prosperous. God allows Satan to take away Job's possessions, children and health. The remainder of the book is the dialogue of Job and his friends attempting to determine why this is happening.

I. SUMMARY OF THE STRUCTURE

II. MAIN POINTS IN THE PROLOGUE

A. Job is declared to be upright and blameless

Job is not guilty of something that would cause God to afflict him

B. Appearance of Satan

1. His malevolence is clear

Satan is hostile to God

2. The Hebrew term, "*ha satan*" is a proper name and it does mean Satan

The term is not a common noun

C. Job loses all his wealth and children in the first affliction and his health in the second

Job does not lose his faith or integrity

D. Satan's proverb, "skin for skin" appears nowhere else in the Bible

1. Similar to, "eye for an eye," Exodus 21:24

Not identical but similar

2. Satan means that Job values nothing as much as his own skin

Job gets to the point where his life is all he has

E. Job won't curse God and die. The rest of the book is Job and his friends trying to figure out why

Job's friends think Job has done something to deserve his affliction

F. Job's three friends show up

1. Job's friends come to comfort him

They start out by sitting with Job for a week without talking

2. The three friends are like Job

Job and his friends all believe in the doctrine of retribution

3. Job's friends are concerned about orthodoxy but end up acting like hateful people

They start out kind and empathetic but it gets worse

Reflection Questions

1. What specific behaviors did Job exhibit that indicated he was, "upright and blameless?" What is the dilemma that Job faces when he begins to experience suffering? Have you or someone you know felt the same way? How did it affect your relationship to God?

8

Job's Opening Speech (3:1-26)

Job curses the day he was born. When you carefully examine what he is saying, you realize that it is more intense than just saying that he wished he had never lived.

I. STRUCTURE

II. JOB CURSING HIS BIRTH IS ASKING THAT CREATION BE REVERSED

A. The day of birth is to you what creation is to the world

Job wants to reverse the language in Genesis chapter 1

B. Job even invokes the name of Leviathan

Leviathan is symbolic of destruction

C. Job desires to see creation revert to chaos

Before creation, chaos existed

D. Life no longer makes sense

To Job, the order and structure of the universe has been turned upside down

III. PREFERENCE FOR STILLBIRTH OVER BIRTH

A. Job wishes he had been buried as a stillborn child

IV. DEATH IS BETTER FOR THOSE IN MISERY

Job's theological world has collapsed and he is suffering physically

Reflection Questions

1. When Job curses the day of his birth, what does he mean that is deeper and more comprehensive than wishing he had never been born? Describe a time when you have experienced suffering and/or depression, and you have been overwhelmed and experienced despair. What verses, songs, quotes, people, etc., help you put your situation in perspective to help you overcome? How will that help you in the future? How does it give you insight to help others when they experience similar feelings?

2. Why does Job's experience cause him to be disillusioned with the doctrine of retribution? What does he do in response? What is a time in your life where you or someone you know has experienced something similar to Job? What was your response? How has it affected your relationship to God today?

9

Eliphaz's First Response (4-5)

Eliphaz begins tactfully in his remarks to Job. He did not intend to do harm. However, he thinks God is causing Job to suffer because of a sin Job committed. He speaks accurately of the justice of God, but in Job's case he misapplies it. He also gives a message he received from the, "night spirit."

I. STRUCTURE

II. APPEAL TO REASON AND EXPERIENCE (4:2, 5:27)

Eliphaz begins by stating that what he is saying is reasonable

III. TACTFUL OPENING (4:2-6)

Eliphaz begins by being kind and respectful

IV. DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION (4:7-11)

God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked

V. THE NIGHT SPIRIT (4:12-21)

A vision from an evil source

VI. MISERY COMES TO FOOLS (5:1-7)

According to Eliphaz, Job is being afflicted because he is behaving like a fool

VII. TURN TO GOD WHO IS UNFAILINGLY GOOD

Eliphaz appeals for Job to repent

VIII. THOSE WHOM GOD LOVES, HE REPROVES AND THEY HAVE HAPPINESS

Much of what Eliphaz says is orthodox but in Job's case it is misapplied

IX. CONCLUSION

Reflection Questions

1. How does Eliphaz begin his conversation with Job? What is Eliphaz trying to accomplish?
2. Why do you think Eliphaz begins his speech by summarizing the, "doctrine of retribution?" What word pictures does he use?
3. Where does bad behavior originate? What is Eliphaz's point when he makes this statement?

10

Eliphaz and the Night Spirit (4:12-20)

Eliphaz considers the message of the, "night spirit" a revelation from God. However, at it's core, this message is inconsistent with God's attitude toward Job, and creation in general.

