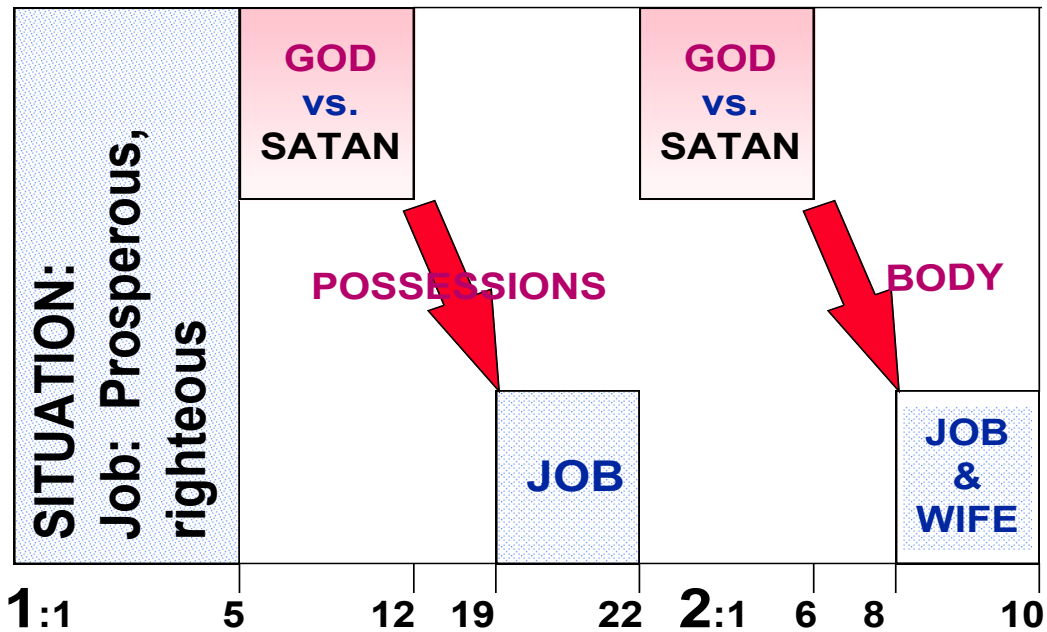




# JOB

## God Has Right Over His Creatures

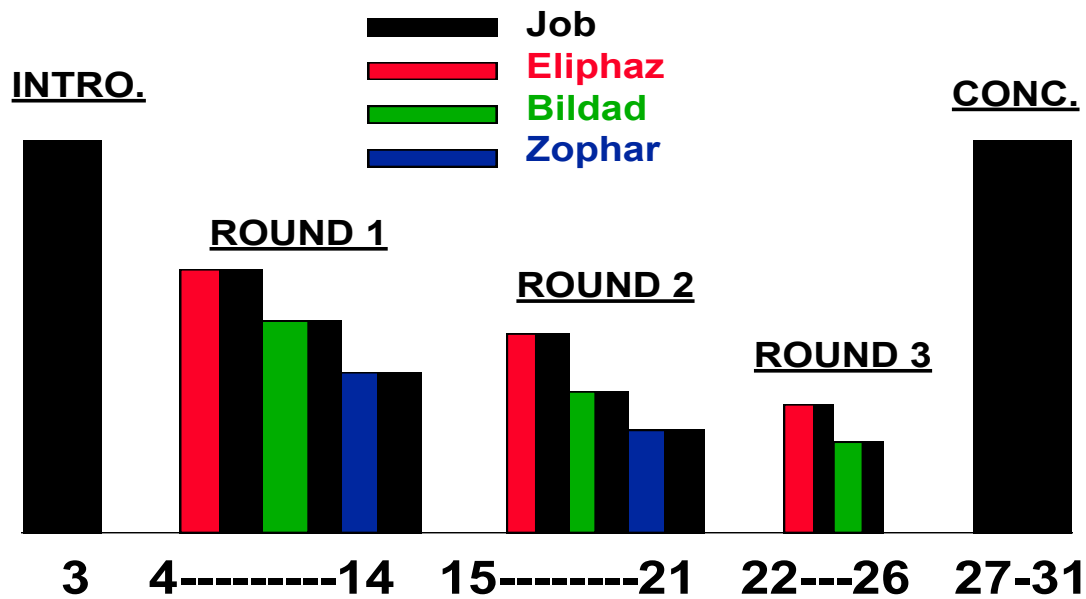
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# JOB: 1--2

## THE SETTING

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## JOB 3--31

### Job and His Three Friends

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#### Job: Laments his life

Eliphaz: Job not pure.

