

# Job



## Introduction

# Wisdom Literature

- The Book of Job is included in what we refer to as the *Wisdom Literature*, together with Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.
- These books discuss man's approach to life "under the sun," covering many different aspects of that life (very practical). \*Job is filled with great wisdom.
- Much of what's contained in these books is written as **poetry**, which is often more difficult to interpret than **prose**.

# Summary

- Job was a righteous man, blessed by God with great riches, a large family, and the respect of many.
- One day, God asked Satan if he had considered Job. Satan responded by saying that Job served God only because God blessed him, that if stripped of his blessings, he would curse God to His face.
- God allowed Satan to take his possessions and his children, but Job did not sin.

# Summary

- Satan didn't give up—"touch his bone and flesh and he will curse You to your face." God allowed Satan to strike Job with painful boils; his wife urged him to curse God and die, but Job held fast to God.
- Adding to Job's misery, three friends came to "comfort" him, and then stayed to **accuse** him.
- Three friends: **Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar**. Three rounds of speeches follow—one man speaks, Job answers; another speaks, Job answers...

# Summary

- They argued that Job's suffering was because of sin, that if he would only confess his sin and repent, God would forgive him and restore him.
- Job answered them, first, by protesting his innocence, and secondly, by showing the fallacy of their arguments. Job declared that if he could present his case to God, God would vindicate him.

# Summary

- When these three rounds of speeches were completed, a man named **Elihu** spoke up. Having listened to what the others said, he offered some objections to their reasoning. He also rebuked Job for questioning God.
- God finally spoke—out of a whirlwind, and He addressed Job. His main point: Job, you are in no position to question me, or what I do. Job humbly accepted the rebuke.

# Summary

- Then, God rebuked the three friends—“you have not spoken of Me what is right.” He ordered them to go to Job, offer up a burnt offering, and have Job pray for them.
- God restored Job’s wealth—twice as much as before. He also blessed him with more children—7 sons and 3 daughters. His brothers and sisters and friends came to him as before and offered him comfort for the adversity he had endured.

# When was it written, and by whom?

- We simply don't know **WHO** wrote it.
- As to **WHEN**, again we don't know, but some evidence indicates during the days of Solomon.
  - Wisdom literature flourished during this time (1 Kings 4:30–33).
  - Vocabulary used in Job very similar to that used in other wisdom literature.
  - Some of the same issues discussed in Job are also discussed in Psalms and Proverbs.

# When do these events take place?

- Most likely during age of the patriarchs (Genesis).
  - Chaldeans still living a nomadic lifestyle (1:17).
  - Job’s lifestyle seems to fit the patriarchal period.
  - No mention of the law, covenant, priesthood, etc.—things which originated at Sinai (Exodus 19).
  - God spoke **directly** to Job, and Job offered sacrifices for his children and friends—things more characteristic of the patriarchal age.
  - Job lived a **LONG** life (140 years **AFTER** his suffering ordeal—42:16).

# Job, the Man

- Job enjoyed a relationship with God—a covenant with Him.
  - “Have you considered **My servant Job...**” (1:8; 2:3).
  - He called on God and God answered him (12:4).
  - He described God as “my witness”—One who vouched for him (16:19).
  - Job was dedicated to keeping God’s commandments; He treasured God’s words (23:11–12).
  - Always called on God, unlike the “hypocrite” (27:8–10).

# Job, the Man

- Job remained faithful in his commitment to God.
  - Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong (1:22).
  - “Shall we indeed accept good from God...and not accept adversity?” Did not sin with his lips (2:10).
  - “I have not denied the words of the Holy One” (6:10).
  - “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” (13:15).
  - “I have kept His way and not turned aside” (23:11).
  - “Long as breath is in me...my lips will not speak wickedness...till I die I will not put away my integrity...my righteousness I hold fast” (27:1-6).

# Statements Made Elsewhere

- “Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and **Job** were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness” (Ezekiel 14:14).
- “Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the **perseverance** of **Job** and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (James 5:11).

# The Great Theme of the Book

- Job made a covenant with God, and because of that, remained faithful to God—even when his earthly blessings had been stripped from him, even when he didn't understand why he suffered, even when he thought God sent his suffering.
- He learned to serve God because of who He is.
- He is a great example to us of faithfulness and constancy in a relationship.

# The Great Theme of the Book

- The New Testament commends Job for his patience, or endurance (James 5:11).
- Not because he never expressed pain and grief over His suffering—because He did. Not because he never questioned why he had such troubles—because He did.
- Commended, because through it all, even when things were at their darkest, he remained steadfast in his relationship to God.

# Questions Raised in the Book

- Do men serve God **only** for the blessings He gives?
- How do we harmonize the tremendous suffering in this world with the providence of an all-wise, all-powerful, and loving God?
- Is suffering always a sign of God's wrath?
- Is prosperity always a sign of God's pleasure?
- Do we have a right to question God about why He does the things He does, or why He allows the things He allows?