I. ELIPHAZ CONSIDERS THIS A REVELATION FROM GOD

He doesn't know the identity of the spirit

II. IT DID NOT OCCUR TO ELIPHAZ THAT HIS MIGHT BE A DECEPTION

The nihilistic message is opposed to scripture

III. THE WORD FOR "SPIRIT" IN HEBREW (RUAH) HAS A RANGE OF POSSIBLE MEANINGS

A. Wind or spirit

B. The spirit of God

C. The spirit of a man

D. A person or animal's biological life

E. The prevalent attitude in a community

F. An autonomous sentient being

IV. THE NATURE OF THE ENCOUNTER

A. The spirit does nothing to reassure Eliphaz

It sustains Eliphaz's terror and then delivers its message

B. The encounter is described as though it were a nightmare

It was a frightening experience

C. The message from the spirit is described as, "stolen"

Not consistent with a biblical revelation

D. Parallel in Jeremiah 23:30

A reference to false prophets

E. The word implies that the message is illicit

Perhaps a word from God has been distorted

F. An encounter with God in Psalm 17:15

An encounter with God results in fulfillment, not terror

G. The spirit in Job 4 remains obscure

God reveals himself in visions and dreams but the night spirit remains obscure

V. THE SPIRIT'S MESSAGE IS PROFOUNDLY DARK

A. The "spirit" describes God as despising his creation

The night spirit describes creation as foul in God's eyes

B. The creator has no confidence in anyone

The night spirit despises both angels and humans

C. Humans are loathsome

The physical nature of humans is repugnant to the night spirit

D. It is a matter of no importance that humans die

According to the night spirit, humans are stupid and worthless

VI. THE SPIRIT'S MESSAGE AND SATAN

The night spirit's message is similar to what Satan says in Job chapter 1

VII. GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD JOB AND HUMANITY

God has faith in Job's loyalty and believes godliness can exist in a human

VIII. THE FRIENDS ECHO THE SPIRIT AT VARIOUS POINTS

Each of the three says something similar to the message of the night spirit

IX. THE PSALMIST LAMENTS, "I AM A WORM AND NOT A MAN."

This is an emotional outburst in a time of great suffering, not God's view of humans

X. PSALM 14

God sees people that are corrupt, but he also sees the righteous

XI. CONCLUSION

Reflection Questions

1. Summarize in your own words the doctrine of total depravity. How does the teaching of the "night spirit" go beyond that?

11

Job Responds to Eliphaz (6-7)

Job's theological worldview has fallen apart because he knows he doesn't deserve to suffer. Eliphaz calls Job to repent. Job responds questioning why he is suffering, because according to his worldview, he hasn't done anything to deserve it.

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF PAIN AND FRUSTRATION

Job cries out for wisdom and answers

II. JOB WISHES GOD WOULD KILL HIM

Job holds on to his integrity and won't make a false confession

III. THE FAILURE OF THE FRIENDS

To Job, it seems like his friends are only friends to him when times are good, not in times of suffering

IV. APPEAL TO HIS FRIENDS TO FACE FACTS

Job wants his friends to agree that he doesn't deserve the affliction he's experiencing

V. JOB PRAYS

A. Job prays for mercy

Job wonders what he has done to deserve his suffering

B. Job begins to develop hope

God will answer Job's questions

12

Bildad Speaks (8)

Bildad is direct in his rebuke and admonition of Job. He uses metaphors to get his point across.

I. STRUCTURE

II. DIRECT REBUKE AND ADMONITION

Bildad says that Job will be restored if he is upright

III. A CONSERVATIVE APPEAL

Listen to the elders

13

Job Responds to Bildad (9-10)

When Job's friends describe God as all powerful in an attempt to comfort Job, he becomes terrified because he sees God as causing his suffering and there is nothing that can stop it.

I. STRUCTURE

II. GOD IS POWERFUL: NO-ONE IS JUST BEFORE HIM (9:1-10)

No one can question God

III. GOD IS FEROCIOUS, I AM INNOCENT (9:13-24)

God is so great that no one can make a case before him, but Job insists he has nothing to repent of

IV. NO MATTER WHAT JOB DOES, GOD TREATS HIM AS GUILTY (9:25-35)

Job calls for an arbitrator between him and God

V. JOB PRAYS (10:1-22)

Job asks God why he is afflicted and wishes he was born dead

Reflection Questions

1. Why does Job's view of God become terrifying to him? When his friends try to comfort him, why are their comments about God a source of terror to Job?

14

Zophar's Speech and a Summary of Cycle 1 (11)

Zophar assumes that Job is being punished because he sinned and accuses him of mocking God. Job's three friends move from tactful suggestions to open hostility. As Job is searching for answers, he becomes disappointed in his friends.

I. ZOPHAR'S FIRST RESPONSE

A. Zophar comes closer to accusing Job of sinning

He assumes Job did something wrong

B. Since Job is a mortal, he can't understand God

Zophar uses dimensions as a metaphor to illustrate how God's ways are above Job's

C. Later in the book, God will say that human wisdom is good but it has limitations

The book of Proverbs contains practical wisdom

II. SUMMARY OF THE FIRST CYCLE OF SPEECHES

A. The three friends move from tactful suggestion to open hostility

Their comments are kind at first but then become more direct

B. Eliphaz's encounter with the night spirit

This is characterized by the Satanic assertion that humans are utterly foul

C. The stance of the friends could be regarded as a perversion of the doctrine of total depravity

Total depravity does not mean that all humans are totally evil

D. Job is searching for answers and disappointed in his friends

Job didn't do anything to deserve his affliction but his friends assume he did

15

Job Begins the Second Cycle (12-14)

Job agrees with his friends that God is causing his suffering, but disagrees with them about why it's happening. Job believes that God will eventually vindicate him.

I. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT GOD PRESIDES OVER AN UNJUST WORLD (12:1-12:9)

Job considers himself as an example of injustice in the world

II. GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL AND HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THIS (12:10-13:2)

These comments by Job sound similar to what the three friends are saying

III. JOB DEMANDS THAT HIS FRIENDS KEEP SILENT (13:3-13)

The friends keep telling Job that he needs to repent even though they know he doesn't

IV. JOB'S CONFESSION OF FAITH (13:14-19)

Job declares that he will defend God and be vindicated

V. JOB'S PRAYER (13:20-14:22)

Job is discouraged and pleads with God

VI. RESURRECTION ((14:14-15)

Resurrection gives Job a reason to hope

Reflection Questions

1. What does Job mean when he says to his friends, "wisdom will die with you.?"

16

Eliphaz's Second Response (15)

Eliphaz appeals to the night spirit and the tradition of the elders to tell Job that he is a babbling and blaspheming fool.