Job: Requests friends reveal sin  
Requests God reveal sin.

Bildad: Job must repent. God is just.

Job: No man is just before God.  
Job not able to argue before God.

Zophar: Job needs to respect God's knowledge.

Job: Job resents their assumption.  
Job knows God is great but desires  
to speak with Him.

## **ELIHU'S SPEECH**

***Narrator's Assessment*** of situation and Introduction of Elihu's purpose: 32:1-5

***Elihu's Evaluation*** and speech to ***three friends*** (32:6-22)

***Elihu's Evaluation*** and speech to ***Job*** (33--37)

1. God's deals with men in multiple ways (33:1-33)
2. Job is wrong in saying he is right/God has not dealt properly (34:5,6; 34:10-37)
3. Job is wrong in saying there is no advantage to being righteous (34:9; 35:1-16)

***Elihu considers*** the meaning of affliction (36:1-23)

and the unfathomableness of ***God*** as He approaches in the storm (36:24--37)

## ADDITIONAL NOTES<sup>1</sup>

### Retribution Theology

1. Characteristic of rationalistic thinking - i.e., gods of other nations
2. Upright and innocent do not suffer!
3. If suffering - - repentance required for relief.
4. God's character - simple - moral purity - judgment for less

### Job's Uniqueness

A priest (mediator) for others

While the text does not say that Job had to mediate for his sons and daughters, it is strongly implied that this is the means, based on 42:8-9 where the three friends are required to approach Job with their sacrifices (not God) and it is stated that "the LORD accepted Job."

**Job 1:5** <sup>5</sup> And it came about, when the days of feasting had completed their cycle, that Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

**Job 42:8-9** <sup>8</sup> "Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you *according to your* folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." <sup>9</sup> So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job.

Job is one who is able to interact with God (receive direct conversation (revelation?)), respond and get a response from God.

### YHWH's Name

YHWH's name is used in a unique fashion in the literary structure of Job. Only the narrator mostly uses it. Other than the introductory chapters (1—2) and the

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<sup>1</sup> A special note of thanks and credit are given to Dr. Elliott Johnson, Senior Professor of Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary. His Bible 303 notes have been influential and are reflected in various places.

conclusion of God (38—42), there is only one use (12:9), and that by Job. Job's only other reference to YHWH is in 2:6 where he states his well-known verse regarding coming from his mother's womb.

## **Synthesis**

### **Background**

#### **Authorship**

The author to Job is unknown. Nowhere in the book is a reference to anyone who might have written it. Zuck (B.K.C.)<sup>2</sup> suggests a few, among them Elihu, Moses, Isaiah, and notes the similarities between Solomon's Proverbs 8 and Job 28.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of Job is theological. It is to demonstrate the sovereignty of God in ordering the righteous man's life. Job and his friends were caught up in a retribution theology, i.e., if a man obeys he will be rich, healthy, etc. They assumed there was no other reason for problems. God will show that in His sovereign knowledge there were other reasons, and they were within His great plan.

The question asked in the beginning about Job and whether he would desert God is answered very quickly. Job would not desert God. But Job had bigger questions to ask? Was God right in dealing with him in that manner? Does the Creator have the right to deal with His creatures for reasons not known to the creatures? The answer is, "Yes."

#### **Subject/Complement**

The subject/complement of Job is: The Sovereignty of God is demonstrated to be beyond man's understanding in his dealings with man, and therefore needs to be accepted by man in faith and trust.

#### **Date**

The date is also unknown, but many argue that it may be pre-patriarchal or contemporary with the patriarchs. Job was his family's priest, and thus some suppose that it would have been before the time of Moses. However, Job was a Gentile, and an understanding of how a Gentile would approach God through sacrifice is not completely understood. It very well may be that he continued to approach God through sacrifice

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<sup>2</sup> Roy Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Old Testament Edition, "Proverbs."

based, not on Moses, but on Adam and Abel. For the Gentile there may not have been a dispensational effect, since he was not under the Law.

