

Responding to the Chaos of the World

Part 2: The Miracle of Job

The Setting (Job 1-2)

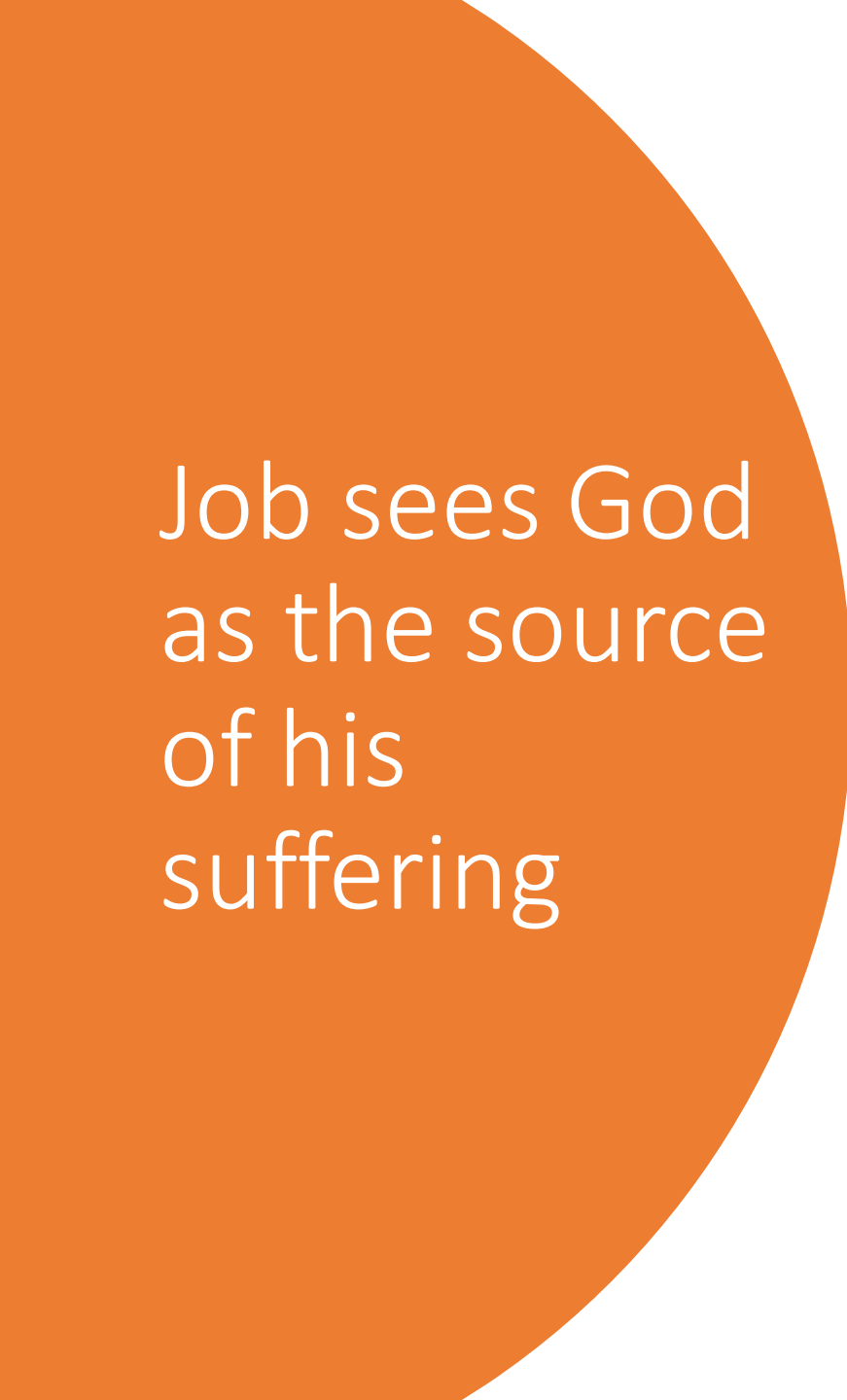
1. A righteous, wealthy man of God named Job lives in Uz.
2. Unbeknownst to Job, a conversation takes place in heaven between God and Satan.
3. Satan is given the freedom to attack Job.
4. All of Job's children are killed, his wealth is destroyed, and later his body is covered with a hideous skin disease.
5. Job's wife abandons him, saying, "Curse God and die." (Job 2:9)
6. Job is left to sit on the ground, "suffering greatly." (Job 2:13)

Job is a
faithful man
of God (Job
29, 31)