I. JOB IS A BABBLING, BLASPHEMING FOOL (15:2-6)

Eliphaz accuses Job of sin and uses his own words against him

II. TRUE WISDOM BELONGS TO THE THREE (15:7-19)

A. Tradition of the elders

Eliphaz tells Job to rely on traditional wisdom

B. The night spirit

There is no one pure before God, not even the angels

III. POEM ON THE FATE OF THE WICKED (15:20-35)

A veiled portrait of Job himself

IV. IS ELIPHAZ RIGHT?

Much of what he says is correct, but some is misapplied

Reflection Questions

1. How did Eliphaz try to use Job's own words against him?

17

Job and Bildad Speak (16-17)

Job begins by criticizing what his friends are saying to him and then professes his faith in God. Bildad responds harshly to Job.

I. SPEECHES OF JOB AND HIS FRIENDS

Job contrasts their empty babble with what he would say to them if he were in their place

II. GOD AND ENEMIES AGAINST JOB: ENEMIES SURROUND HIM AND RIGHTEOUS APPALLED

God has afflicted Job and the righteous are appalled when they see him

III. JOB LAMENTS HIS SITUATION

Job is ready to die

IV. JOB'S CONFESSION OF FAITH

Job's confession of hope is at the center of the passage

V. BILDAD'S SPEECH

Bildad tells Job that Job is wicked and needs to listen

Reflection Questions

1. As Job begins, how does he characterize what his friends have said to him? What does he say he would say to them if they were in his situation? How can you be an encouragement to someone you know who is going through trials?

18

Job's Fond Hope (19)

Even though Job's friends have criticized him, he has grown in his faith in God. Job is worn out and begs for compassion. When he gets nothing but contempt and hostility instead, he confesses his faith and hope in God. The messianic theology of Job is different from any other book of the Bible.

I. APPEAL FOR MERCY FROM HIS FRIENDS

Job is weary of arguing with his friends and pleads for compassion

II. GOD HAS CUT OFF JOB'S APPEAL FOR JUSTICE

Job feels like he is disconnected from God

III. CONTEMPT FROM EVERYONE

Relatives, friends and subordinates view Job with contempt

IV. JOB'S CONFESSION OF FAITH

A. The redeemer who lives

Job's hope is in a divine redeemer

B. The final one

Job warns his friends that they will be judged if they rejoice in his affliction

V. MESSIANIC HOPE IN JOB

A. Two universal human needs

The need for a deliverer and release from mortality

B. Messianic theology in Job compared to the rest of the Bible

Job wants a redeemer to plead his case. God's plan is a redeemer for everyone

Reflection Questions

1. Why do Job's friends continue to try to force him to repent? What is Job's response in 19:2-6?

19

Zophar Declares Job to be God's Enemy (20)

Zophar uses metaphors that are found in other passages of scripture as well as Job's own words to accuse Job of being wicked. However, Zophar made a serious error, which we need to avoid in our lives.

I. AN APPEAL TO JOB TO BE QUIET AND LISTEN

Zophar feels insulted

II. ZOPHAR ACCUSES JOB OF BEING WICKED

A. Zophar's metaphors describing the wicked

Zophar uses the metaphors of gluttony and being killed in battle

B. Zophar's metaphors describing Job specifically

Gluttony and being killed in battle

III. WARNING

Be careful not to misapply biblical truths in a way that is harmful to others

Reflection Questions

1. What characteristics of a dream does Zophar use when describing a godless person? How is that consistent with the doctrine of retribution?

20

Job Begins the Third Cycle (21)

Job continues to wrestle with the presence of evil in the world and the apparent injustice of God.

I. OUTLINE

- A. Don't be Stupid (2-6)
 - B. Look for yourselves: Wicked live long and prosper (7-16)
 - C. Death: they don't die young (17-21)
 - C'. Death; it does not change unfairness of life (22-26)
 - B'. Testimony of others: Wicked live long and prosper (27-33)
- A'. Don't be Stupid

II. DON'T BE STUPID (POINT A IN JOB'S ARGUMENT)

Job confronts the problem of theodicy

III. JOB TELLS HIS FRIENDS TO LOOK AT THE WORLD AND SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE (POINT B IN JOB'S ARGUMENT)

Job challenges his friends to see the world as it is

IV. THE WICKED DO NOT DIE YOUNG

The wicked seem to live long lives

V. DEATH: IT DOES NOT CHANGE THE UNFAIRNESS OF LIFE

Some people suffer more than others

VI. THE TESTIMONY OF OTHERS

It's obvious that some wicked people prosper

21

Eliphaz Makes a Furious Final Speech (22)

Eliphaz attacks Job as being wicked by twisting the meaning of what Job has said previously. The irony is that Job will be reconciled to God and will pray for Eliphaz.

I. HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS IS MEANINGLESS TO GOD

Eliphaz tries to downplay the significance of Job's righteous deeds

II. DIRECT ATTACK ON JOB

Eliphaz twists the meaning of Job's words

III. THE PARADIGM OF THE WICKED MAN, REFERRING TO JOB

Eliphaz accuses Job of being wicked because of what he is experiencing

IV. APPEAL FOR JOB TO REPENT

Job appeals for job to repent and intercede for sinners

V. IRONY IN WHAT ELIPHAZ IS SAYING

Eliphaz doesn't realize how ironic his accusations of Job are.

Reflection Questions

1. How does it benefit God when you live your life in a righteous way?

5. How was the Jewish essence of the concept of righteousness more than avoiding certain activities? What does Eliphaz accuse Job of not being righteous?

22

Job Wants Justice; Bildad Advises Despair (23-24)

Job wants to lay out his case before God by claiming his innocence. Job says that God is hidden and does as he chooses, but that God neither judges the guilty nor helps the righteous. Bildad responds by contrasting God's holiness and human lowliness.