### **Structure**

The book is divided into three portions, an introduction (1:1-2:10) in which the situation is set, whereby Job finds himself in his dreary situation. The second section is the debate over why Job has found himself in this situation, in which six parties attempt to answer the question, Job, his three friends, Elihu, and God (2:1-41:6). And finally the epilogue (42:7-9) where judgment takes place on those who have misrepresented God, and Job is restored. The main section (2:1-41:6) is broken into parts whereby each of the parties interacts with Job. Job and his three friends (2:11-31:40), Elihu speaks (32:1-37:24), and finally God and Job discuss (38:1-41:34).

### **Commentary**

#### **THE SETTING (1--2:10)**

##### **I. The Setting and Tension Introduced:** The man Job. 1:1-5

The first five verses are very important in understanding where the book of Job is going, and understanding Job's theology. First, it is revealed that Job was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. This is the Old Testament's way of saying Job was an Old Testament saint (trusting in the promise of God for forgiveness), who was living according to God's principles. The parallel to today would be one who was saved and was walking daily with the Lord, confessing their sins (requesting mercy) regularly.

In verse 5, the reader is revealed something else very interesting about Job. He was a sacrificer. In the Old Testament, a sacrificer was one who trusted God for the ultimate removal of sin through a Redeemer to come. While the New Testament reader tends to think that non-Mosaic sacrifices were simply obedience, Genesis 3--4 indicates a testimony of a coming Messiah.

So the point of these first five verses is to show that there was no evil in Job. He was righteous, and if perhaps he had sinned, he had been obedient in his sacrifice for the removal of that sin. He had done everything that God had instructed.

##### **A. Job's status in relationship to the spiritual and physical is full (1:1-5).**

1. The status of Job with respect to God is listed as complete. (1:1).

**Job 1:1** There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil.

2. Job's physical success is listed as full (1:2-3).

<sup>2</sup> And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. <sup>3</sup> His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

3. Job's integrity in relationship to God is a total pursuit (1:4-5)

<sup>4</sup> And his sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. <sup>5</sup> And it came about, when the days of feasting had completed their cycle, that Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

- B. **First Tension, Response Introduced:** Job was faithful in relationship to the first test; that of removal of all physical benefits (1:6-22).

**Life:** This test is similar to Adam's test in that it is a question as to where "life" resides. Is Job's life found in the physical or does he believe it is with God in the revelation of His promise?

Each issue of Satan will be in two phases. The first phase is regarding possessions. This is what the Pharisees craved for their identity. But it is clear that Job will not find his identity in his possessions.

1. Satan had proposed a test of the removal of Job's possessions to test his faithfulness to God. 1:6-12

The second part of this first section begins the debate. Is Job only obedient since he is blessed (i.e., Job is not obedient based on a love for God, but on blessing)? This tact is taken up by Satan before God. God defends Job, pointing out that Job will not abandon God even if he is not blessed.

2. Job responds in faithfulness even though he lost all his physical benefits. 1:13-22

The past tense attack is on Job's possessions, yet Job only points out that it was God who gave him the possessions and thus it is His right to take them away.

C. **Story Tension Introduced:** Job's body attacked by Satan.

The story tension is introduced here. Job had responded appropriately to the removal of his possessions, recognizing that God had given and it was God's option to take away. His "life" was not found in his possessions. In other words, externally to Job's body, Job does not find his purpose nor life.

The tension of affecting his body also brings an appropriate response from Job from his lips. In the next section, Job's reasoning will be revealed through the antagonistic proposals of his friends. The effort of his friends is focused on how to remove the physical adversity; that is how to prompt God to respond and restore Job. Thus they search for the "key" to force God to act. Job, by contrast will reject their "key", but will question why his own "key" (self-righteousness<sup>3</sup>) does not work.

So, Job recognizes God's right to allow adversity, but ultimately changes when it is not removed based on his pleading.

1. Satan's proposal is that Job's faithfulness is limited to personal effects loss, but not by personal bodily suffering. 2:1-6

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<sup>3</sup> The friends are going to argue that the prompting that this reactive God needs is for Job to repent and forsake his sin. Job will argue that since he has not sinned (or failed to sacrifice for such) that he is undeserving of this curse and thus argues his own self-righteousness before God. Job has not considered that there might be another reason (testing) that is possible. Testing is the other option which God has revealed and while it might seem to constrain God's actions, it is unlimited in the ways he deals with man to bring about God's glory, and He does not have to explain how or to what degree he tests man. Creation issues at the end of the book are not stating that God has no restrictions in dealing with Job, only that God is not required to explain his testing of Job and its relationship to God's ultimate purpose. Thus the testing of Job and God's implementation of trials in Job's life may have benefits beyond Job's perception or his direct benefit. But God does not act apart from a wonderful purpose for Job and His creation. He is not required to explain that glorious purpose to a finite minded man.



