

# Old Testament Literature

## Session 2 - Job Part 1 - Dr. Chris Miller

Ancient Poetry - easy to incorrectly interpret through the lens of James...

"Trials come to purify Christians". The problem is that James and Job are completely different.

What's the point of the book?

Why the righteous suffer? Job never gets the question answered.

How trials purify God's people? Job concludes... I'm right (gold) and God is wrong.

The trials turn Job away from God.

*But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me,  
I shall come forth as gold. Job 23:10*

### What's the background?

- There isn't one! At least for practical purposes. Huh?
- We're talking a timeout from the Grand storyline of one nation.
- This is the beginning of "Wisdom Literature" (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon) that teaches universal lessons that apply to all people.
- The timing isn't described. (wealth compared to Abraham... donkeys and cattle... 2000 BC vs David/Solomon... gold & silver... 1000 BC)
- The location is in "Uz" (Not Oz) - far away from Israel
- All characters (including Job) are non-Israelites but believers.
  - Eliphaz the "Temanite"
  - Bildad the "Shuhite"
  - Zophar the "Naamathite"
  - Elihu the "Buzite"

### Job 1:1-2:13 PROLOGUE

A Description of Job - He's in a right relationship with God. The trials don't come to purify him.

*There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless (pastors/elders NT) and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. Job 1:1*

### The Supernatural Background 1:6-2:10

(God says to Satan) *"Have you noticed Job? He's blameless (not sinless) and upright!"* (Satan says to God... **I agree but...** ) ***"Does Job fear God for nothing?"***  
Satan - the accuser, hasn't been kicked out of heaven... yet. (Rev 12:7-12) - thinks Job only follows God because He's provided Job with wealth) *"Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? Job 1:8-10*

Is it wrong to serve God because it's good for us? Hell sounds like a bad idea.  
What is the essence of our salvation? It's not "religion" it's about relationship.  
A relationship based upon economic advantage is really not a **personal relationship** at all.  
Satan says God has a **business contract** with Job. God never says, "I'm right, get out"  
So how would we be able to tell if this is how Job thinks of his "relationship"? ... take away the paycheck.

*But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." Job 1:11*

### **The trials do not come to purify Job. The trials come to isolate the answer to ... "Why does Job serve God?"**

Satan takes away everything... His wealth... All of his kids... Job is devastated as he buries 10 children. Grief you can't imagine. Job offers sacrifices just in case one of them has sinned.  
Job's response at the loss of his wealth and children...

*"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD came, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." Job 1:21*

***"In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing."** Job 1:22*  
(Where does it go from here???)

### **Chapter 2** Job loses his health...?

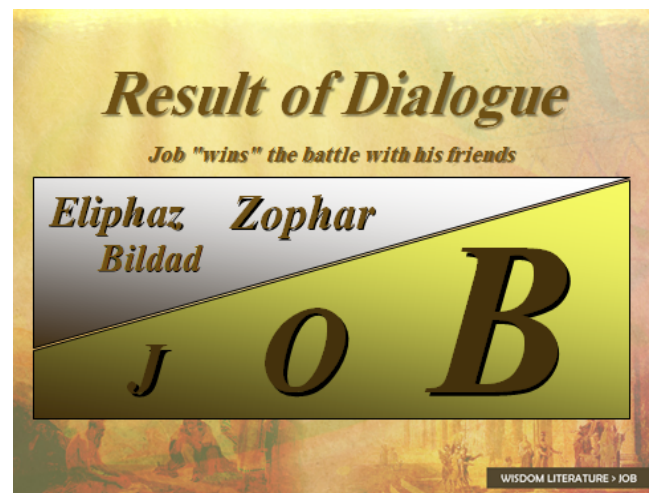
*Job must have thought no man had ever suffered such pain or such loss. Little did he know what God was about to allow. His entire body was inflamed with a sore and angry swelling, eventually covered by one universal boil that stretched from his head to his feet. His bones ached, his legs began to thicken, his hair fell out, his face swelled and his voice became hoarse. He could not sleep. Worms crawled in his flesh. Even the thought of food made him sick. The pain was so intense that he was forced to bite his own flesh to tear out the boils. His condition was so desperate, his pain so contemptible, his pain so continual and his shame so complete that his wife finally concluded that Job should kill himself.*