I. JOB WANTS JUSTICE

A. Job wants to lay his case before God

Job wants God to acquit him

B. I am innocent, but God is hidden and does as he chooses

Job wants to meet God face-to-face

C. Job articulates the problem of theodicy

1. Opening summary
2. Wicked abuse the poor
3. Wretchedness of the oppressed
4. Wicked abuse the poor
5. Wretchedness of the poor
6. Wicked work in darkness
7. The wicked are not punished
8. Job raises questions but doesn't give answers

23

Job's Last Address to the Friends (26-27)

Job sarcastically thanks the friends for their wise words, which he doesn't think were wise at all.

I. SARCASTIC INTRODUCTION

Job sarcastically thanks the friends for their wise words, which he doesn't think were wise at all.

II. THE POWER OF GOD

Job declares the power of God over the earth, heaven and the places of the dead.

III. JOB REFUSES TO MAKE A HOLLOW CONFESSION OF SIN

Job knows that he doesn't deserve God punishing him like this and he is not willing to lie by confessing to something he hasn't done.

IV. JOB DECLARES THAT GOD WILL OPPOSE HIS ENEMIES

Job may be referring to his enemies in general as well as the three friends.

V. THE FATE OF THE WICKED

God punishes the wicked

VI. UNEXPECTED NATURE OF THIS PASSAGE

Part of Job's speech sounds like it's consistent with what the three friends are saying

VII. ARGUMENTS FOR ATTRIBUTING THIS DIALOGUE TO JOB

Job has confidence in God and is perplexed about why he is suffering

VIII. THE THREE CYCLES OF DEBATE DESCRIBE TWO DIFFERENT SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

A. The friends

They begin with compassion and end by hurling lies and insults at Job

B. Job

Job begins with despair, but fearlessly explores the significance of his suffering

Reflection Questions

1. How does Job use sarcasm to describe what his friends have told him? How do you avoid giving advice to people that could result in being hurtful or misapplied?

24

Secret Wisdom (28)

This is a poem about wisdom that divides the content of the book and points to a deep truth. It is inserted by the author of the book and is not attributed to Job or the friends.

I. MINING FOR PRECIOUS METALS AND GEMS

Humans are God-like compared to animals. They do things that are analogous to God.

II. FINDING THE WISDOM DESCRIBED HERE IS BEYOND HUMANITY'S POWER

Contrasting of the digging and searching of ingenuity of finding gems to the impossibility of finding wisdom.

III. THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE WISDOM OF PROVERBS

Wisdom was present at creation and embodied into creation.

IV. WE CAN DISCERN THREE TYPES OF WISDOM

God's wisdom is different than skill and craftsmanship (level 1) and moral and theological prudence (level 2)

V. CHRIST THE WISDOM OF GOD

Counter-intuitive, hidden wisdom that confounds everyone. Christ being crucified and resurrected was something that no one expected.

VI. CONCLUSION OF JOB 28

Our response is to have confidence in God and live by faith

Reflection Questions

1. What is the word picture that begins chapter 28? What remarkable activities are people described as doing? How is this contrasted to the descriptions of animals?
2. Where are the places that wisdom is not found? How is this related to Proverbs 8:22-31?
3. How does Dr. Garrett use the examples of promiscuity and laziness to show how we are made according to wisdom? What is another example of a character trait that either helps or hinders people to flourish? How are each of these characteristics demonstrated in God's character?

25

Job's Final Discourse (29-30)

The crisis that Job is experiencing is not just the material losses and physical suffering, but also his crisis of faith. He thought he understood what his relationship with God is all about but he feels that God has abandoned him for no apparent reason. Job laments the pain he feels from being disgraced and humiliated.

I. JOB'S FORMER GLORY

A. He longs for his former relationship to God

He feels like God has abandoned him

B. He misses the days that he was a respected man

Job had been a leader in his community who was known for compassion and justice

C. Job refutes Eliphaz

Job did the opposite of the accusations of Eliphaz

D. Everything he did was for the good of the people around him

Job used his power and prestige to help others

II. JOB HUMILIATED

A. Job is mocked by the dregs of society

Even people who lack character now make fun of Job

B. His pain is more than he can endure

Job is weary of suffering

Reflection Questions

1. As Job begins his speech, what does he miss the most?

26

Job's Negative Confession (31)

This is the last major statement that Job makes, other than his responses to God that come later. Job is taking a series of oaths that he has not committed any of the sins he mentions. The Bible is distinctive in declaring that all people are created equally, in the image of God. In ancient cultures, some people intrinsically have more value than others because of heritage, wealth, gender, race, etc. God looks on everyone impartially.

I. DEFINITION OF A NEGATIVE CONFESSION

Someone listing sins that they have not committed

II. THE LIST OF SINS THAT JOB CLAIMS HE DID NOT COMMIT

A. Lust

B. Cheating

C. Adultery

D. Unjust employer

E. Ignoring the poor

F. Greed

G. Superstition or idolatry

H. Vindictive and cunning

27

The Elihu Speech (32-37)

Elihu is not mentioned either before or after his speech. He claims to be perfect in knowledge. Elihu thinks that the other three did not convince Job because they did not give a satisfactory answer, but Elihu ends up repeating what they have already said. He thinks that the doctrine of retribution is the answer to Job's situation. Elihu is a warning to us that we don't have all the answers.

I. INTRODUCTION TO ELIHU

Elihu makes only one speech

II. ELIHU ADDS NOTHING OF VALUE TO THE BOOK OF JOB

A. Elihu is overconfident of his own wisdom

Elihu claims to be, "perfect in knowledge

B. Elihu says nothing that has not already been said

- 1. God reproves a person but restores them if they repent**
- 2. God is the wise and powerful ruler of the world**
- 3. Evil people will be destroyed but the repentant will prosper**
- 4. He wrongly assumes that Job is being punished for something he did**
- 5. Even Elihu's claim that he must speak is not original**
- 6. Elihu speaks of a dream**
- 7. Sleep is impossible for the wicked**
- 8. Elaborate discourses on how God punishes the wicked**

C. Almost everyone in the book ignores Elihu

The epilogue mentions the three friends but not Elihu

D. Some scholars think that the Elihu speeches were inserted later

The content and style indicate that it was likely part of the original text

Reflection Questions

1. Elihu claims to have more wisdom and insight than Job or the three friends. In 36:4, he says that he is, “perfect in knowledge.” Have you had a situation in your life where you were convinced you understood something completely and found out later you were wrong? How do you manage the tension of being confident in what scripture says and what the Spirit reveals to you with the possibility that because of your limited perspective and your own motives that sometimes you may be wrong?