The second portion of the debate only takes the fight one step further. Satan points out that it is only since Job's body has not been inflicted that he does not abandon God.<sup>4</sup>

**1:1-6** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth, and walking around on it." <sup>3</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause." <sup>4</sup> And Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. <sup>5</sup> "However, put forth Thy hand, now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse Thee to Thy face."

2. The attack on Job's body. 2:7-10

Thus God allows Job's body to be harmed. The response of Job's helper, his wife, is to respond as Satan has suggested, to curse God<sup>5</sup>. Job is now a man alone. The function of Job's wife in this narrative is to contrast the natural man's response to the Godly response of Job.

<sup>6</sup> So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life." <sup>7</sup> Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. <sup>8</sup> And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. <sup>9</sup> Then his wife said to him,

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<sup>4</sup> The question of affliction and physical observation is a Biblical issue. The pagans felt that they would be blessed (or cursed) in a response should they perform according to their god's wishes. Yet this God requires obedience based on His word and on a love for Him (since He is truth) regardless of observation. Thus Satan's question is that Job has not uniquely loved this God because of who this God is (submission to His sovereignty) but because of physical blessing.

<sup>5</sup> There is a lesson in the response of Job's wife. First of all, she is not saying "curse God and die," but "bless God and die," (unless this is a figure in some way not obvious to the reader.) She seems not to be saying that Job should commit suicide by abandoning God so that He will kill Job, but that his blessing God only results in death. She seems to be saying that his relationship with God has only brought him bad things. She, thus, like the friends, appears to be questioning Job's relationship as working.

"Do you still hold fast your integrity? Bless<sup>6</sup> God and die!"<sup>10</sup> But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

## II. THE RESPONSE OF JOB'S FRIENDS JOB'S INTERACTION TO THE TENSION (2:11-31:40)

Job's answer to the adversity was one of admission that God was sovereign and had the right to do with His creatures as He deemed necessary. However, as the adversity continues, Job's friends probe deeper and Job will react. Job's friends premise is simple. God is a simple God and responds to evil by cursing and will reverse the evil by repentance. Job does not agree initially, accepting his adversity seemingly without question. However as the adversity continues, Job insists God's character is unjust since He acts toward His creatures in judgment when they have not sinned and He does not reply to justify His actions upon request.

The essence of this problem is first, the question of "testing" and the second, the question of "delay" prior to restoration. Thus a believer is open to testing (not cursing) and it is for God's purposes and His timing as to when it will be removed.<sup>7</sup>

The response is introduced in 2:11-13, and presents the next section. The men initially come to comfort Job, sitting with him for seven days. The three will take turns speaking to Job, each in three cycles, with Zophar being left out of the third cycle. The speeches each get shorter as they cycle, and become increasingly accusatory of Job's actions. Each man, holding God to be without error but operates on retribution theology, insists increasingly that Job must have sinned. Their solution is for Job to repent. Job's response is not to repent but to see himself as righteous as he has been obedient. He has failed to see himself as a humble servant.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This is the literal translation of the word and "curse" is a modification by the translators.

<sup>7</sup> In the "Age of Grace" this testing will end at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming and the resurrection of the body.

<sup>8</sup> Imputed righteousness is not self-righteousness. Job had a similar thing that happens in Romans, called the self-righteousness, which comes with faith (looking down on those without it as if one had brought faith about on one's own).

The speeches in their cycles also become much more blatant and angry, but more importantly more fed up with Job's lack of admission of sin. Therefore Bildad's last speech is very short, while Zophar seems fed up and leaves without speaking.

Further each speech of Job is characterized by a response to the friend and then a lament, pointed at God.

A. Description of Job's pain is great as his friends are silent. (2:11-13)

Now that Job has introduced his answer of God's right to give adversity, he now expands on it.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, they came each one from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; and they made an appointment together to come to sympathize with him and comfort him.<sup>12</sup> And when they lifted up their eyes at a distance, and did not recognize him, they raised their voices and wept. And each of them tore his robe, and they threw dust over their heads toward the sky.<sup>13</sup> Then they sat down on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights with no one speaking a word to him, for they saw that *his* pain was very great.