*His wife said to him, "Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!" He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" **In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.**" Job 2:9-10*

### Cycles of Dialogue

Cycle #1	<b>E</b>	Job	<b>B</b>	Job	<b>Z</b>	Job
Cycle #2	<b>E</b>	Job	<b>B</b>	Job	<b>Z</b>	Job
Cycle #3	<b>E</b>	Job	<b>B</b>	Job	?	Job

WISDOM LITERATURE > JOB



**The purpose of the dialogue:** the ideas are clarified as you talk it through.

**What happens in the dialogue:** When it's Zophar's time to speak he says... "I've got nothing" and instead Job speaks... becomes more and more confident... not "right".

**JOB 3-27 Three Cycles of Dialogue** ... between really good friends who grieve with Job

### First Cycle -

**Eliphaz' first speech** ... you must have done something to deserve this.

*"Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it. Job 4:7-8*

*"Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty." Job 5:17 ("this is a good thing Job, just say you sinned so we can go home" but Job says, "I didn't sin")*

**Bildad's first speech**

*Then Bildad the Shuhite replied: How long will you say such things? Your words are a blustering wind. Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right? When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin. (not true) But if you will look to God and plead with the Almighty, even now he will rouse himself on your behalf and restore you to your rightful place. Job 8:1-5 ("Job, you're getting what you deserve")*

God will bless and God will curse depending on your obedience or disobedience - Deuteronomy 28

But... they're not Jewish. Time of Abraham hasn't been written yet.

But... just because it hasn't been written doesn't mean God can't be working that way.

## Retribution Theology

Righteousness = Prosperity

UN-righteousness = Poverty (financial, social, physical... everything)

- 1) It's corporately (the nation of Israel) but not always individually true!  
(Jeremiah, Ezekiel & Daniel are good people)
  - 2) And given that, you certainly can't work from Right to Left on the chart!  
You don't know someone's heart.
- IF Job assumes the truth of retribution theology THEN can you predict what he will conclude? They look at the outward fortunes and assume he's sinned. Job knows he didn't sin... there's been some kind of cosmic bookkeeping error.

### Job's first reply to Bildad

*Though **one wished to dispute** with him (God), he could not answer him one time out of a thousand... How then can I dispute with him? How can I find words to argue with him? Though I were innocent, I could not answer him; I could only plead with my Judge for mercy. Even if I summoned him and he responded, I do not believe he would give me a hearing. He would crush me with a storm and multiply my wounds for no reason. Job 9: 3,14-17*

### Job's first reply to Zophar

*But **I desire to speak to the Almighty and to argue my case** with God... Now that I have prepared my **case**, I know I will be **vindicated**. Can anyone bring **charges** against me? If so, I will be silent and die. Only grant me these two things, O God, and then I will not hide from you: Withdraw your hand far from me, and stop frightening me with your terrors. Then **summon me** and **I will answer**, or **let me speak**, and **you reply**. How many wrongs and sins have I committed? **Show me my offense** and my sin. Job 13:3, 18-23 (What have I done wrong?)*

### Second Cycle -

*Then know that **God has wronged me** and drawn his net around me. "Though I cry, 'I've been wronged?' I get no response; though I call for help, there is no justice.' He has blocked my way so I cannot pass; he has shrouded my paths in darkness. Job 18:6-8 (God is wrong. God has wronged ME!)*

### In light of this... Has Satan won?

***In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.** Job 1:22  
(In Chapter 19... he does. Did God see this coming? The hero of the book is charging God with wrongdoing.)*