28

God and Inanimate Nature (38-41)

The questions of the book of Job are, "How does God address the problem of evil and why do we serve God? God created a world that is stable and not chaotic. Where there was chaos, God brought in light, shape and beauty. Chaotic forces are necessary for life and God controls them.

I. GOD'S SPEECH AND JOB'S RESPONSES HAVE PARALLEL STRUCTURE

- A. God challenges Job (38:1-3)
 - B. God's dominion over creations (38: 4-40:2)
 - 1. Inanimate Nature (38:4-38)
 - 2. Animate Nature (38:39-40:2)
 - C. Job answers (40:3-5)
- A'. God challenges Job (40:6-14)
 - B'. Behemoth and Leviathan (40:7 - 41:34)
 - 1. Behemoth (40:15-24)
 - 2. Leviathan (41:1-34)
 - C'. Job answers (42:1-6)

II. MANY PEOPLE ARE CONFUSED BY GOD'S SPEECH

A. God gives Job a lesson in natural history

God does not answer Job's question directly

B. God seems to berate Job for being a mortal

This is not God's purpose

C. The book of Job does not answer the question, 'Why do the righteous suffer?'

The question at the beginning that Satan asks is, "Will Job serve God for nothing?"

III. WHAT DOES GOD'S SPEECH DO AND NOT DO?

A. Does not say that Job's affliction is punishment for sin

Job's affliction was not a consequence for sin or

B. God accuses Job of having imputed injustice to God

Job did accuse God of being unjust

C. God is rebuking Job for his theological conclusion

God is not rebuking Job's behavior

IV. GOD AND INANIMATE NATURE

A. Things are fixed because God made it so

1. The earth

2. The sea

3. The dawn

4. The stars

B. Distant and dangerous places

God mentions the deeps, broad expanse of the earth and others

C. Chaotic forces

God refers to the examples of thunderstorms and freezing weather

Reflection Questions

1. For what theological conclusion did God rebuke Job? What was God's purpose? What was a time in your life that, as a result of reading scripture, the leading of the spirit or someone explaining something about a scripture passage, you changed your mind about who God is and how you should live your life?
2. God begins his speech by emphasizing the stability of creation. Why is that significant in the context of the book of Job? How is this a response to Job's description of the world as he is experiencing it?
3. When God asks Job about the creation of the world, what metaphors did he use to describe the stability built into creation? Why was that important for Job to hear?

6. What are examples of dangerous and chaotic places that God mentions in his speech? What is the point he is making by referring to them? How does this affect your understanding of how God is working in the world? How does this encourage you to trust him and live by faith?

29

The Ancient Perspective on Nature

People in ancient Mesopotamia lived in constant fear of the chaos, danger, ferocity of nature and they valued subduing, controlling and pushing back nature. Wilderness was something to be tamed and pushed back by civilization. In the Gilgamesh epic poem, Enkidu is transformed into a civilized man who protects the domestic animals from the wild animals. In Egypt, there were gods of the Black Land and gods of the Red Land. God sees everything in the world as entirely under his control.

I. ROUSSEAU'S VIEW OF THE NOBILITY OF THE SAVAGE AND THE GOODNESS OF WILDERNESS

A. Highly urbanized environment

People who live in cities need to make an effort to see creation in its natural state

B. Shrinking wilderness

There are fewer areas that you can go to get away from civilization

C. Vanishing Species

Some species are threatened by possible extinction

II. ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIANS BELIEVED CIVILIZATION WAS A GIFT FROM HEAVEN TO PUSH BACK THE WILDERNESS

A. Quote from Gilgamesh Tablet 1

Description of a creature that is wild and untamed

B. Quote from Gilgamesh Tablet 2

Description of a wild creature that becomes civilized

III. EGYPTIAN CONCEPT OF NATURE AND CIVILIZATION [SET, OSIRIS, AMUN-RA, HORUS, MAAT]

Egyptians believed that the part of their country that was civilized was more desirable than the empty desert where death reigned

IV. JOB AND HIS FRIENDS COME FROM A CONVENTIONAL WISDOM IN WHICH HUMAN SOCIETY AND ORDER ARE GOOD

Life thrives when there is civilization that follows the precepts of wisdom

V. VIOLENT CREATURES REPRESENT EVIL AND CHAOS AND ARE OUTSIDE THIS ORDER

The wilderness was a lethal place where the lion was a killer

VI. GOD DESCRIBES A CREATION THAT IS NOT EXCLUSIVELY ANTHROPOCENTRIC

God cares for the wilderness areas even though people don't live there

30

God and Animate Nature

God's care for the animals and how this relates to the problem of Job. The Lion was the epitome of the ferocity and danger of the wilderness. God protects the prey when are vulnerable giving birth and raising their young. The wild donkey and wild ox are thriving, even though they aren't domesticated. The ostrich is an animal that thrives with no wisdom. Civilization and humanity can use the horse, but the horse's strength is from God. God has made the eagles to be dangerous predators and God manages the glory of his earth. All of these things that we see as chaos, and out of control depend on God and thrive because he provides for them and things that he manages and glories in. God describes nature as good, unlike the night spirit that describes it with contempt and loathing. God knows how to manage the chaotic elements of creation.