B. Job's detailed response is that of great pain wherein he questions the purpose of his life. Contrariwise: The purpose of life is enjoyment. (3:1-26)

*Job regrets that he is not dead. 3:1-26 (Questions purpose of life based on his suffering). In other words, Job questions that if life is not enjoyed then it has no benefit and thus one should be taken out of life.<sup>9</sup>*

1. Job regrets the day he was born. 3:1-10.

**3:1** Afterward Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his *birth*.<sup>2</sup> And Job said,<sup>3</sup> "Let the day perish on which I was to be born, And the night *which* said, 'A boy is conceived.'<sup>4</sup> "May that day be darkness; Let not God above care for it, Nor light shine on it.<sup>5</sup> "Let darkness and black gloom claim it; Let a cloud settle on it; Let the blackness of the day terrify it.<sup>6</sup> "*As for* that night, let darkness seize it; Let it not rejoice among the days of the year; Let it not come into the number of the months.<sup>7</sup> "Behold, let that night be barren; Let no joyful shout enter it.<sup>8</sup> "Let those curse it who

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<sup>9</sup> Note the similarity to Job's wife's statement. The difference is that Job is not going to force God to take him out by cursing Him.

curse the day, Who are prepared to rouse Leviathan. <sup>9</sup> "Let the stars of its twilight be darkened; Let it wait for light but have none, Neither let it see the breaking dawn; <sup>10</sup> Because it did not shut the opening of my *mother's* womb, Or hide trouble from my eyes.

2. Job regrets that he did not die at birth. 3:11-19

<sup>11</sup> "Why did I not die at birth, Come forth from the womb and expire? <sup>12</sup> "Why did the knees receive me, And why the breasts, that I should suck? <sup>13</sup> "For now I would have lain down and been quiet; I would have slept then, I would have been at rest, <sup>14</sup> With kings and *with* counselors of the earth, Who rebuilt ruins for themselves; <sup>15</sup> Or with princes who had gold, Who were filling their houses *with* silver. <sup>16</sup> "Or like a miscarriage which is discarded, I would not be, As infants that never saw light. <sup>17</sup> "There the wicked cease from raging, And there the weary are at rest. <sup>18</sup> "The prisoners are at ease together; They do not hear the voice of the taskmaster. <sup>19</sup> "The small and the great are there, And the slave is free from his master.

3. Job questions why he must still live. 3:20-26

<sup>20</sup> "Why is light given to him who suffers, And life to the bitter of soul; <sup>21</sup> Who long for death, but there is none, And dig for it more than for hidden treasures; <sup>22</sup> Who rejoice greatly, They exult when they find the grave? <sup>23</sup> "Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, And whom God has hedged in? <sup>24</sup> "For my groaning comes at the sight of my food, And my cries pour out like water. <sup>25</sup> "For what I fear comes upon me, And what I dread befalls me. <sup>26</sup> "I am not at ease, nor am I quiet, And I am not at rest, but turmoil comes."

B. In the first cycle (4:1-14:22)

Eliphaz questions Job's purity, but Job tells him to show him where he has sinned or leave him alone. Job laments that God should show him his sin or leave him alone.

This appears to be the first hint of Job's accusations of God's injustice.

Bildad questions Job's purity in the light of the fact that God is just. If Job was not a sinner, then he would not be punished. Job responds that it is silly to expect a man to be just in God's eyes based upon his

works, for no man is just in God's eyes. Job then turns to God and laments that he does not have one to plead justice in God's presence. It appears to this author that Job is counting on the promised intermediary, not to justify Job's works, as he has already claimed that he was not just in God's sight, but to justify Job's actions in doing all that God had commanded, and placing himself on the mercy of God through the coming Redeemer. This Job felt was what God had commanded, and he had obeyed.

Zophar mentions God's omniscience and points out that Job has sinned, God knows of it, but Job does not. Job replies that he would like to speak with God and know these things. In the lament he requests that God would show him his sin.

