



## Job – Part #3

As mentioned last week, we will tackle the book of Job using this five-part outline:

- 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

This week we will discuss the dialogues where Job and his friends try to analyze the disastrous events and meaning in Job’s misfortunes. This long middle section is composed of numerous speeches given by Job and his three friends. They are all struggling to make sense of the events in Job’s life. Job and his friends have different perspectives, they are quick to judge him.

Job’s friends believe (correctly) that God is moral and just. However, they also believe (incorrectly) that Job is being punished for some great sin he committed and as a result Job needs to repent. Their premise that we reap *only* what we sow is false. All suffering, as Job’s experience will validate, is not due to sin. Ever since the death of Abel, the innocent have suffered. Job’s friends rightly assert that God is all powerful, righteous, and wise, but they deny God the freedom to use evil to accomplish His sovereign purposes (a theology we struggle to accept even today). Their theology is shallow and misappropriated, viewed myopically from potentially a mindset of Proverbs alone – “people get what they deserve.” Instead of humbly and prayerfully looking to God for insight, their dialogues become more sarcastic and damaging to their friendship.

Many Bible scholars take the position that one of the main points of Job’s story is to refute this warped theology. In fact, Jesus speaks to this too. When His disciples see a man born blind, they ask whose sin is to blame – the man or his parents? Neither Jesus answers. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him” (John 9:3). How does this shape your Christian theology? *More next week...*