I. GOD AND ANIMATE NATURE

A. Predators and scavengers

God cares for lions and ravens but Eliphaz views them as metaphors for wicked men

B. Mountain goats and deer

God enables them to survive even though they are vulnerable as prey, especially when giving birth

C. The wild donkey and the wild ox

They thrive even without human direction or care

D. The ostrich

The ostrich flourishes even though she doesn't have wisdom

E. The horse

The horse can overcome violence and human warfare

F. The hawk and the eagle

Two predators that have amazing skills

II. GOD AS THE RULER OF THE NATURAL WORLD

A. The world is more complex than Job and his friends allow for

They don't understand everything

B. Type 2 wisdom does not explain everything about how God manages the world

The wisdom in Proverbs is valid but doesn't account for everything God is doing

C. The sages wrongly thought that their system explained everything

Some people thought that everything fit into their conception of wisdom

D. The ostrich is an example of an animal that thrives without wisdom

The ostrich leaves her eggs unprotected but still thrives

E. God's speech answers the theology of the night spirit

God considers all aspects of creation to be good and manages it all rather than destroying it

31

The Powers Above Nature (40:1-14)

The societies of the Ancient Near East had a high concept of justice. It was the duty of the rulers to uphold justice and protect the powerless. If you are a man who leads, you need to make sure that evil is held in check. Listen to people who come to you with a grievance. The “Eloquent Peasant” speeches were from the perspective of an Egyptian that had been mistreated who was presenting his case before a magistrate. He encouraged the magistrate to listen to the plea of people who are oppressed and come to their rescue. In Mesopotamia, we have a recorded prayer of Ashurbanipal to the god Shamash to help him to be just and for the Shamash to be just. Psalm 101 is a prayer by King David for his successor. In Genesis 18, Abraham expects God to behave with justice just like he would expect a king to behave with justice. God is asking Job if he comprehends what it means to bring justice to the world. It involves both power and wisdom.

I. GOD HAS SHOWN THAT HE CONTROLS THE CHAOTIC POWERS OF THE COSMOS

He set boundaries for the sea and controls and cares for wild animals

II. THE DUTY OF THE KINGS TO UPHOLD JUSTICE

A. Teachings in Egypt by Ptahhotep

If you are in power, you need to listen to the case of someone who is being mistreated

B. Teaching in Egypt of the, “Eloquent Peasant”

A story of a peasant who is mistreated that is pleading their case for justice

C. Teachings in Mesopotamia

A prayer by the king Asurbanipal to the god Shamash

D. Kingship ideal of Psalm 101

A prayer of King David about upholding justice

E. Genesis 18

Abraham's interaction with God about whether he will judge Sodom

III. JOB EXPECTS GOD TO ACT JUSTLY

Job has complained about how the evil prosper and other people suffer unjustly

IV. GOD ADDRESSES THE ISSUE OF INJUSTICE IN THE WORLD

God says that Job doesn't understand what it takes to bring about justice and defeat evil in the world.

32

The Identity of Behemoth (40:15-24)

Behemoth is the plural form of a Hebrew word that refers to animals in general also specifically to wild animals. In Job, it's also used as a metaphor representing the composite forces of the powers of the earth that are against God.

I. BEHEMOTH IS NOT A DESCRIPTION OF A SPECIFIC ANIMAL

The characteristics do not fit one particular animal

II. BEHEMOTH IS PLURAL OF A HEBREW WORD, MEANING BEAST OR ANIMAL

A. In the singular it often refers to a large land animal

It is often used to refer to domesticated cattle and sheep

B. In the plural, it may refer to animals in general or specifically to wild animals

See various passages in the Psalms and prophets

C. The plural indicates that it is a composite description

It appears in all environments and every part of it is powerful

D. Composite animals described in Daniel

Daniel chapters 7 and 8 describe political empires as composite animals

E. Behemoth is a metaphor for evil that is against God

It is out of control like a beast

F. God says that no one can put an end to oppression and bring about utopia except God

Humans cannot put an end to oppression, just like they can't control Behemoth

Reflection Questions

1. What animal is God referring to when he describes Behemoth? Why?

2. What does the Hebrew word Behemoth mean?

3. In what ways is Behemoth an accurate metaphor to describe spiritual forces and earthly kingdoms and rulers that are opposed to the kingdom of God? What is the implication about what Job can do and about what God is doing?

33

Behemoth: Beginning of God's Ways (40:19)

Behemoth is a dangerous power that God must reckon with. Some people think this is an allusion to animals that God created in Genesis 1:24. "Lady Wisdom" is the wisdom that God built into creation. Behemoth is dangerous and a force to be reckoned with, not the embodiment of good behavior. One aspect of principalities and powers is forces outside of the world we can see. In Revelation, God protects people from the fury and wrath of the dragon, which is an oppressive power that seeks to take the place of God.

I. BEHEMOTH AS THE BEGINNING OF THE WAYS OF GOD

A. Some explain this as an allusion to Genesis 1:24

This encompasses more than just the creation of land animals

B. Possibly alludes to “Lady Wisdom”

Behemoth is not the embodiment of good behavior

II. BEHEMOTH MAY HAVE BEEN THE FORCES OF CHAOS PRESENT AT CREATION

A. Before God created, there was a lifeless void

This represented the primordial forces of oblivion and chaos

B. Principalities and powers

The New Testament equivalent of Behemoth

C. The vision in Revelation of the woman and the dragon

The dragon is Satan and the male child of the woman is Jesus

D. Behemoth becomes the Beast in Revelation 13:1

Described as an animal with composite features

Reflection Questions

1. What are the two examples that Dr. Garrett says that Behemoth is NOT an allusion to? What reasons does he give?

34

Identifying Leviathan (41)

Job 41 describes Leviathan. Leviathan is not a natural animal like a crocodile. Sometimes Leviathan refers to a large sea creature, and sometimes death, chaos and the embodiment of evil. Satan is present at the first of the book but he is never mentioned again. In order for God to deal with evil in the world, he must defeat Leviathan.