### **THE FIRST CYCLE (4:1-14:22): (God is simple)**

3. **Eliphaz the Temanite** questions Job's purity and need to repent: 4:1-5:27
  - a. Job should be patient due to his trust in God and acts. 4:1-6.
  - b. God only punishes the guilty. 4:7-11
  - c. Points out that all are guilty before God. 4:12-21
  - d. There is no other place for Job to seek help for his trouble. 5:1-7
  - e. Seek God who raises up the lowly. 5:8-16
  - f. The lowly one whom God restores from discipline is stronger. 5:17-27
  
4. **Job** speaks. 6:1-7:21
  - a. Reply to Eliphaz. 6:1-30 (Point out error or desist).
    - 1) His pain is great. 6:1-7
    - 2) He desires that God would deliver him to death. 6:8-13
    - 3) His friends are unkind. 6:14-23
    - 4) His friends should either point out his error or desist from accusations. 6:24-30
  
  - b. Lament. 7:1-21 (Point out error or pardon)
    - 1) Job laments the fruitlessness of his days and nights. 7:1-6.
    - 2) Job laments his approaching death. 7:7-10
    - 3) Job justifies his complaining. 7:11-16
    - 4) Job questions God's dealings with him. 7:16-21

- a) Must God continue to examine him? 7:16-19
  - b) Why does God not act on his sin? 7:20-21
    - (1) Why doesn't He reveal his sin? 7:20
    - (2) Why doesn't He pardon it? 7:21
- 5 **Bildad the Shuhite** questions Job's acts in light of God's justice. 8:1-22
- a. Job is wrong when he complains about God's dealings. 8:1-2
  - b. God is just. Job must respond properly. 8:3-7
    - 1) God is just. 8:3
    - 2) If Job's sons sinned, then God is just in punishing. 8:4
    - 3) If Job seeks God, and Job is upright He will restore Job. 8:6-7.
  - c. The basis for this thesis. 8: 8-22
    - 1) Wise men have known these truths for ages. 8:8-10
    - 2) God will not reject a man of integrity. 8:11-22
6. **Job** speaks. 9:1-10:22
- a. Reply to Bildad. 9:1-35 (God is powerful, justice is in His power not Job's)
    - 1) No man could be just in God's eyes. He is too great. 9:1-12
    - 2) Even if Job is guiltless, he could not argue his point before God. 9:13-24
  - b. Lament. 9:24-10:22 (God does not understand Job's plight).
    - 1) Job laments that there is not someone to stand between him and God, so that he may plead his case. 9:24-35
    - 2) Job laments that God is not human, so that He might not condemn him. 10:1-7
    - 3) Job laments that God could mount an insurmountable case against him. 10:8-17

- 4) Job desires that God leave him alone for his last remaining hopeless days. 10:18-22
7. **Zophar the Naamathite** questions Job's acts in light of God's omniscience. 11:1-20
- a. Job is speaking without knowledge of the Almighty's wisdom. 11:1-6
  - b. God knows every man's sin. 11:7-12
  - c. Job's sin needs to be repented of, so that he may be forgiven. 11:13-20
8. **Job** speaks. 12:1-14:22
- a. Reply to Zophar. 12:1-13:12 (Job knows what they know, he needs to have knowledge from God, not them)
    - 1) Job resents his friends assuming that he does not know these things. 12:1-6
    - 2) Job asserts the knowledge of God's sovereignty in this matter. 12:7-12
    - 3) Job reviews God's wisdom and might. 12:13-25
    - 4) Job desires to speak with God, not his friends. 13:1-12
  - b. Lament. 13:12-14:22 (A weakening plea for God to explain Himself)
    - 1) Job places value in his contention. 13:13-19
    - 2) Job requests to know his iniquity. 13:20-28
    - 3) No one could be as perfect as God, and able to stand His judgment. 14:1-6
    - 4) There is no hope for a man when he dies. 14:7-12
    - 5) Job will wait for his death, since God will not reveal his transgression. 14:13-17
    - 6) Job is wearing down. 14:18-22

### The Second Cycle (15:1-21:34)

Now Job is attacked by Eliphaz who argues that Job's very manner in approaching God in non-*humility* demonstrates that he is hiding wickedness. Job resents his friend's attacks, and says to God that he is broken.

Bildad takes a similar tone, stating that Job thinks too highly of himself and that *pride* demonstrates wickedness. Job again resents his friends, and points out that he has become loathsome.

Zophar states dogmatically that if Job's *riches* have been removed there is no question about his sinfulness. Job replies that the wicked prosper right up to their death, and thus his argument is full of holes.

