



Job – Part #2

The book of Job deals with the difficult question of how we as wise, godly people are to handle great tragedies in our lives that seem to be unfair or without any logical explanation. While the issue of *theodicy* (the question of God’s justice in the light of suffering) is not fully answered, we observe Job’s development from a good man to a wise man.

“Have you considered my servant Job?” The pointed question that God put to Satan (1:8; 2:3) triggered the forty-two chapters of suffering, complaint, argument, and response that comprise the book of Job. This book instructs that God’s universal kingdom also encompasses an evil realm that no mortal can rule. Despite this mysterious realm, we can still have reason to trust God because evil is restrained.

The story of Job unfolds into five parts:

- Job’s Testing (an unexplained tragedy) 1:1 – 2:13
- The Dialogues (the search for answers) 3:1 – 31:40
- Elihu’s Speeches (an attempt at theodicy) 32:1 – 37:24
- God’s Response to Job (and Job’s repentance) 38:1 – 42:6
- God’s Restoration of Job (and of Job’s friends) 42:7 – 17

The story of Job’s testing has a very strange beginning. Job is introduced as a blameless and upright man who fears God. He is blessed with a large family and great wealth. However, Satan comes before God and challenges Job’s motives, and through a series of disasters, ultimately decimates Job’s family, wealth, and health. Job remains faithful and somewhat stoic, stating: “Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?” (2:1-10).

Next week we will discuss the dialogues (2nd part of outline) where Job and his fellow thinkers try to analyze the disastrous events and find causation and meaning in Job’s misfortunes.