I. DESCRIPTION OF LEVIATHAN

Leviathan is described with characteristics that do not match a created animal

II. LEVIATHAN IS NOT A CROCODILE

- A. Invulnerable to human weapons**

- B. Eyes and nose flash with light**

- C. Pours fire out of its mouth**

- D. He is covered with armor**

- E. He dominates all creatures**

- F. God implies that he has speech**

III. THE NAME LEVIATHAN

- A. Some Bible passages use this name to refer to a sea creature**

Psalm 104:26 is an example

B. Found in Ugaritic literature

The creatures Motu, Lotan, Elu are examples

C. Psalm 74:13-14

The power of God is described metaphorically as fighting the forces of chaos and death.

D. Isaiah 27:1

A metaphor for the Assyrian army

IV. CONCLUSION

Reflection Questions

1. What are the unique characteristics of Leviathan that indicate it is not a typical animal?
2. What are different ways the word Leviathan is used in the Bible?
3. What does Leviathan represent in Ugaritic literature?
4. How is Satan and his challenge addressed in the book of Job by how God deals with Leviathan?

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Combating Leviathan (41)

Leviathan is a ferocious creature that no human can subdue. God is saying that he is willing to oppose Leviathan and is not frightened of Leviathan or intimidated by his boasting. God is the one who will defeat this enemy who seems unbeatable to humans. God tells Job that he will deal with Leviathan but God doesn't tell him how he will do it. Job embraced God's answer even though Job didn't know how God would deal with evil.

I. GOD MAKES SIMILAR COMMENTS ABOUT LEVIATHAN AS HE DID ABOUT BEHEMOTH

Rhetorical questions to Job to point out that Job cannot tame, subdue or defeat it

II. TRANSLATION DIFFERENCES 41:9-12

A. Verse 9

Leviathan's expectation of victory is false and will fail

B. Verse 10

He is not so deadly should someone ritually summon him. God is not fearful of Leviathan

C. Verse 11

Boasting by Leviathan

D. Verse 12

I will not be silent at his blathering words of boasting

III. GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD LEVIATHAN IS DIFFERENT FROM HOW HE REGARDS THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD

A. God doesn't consider animals to be evil

He regards Leviathan as boastful and evil and does not sustain it

B. Humans have tamed or killed a variety of beasts

Humans are not able to tame or kill Leviathan

C. The chaos of the animal kingdom does not threaten the human race

The beasts of the field do not boast of great things and they are not evil

IV. LEVIATHAN IS SATAN

Satan isn't mentioned by name after chapter 2, but he reappears as Leviathan

V. GOD CAN ONLY DESTROY EVIL BY DESTROYING CREATION

God will destroy evil when he establishes the new heaven and new earth. In the meantime he manages Leviathan.

VI. GOD LEAVES A GREAT DEAL UNSAID

God does not tell Job specifically how he will subdue Leviathan

VII. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LEVEL 3 WISDOM [1ST LEVEL HOCHMA, 2ND LEVEL,

Level 3 wisdom is God's secret wisdom that is counter-intuitive. You can't find it in the world.

VIII. IN REVELATION 20, GOD DEALS WITH THE DRAGON

God destroys Satan, then establishes the new heaven and new earth

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Job Repents (42:1-6)

Job announces that he has changed his outlook on evil, God's governance of the world and his own suffering. Job knew that God is all-powerful. Now Job knows something more about how God uses his power. Should God be merciful to people who will still be evil? Eschatological is an event that can only happen by a work of God. Emergence of divine power within the historical context. Job admits that he didn't understand the complexity that is involved in God conquering evil. God forgives Job's three friends because Job interceded for them. God is showing his approval with job by publicly restoring him.

I. JOB CHANGES HIS MIND

Job has a different perspective on his own suffering and how God governs the world

II. JOB BEGINS BY ASSERTING THAT GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

Job knew this before, but now he has a different perspective on what it means

III. JOB ASSUMED THAT GOD WOULD ELIMINATE EVIL

Job realizes that God can't destroy evil without destroying creation, like the parable of the "wheat and the tares." (Matthew 13:24-30)

IV. NOT EVERYTHING THAT IS DANGEROUS IS EVIL

The eradication of evil is a complex matter

V. EVIL CANNOT BE DESTROYED WITHIN THE HISTORICAL PROCESS

God must undo evil eschatologically

VI. JOB CONSIDERS HIMSELF A PERSON THAT SPOKE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE

Job realizes that the perspective of the doctrine of retribution is incomplete

VII. JOB 42:6 IS DIFFICULT TO TRANSLATE

A. Problems with the common translation

1. The word, "myself" is not in the Hebrew text and "despise" means "reject"
2. The word translated as, "repent" [*shuv, necham, al*]
3. Hebrew idiom meaning, "to change one's mind about something"

B. The phrase translated, "dust and ashes"

The phrase refers to the lowliness of the human condition

C. Job does not reject humanity

Job is rejecting his former opinion that God was not governing the world properly

VIII. JOB THE INTERCESSOR

A. The Lord shows deep rage toward Job's three friends

The phrase that is used describes furious anger

B. God demands an extravagant sacrifice from the three friends

The basis for God forgiving the three friends is God's favor toward Job

IX. JOB RESTORED

A. Job's vindication is complete

God restored what Job had lost

B. Job was right to not confess to sins he didn't commit

For Job to confess to something he didn't do would have been meaningless

C. Two troubling matters

- 1. Nothing can truly replace a child**
- 2. The text doesn't say that Job was healed of his skin disease**

D. Job's suffering was redemptive

God can redeem suffering if we choose to deepen our faith in him

Reflection Questions

1. At the beginning of Job's speech, what did he say that he already knew? What does he know now, but didn't know previously?
2. How is it consistent with God's nature to allow evil to exist in the world? How has it benefited you and people you know that God has delayed punishing all evil in the world?
3. In what ways is God confronting evil in the world even though he hasn't eradicated it? How are you being a part of that process in the way you think, pray and act?