### The Third Cycle (22:1-31:40)

This cycle only includes speeches by Eliphaz and Bildad with a lengthy summary by Job at the end.

Eliphaz now moves to accusing Job of not taking care of the lowly, and outcast. Job does not reply to Eliphaz. It appears he is getting sick of their insensitivity and continued attacks, and laments directly to God. He points out that God knows who helps the lowly sincerely.

Bildad points out that Job is clearly unrighteous since man is a maggot and must be unrighteous. Job's theology does not present himself as good on the basis of his works, but on obedience to God's commands, sacrifices, etc. So Job replies to Bildad that he continues to trust in God even though he does not understand His motives.

Job then continues on *in a summary (29:1-31:40) lament, declaring his innocence, and reciting his past life of integrity toward God.*

### **ELIHU COMMENTS TO JOB. 32:1-37:24**

The purpose of Elihu is to demonstrate that a *man* understands the error of the theology of retribution and God's means of teaching man. Elihu steps up and ridicules the friends for not being friends at all, and not having represented their age well.

Elihu tells Job there are many reasons for God working with a man.

1. To prevent him from a disastrous path (33:1-33).
2. To be assured that God always deals fairly (34:1-37).
3. To realize one is unable to understand since God is so far beyond him (35:1-16).
4. Elihu's final statement is that Job should exalt God and not to have criticized (36:1-37:24).



**GOD AND JOB DIALOGUE. 38:1-41:34**

Basically God's response to Job is simply to show him His grandeur, His omnipotence, His sovereignty, in summary, His total infinite majesty. He questions Job about his knowledge of, or part in, creation, the operation of nature, the care of animals. Job is dumbfounded (40:3-5).

Then God asks Job how he can question God's judgments and how Job could not lower the mighty and raise the lowly. Job's response is to repent. (42:1-6).

The point of God's theology is to point out that God is God and man is man. The question asked in the beginning was whether Job had the proper motivation in obeying God. The question answered was whether God had the right to allow Job to suffer. The answer was that God had purposes beyond man's comprehension and had the right to do whatever He wished within His promises and purposes for man.

### CONCLUSION: 42:7-17

First God places the three friends in their place. They are instructed to sacrifice and have Job pray for them, since they have sinned against God. This is very instructional. God states that in their theology they would be punished, except through sacrifice. This appears to be what Job was claiming, not that he was a perfect man, but that he was clean in God's sight through His provisions.

Then God restores Job. This has puzzled men for ages, since it seems to leave a retribution theology taste in their mouths, i.e., now that Job had repented of his sin he was blessed. Thus it would appear that in some sense the friends were right. However, this is not an understanding of what is demonstrated. God wished to purge Job, even though there was not an unforgiven sin in him, and now that the purging was accomplished Job was restored to blessing. The only reason God had taken it away was to show Satan, and to keep it away would be to keep Job suffering when there was no reason. Thus, God shows that He had accomplished His object, and Job was restored. This demonstrates that blessing is God's desire, not suffering.

Thus while God may allow suffering in his child through His sovereign choice, He may also provide Him with blessing at His sovereign choice.

### ASSESSMENT

The original stated object of Job's suffering was to demonstrate to Satan that Job would not abandon Him, even if his body was touched. Job did not abandon God (though he questioned God's purpose). But the original (revealed) instigation of the whole problem turns out to result in *much* more than a demonstration of Job's steadfastness. For through a seemingly limited debate (takes place in heaven using Job as the test) a tremendous benefit comes to Job, that of learning more about the God in Whom he had placed his trust, and gaining the attribute of humility in view of the sovereign God. To see the restoration of Job's goods as the benefit is to miss the point of the book. Job possessed something at the end that he did not possess at the beginning - the knowledge of his Creator, and of His sovereign majesty.

While Job had been offering God what Job thought He wanted for Job to be in a relationship, what Job realized by the end was that the relationship was more than Job's representation in the area of the known and the prosperous, but Job was to represent God in the unknown and the area of suffering. The issue does not seem, however, to be simply suffering, as Job acknowledged that in Chapter 2. The issue is the question of whether God has to justify Himself to man. In other words, Job was content to deal in areas that God had specifically revealed, but Job was not willing to deal in areas unrevealed. Job realized that part of the revelation is that God does not have to reveal since He reveals His sovereign control.