

Lesson 4: Job

GROW University - Old Testament 101

Context

Theme

The book of Job asks some difficult questions:

Why do the righteous _____ in the same way as the unrighteous?

We might be tempted to think that evil people suffer and godly people are rewarded with ease, comfort, and riches. But it is not so in the world. Many wicked people seem to go unpunished, and many upright people suffer all the time. How then do we explain why the righteous suffer? And, perhaps more importantly,

How do the righteous _____ it, and conduct themselves, when they do suffer?

Two things are assumed here:

- (1) That God is _____ and ordains everything whatsoever that comes to pass in His universe; and
- (2) God is _____, loving what is right and hating what is evil.

Summary of the book's resolution to these issues:

God is completely sovereign over ALL the affairs of His universe, for His own glory. But sometimes His motives, reasons, and goals behind what He does are NOT revealed to us. He knows them, but we are not always made privy to them. The thing to do, then, is to humbly submit to His sovereignty, not to grumble against it. We are never to shake our fists at God, nor question His wisdom and goodness, as though we could run the universe better than He. Nevertheless, hope in the suffering of the righteous is found in a future resurrection and in a Redeemer.

Outline W/ Pivotal Texts

I. Job 1-2 — God sets His plan in action.

II. Job 3—14 First Round of Discussion:¹

Job's friends insist that this calamity has come upon him because he's sinned, and therefore must repent. Job maintains that he is innocent in this situation.

III. Job 15-21 —Second Round of Discussion:

Job's friends insist that his speech is wrong (i.e. he either doesn't know what he's talking about, or he's lying). But Job insists that he's right.

IV. Job 22-26 — Third Round of Discussion:

Job's friends say he's hiding something. But Job says he's righteous.

V. Job 27-31 — Two monologues by Job:

Man cannot discover God's wisdom.

VI. Job 32-37 — Four Monologues by Elihu:

Human observers cannot expect to adequately understand God's dealings in justice and mercy, for indeed, God might have a loving purpose after all in Job's sufferings. Even still, in this suffering, it is still of great value to lead a godly life.

VII. Job 38-42— God questions Job:

"Who are you, oh man, to doubt and question the wisdom and workings of the Almighty?"

Theme Texts

The story:

Satan is granted permission by God to strike Job, who is a righteous man (not a sinless man, but a man of integrity). He loses his wealth, family, and health. Then three of Job's friends come to talk with him about what's going on and what Job ought to do. Then a fourth friend comes and adds his two cents. Finally, God Himself weighs in on the discussion. By the end of the book Job has everything restored, and then some.

¹ Each round of discussion follows this pattern: one of Job's friends speaks, then Job responds to that friend before another friend speaks, then Job responds to that friend, and so forth.

Chapter 3-14

4:7-9; 5:17.

8:3-7.

10:2-7

Chapter 15-21

15:2-3.

21:34.

Chapter 22-26

22:12-14.

22:21.

23:11-12.

Chapters 27-31

28:12-13; 28:20-24.

Chapter 32-37

32:1-3.

37:13.

37:23-24.

Chapters 38-42

38:1-4.

38:5, 12, 22, 31-35; 39:19-27.

40:1-2

42:1-6.

Review: If God is sovereign and good, why are bad things happening to Job, who is described in 1:1 as "blameless and upright?"

So it's important that such things about God and suffering be addressed. We can thank God that He's given us this book to _____ us in the right direction of thought.

Chapter 1-2

Two preliminary things.

1.) God is _____ (**34:10, 12**).

2.) Job has said the _____ things about God in this book (**42:7**).

Job's three friends were wrong about God.

- Said that God causes calamity to come upon people for one simple reason only: they must have _____.

- All one needs to do is repent, and God will take away the trouble.

What did Job say about God?

- **1:8** - Yahweh initiates this conversation with Satan. What is about to happen, is _____ plan, not Satan's.
- **1:9-11** - Satan responds. In the following verses Job loses his property and children to raiders and natural disasters.
- **1:20** - Job's response
- **1:22** - The writer's commentary on what Job said.
- **2:9** - More calamity, and Job's wife's advice
- **2:10** - Job's response.²

So, we're really back to where we started:

God is _____, and God is _____.

God tells Job that the mystery of His providence is _____ for Job to grasp. What's more significant is how one is to handle themselves in such times.

Instead of pointing fingers and shaking fists at God, or throwing off one's faith, we are called to _____ God at those times. Like Job, we should worship this powerful Creator who we've just seen describe Himself in chapters 38-41.

We should _____ respond like Job's wife suggested (**13:15**)

19:25-27

19:25-26 - In the _____ resurrection, we have our hope too.

Christianity is unique because, while we may not know the origin of evil, we do know its _____.

The guarantee of this is the resurrection of _____.

² Job makes a lot more statements like this throughout the rest of the book: 6:4; 7:20; 9:17, 24; 10:8f; 12:9; 12:13-25; 13:15; 14:5; 19:21; 23:13f.

Conclusion

So for us, we trust God in our sufferings at the time they occur, and also look beyond them, knowing that our life is hidden in Christ, and it is not yet revealed what we will be when He returns and resurrects His people to an eternal "rest."

Application

1.) Turn to _____

Hebrews 2:10

Hebrews 4:14³

2.) Turn to the _____ of believers, the local church.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

³ There is a lot of aberrant teaching prevalent today on this issue of God's sovereignty, and especially as it relates to suffering. Here is some suggested reading that is faithful to the Scriptures:

"The Sovereignty of God" by A.W. Pink

"The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel

"No Place for Sovereignty" by R.K. McGregor Wright

"Behind a Frowning Providence" by John Murray

"How Long Oh Lord" by D.A. Carson

"Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility" by D.A. Carson

"Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God" by J. I. Packer

"The Pleasures of God" by John Piper

Of course the best place to study these things is the Scriptures themselves:

Gen 45:5; 50:19f; Ps 78:31-35; 105:16; 115:3; Pv 16:1, 9, 33; 19:21; 20:12; Is 53; Dan 4:35; Amos 4:6-12; Hag 2:17; John 9:1-3; 11:1-4, 14, 40-44; Roman 8:18-39; 2 For 1:8-10; 4:16-18; 12:7-10; Hey 12:4-11; James 1:2-4; 1 Pt. 1:6f; 4:12f; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:14-17; 21:1-8.