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The Theology of Job (Part 1)

Job's suffering brought him to a new understanding of who God is and what God is doing in the world. Job's hope, and our hope, is in a heavenly redeemer that rose from the dead. Legalism comes about often when people hold to essential teachings but they don't know God. They substitute the rules for relationship.

I. THE MESSAGE OF JOB

A. Satan's challenge is, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"

1. The answer is, "no"

2. Job learned that the benefit is God himself

B. Our hope is in God

The world is full of injustice but we can live our lives by faith in a righteous God as we await our final salvation

C. The need for a heavenly redeemer

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus was necessary

D. Job's understanding of God and the reality of evil came through redemptive suffering

We can also experience redemptive suffering as we live in a world where evil is present

II. MISDIRECTED ORTHODOXY

A. Orthodoxy is essential but never sufficient

Orthodoxy without love, compassion and humility is in danger of becoming hardened, misanthropic and satanic

B. Job often prays but the three never do

You can be orthodox, but far from God

C. Job's faith is combined with honesty

Job is willing to be honest with God about how his experience of suffering contradicts his theology

6. What is the evidence that Job's faith and orthodoxy is combined with honesty? What is the value in being honest with God about what you are experiencing and what you are feeling? In what ways are you honest and transparent with God now? In what ways does he want you to improve in this area?

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The Theology of Job (Part 2)

Job mentions composite animals similar to those described in other apocalyptic passages. Job had faith that God would do a work of salvation but didn't understand everything that Jesus would do. There is a hidden plan of God to redeem people and conquer evil that is a major theme in apocryphal books and also in Job.

I. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB AND APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

The core message is that God will bring salvation

II. PEOPLE ON EARTH ARE SUFFERING, BUT THERE IS A HEAVENLY REALITY THAT THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT

Job did not know about the conversation with Satan and God

III. EVIL IS PERVASIVE

The state of the world challenges the idea that a righteous God is in control

IV. THE WISDOM WE HAVE IS LIMITED

Because we are human, our perspective is incomplete

V. JOB'S EXPERIENCE IS REFLECTED IN REVELATION

God ultimately redeems suffering

VI. CHRIST IS THE HIDDEN WISDOM OF GOD

People at the time of Christ, and still today, consider the death of Jesus on the cross to be foolishness

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The Theology of Job (Part 3)

Job tells us about the heavenly mediator. Prior to his afflictions, Job's life was almost god-like because he was relatively free of suffering. Job through his affliction, faces the problem of evil and the enormity of suffering in the human race. Even though some people commit evil and violent acts, Job describes them in pitiful terms.

I. PRIOR TO HIS AFFLICTION, HE WAS ALMOST GOD-LIKE IN BEING RELATIVELY FREE OF SUFFERING

A. The ground Job walked on prospered

B. People fell silent in his presence

C. He put on righteousness as a garment

D. He punished the wicked

E. He cared for people who were suffering

F. Eyes to the blind and feet to the lame

II. JOB HAD NO FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE OF SUFFERING UNTIL HE EXPERIENCED CALAMITY

A. Job now knows what it means to suffer

Job's speeches reflect the extent of his suffering

B. Job spoke with compassion for common sinners

Job's experience help him relate to others who

III. THE NEED FOR A MEDIATOR AND REDEEMER

A. Job wanted a mediator to plead his case

Job wanted a mediator to plead his innocence directly to God

B. We know that Jesus is the mediator between God and humans

Jesus is qualified to be the mediator because he is both God and human

C. Job became aware of human suffering by experiencing it

Job only understood the suffering of others by experiencing his own affliction

D. Characteristics of a mediator

Jesus often referred to himself as Son of Man

Reflection Questions

1. In chapter 29, how did Job describe his life before his afflictions in ways that indicated a god-like status? What was Job's purpose in describing himself like this? In what way could his position in life be considered a shortcoming? How did his experience of suffering change him? What was a time in your life that you experienced difficulty or suffering that caused you to have more compassion or empathy for people as a result? Explain.

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Does Job Serve God for Nothing?

Should virtue, or piety, be disinterested? If it's not done for its own sake, is it real? Job's love for God is not disinterested, but it is real.

I. THE QUESTION OF DISINTERESTED PIETY

Satan's question was, "Does Job serve God for nothing?."

II. ASKING SOMEONE TO BE VIRTUOUS IN A DISINTERESTED WAY IS NOT REALISTIC

It's part of being human to consider the consequences of our choices

III. JESUS DOESN'T EXPECT OUR MOTIVES TO BE DISINTERESTED

Jesus promises rewards for being his disciple

IV. EVEN THE MOTIVES OF A MARTYR AREN'T DISINTERESTED

They have hope of the resurrection and eternal life

V. RIGHTEOUSNESS DEMANDS SERVICE THAT INVOLVES SUFFERING

Suffering tests us and can purify us

VI. DID JOB SERVE GOD FOR NOTHING?

No, he doesn't serve God for nothing. His love for God is not disinterested but it is real. Your love for God is real when it endures suffering.

VII. WHAT DOES JOB LEARN?

Job's reward is God himself and has confidence that God will set everything right

Reflection Questions

1. How is disinterested piety inconsistent with what it means to be human? When you are serving God, how do you evaluate your motives? Was there something you did for God and you didn't get out of it as much as you expected? How did you deal with that? Is there something you did for God and you got more out of it than you expected, maybe even in an unexpected way?

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