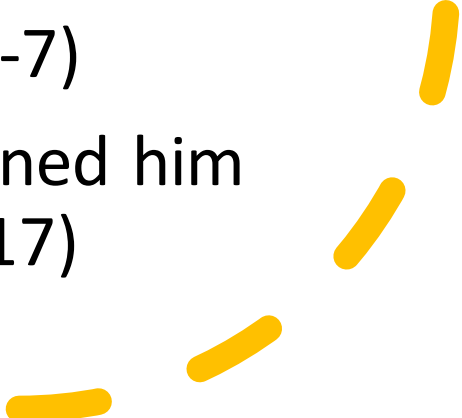
1. He was respected by all in the gate of the city. (29:7-10)
2. He was “eyes to the blind,” “feet to the lame,” and “father to the needy.” (29:15-16)
3. He “broke the fangs of the unrighteous.” (29:17)
4. Men listened to him and kept silent for his counsel. (29:21-23)
5. He “sat as a chief” and lived like “one who comforts mourners.” (29:25)
6. He didn’t tell lies or lust after women, he treated his servants well, he gave to the poor, he was concerned for strangers and enemies. (31:5-31)
7. He has lost everything and is now “a laughingstock to his friends” (Job 12:4)

Job's anguish

1. Job wishes he was never born. (3:3-19)
2. Job wants God to let him die. (6:2-13)
3. Job has lost hope. (7:1-6; 17:3-16)
4. Job has been deserted by his friends and family. (19:13-24)
5. Job has been mocked and hated. (30:1-15)
6. Job is in utter turmoil. ("My soul is poured out within me; days of affliction have taken hold of me. The night racks my bones, and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest." (30:16-17))

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Job sees God
as the source
of his
suffering

1. Job never curses God. (e.g., God does great and marvelous things without number. (5:9))
 2. Job acknowledges God's sovereignty (recognizes God as God). (10:1-13)
 3. Job thinks all of his suffering has come from God. (7:17-21; 9:17-18; 10:15-22; 19:8-12)
 4. Job wants to be able to face God and ask God to end the suffering. (23:2-7)
 5. But Job thinks God has abandoned him and won't listen to him. (23:8-17)
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Job's friends
accuse Job of
being wicked
and
deserving to
be punished

1. From Chapter 4 to 31 Job and his three friends argue bitterly over Job's suffering.
2. Job's three friends all say Job is wicked and deserves to be punished.
3. Job defends himself and tells his enemies to show how Job has done wrong.
4. The friends become angrier at Job.
5. Notice: Just like Job, the three friends all think that Job's suffering has come from God.

Elihu speaks

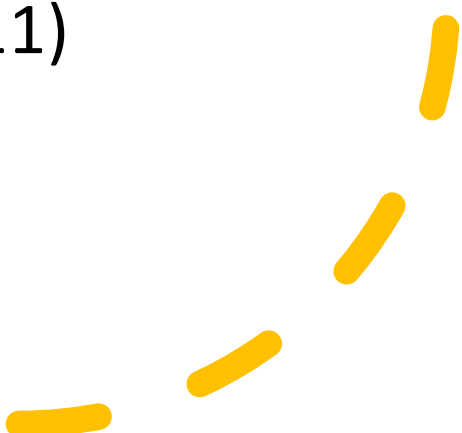
1. From Chapter 32 to 37, a younger man, who has been watching Job and his three friends argue, speaks up.
2. Elihu is angry at Job's friends for not showing why Job was wicked. (32:5-17)
3. Elihu rebukes Job for trying to defend himself before God. (34:31 – 35:16; 36:17-23)
4. Elihu praises God. (34:1-30; 36:1-16; 36:24 – 37:13)
5. Elihu speaks of God's sovereignty. (33:19-33; 34:16-30; 37:14-24)
6. Notice: Elihu also thinks that Job's suffering has come from God.



Job's brothers and sisters

At the end of the story, Job's brothers and sisters come to him. Even they think Job's sufferings came from God:

“Then came to him [Job] all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before and ate bread with him in his house. **And they showed him sympathy and comforted him for *all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him***. And each of them gave him a piece of money and a ring of gold.” (42:11)



God speaks to Job

1. In Chapters 38 to 41, God speaks to Job out of the whirlwind.
2. God challenges Job with questions that speak of God's sovereignty and challenge Job's ignorance:
 - a. "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (38:2)
 - b. "Is the wild ox willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your manger?" (39:9)
3. Job humbly refuses to respond. ("I lay my hand on my mouth." (40:4))
4. God speaks of his sovereignty over the Behemoth and the Leviathan. (40:15 – 41:34)
5. God never explains why Job is suffering.
6. God never corrects the incorrect thinking that He was the source of Job's sufferings.

Commentary of the lesson of Job

Commentaries say that the lesson for Job is that he should trust God. Even though he is suffering greatly and has no answers, Job should just trust God:

“[T]here is no answer, since man is no judge of a God whose wisdom and power are infinite.”

“This is the book’s lesson: faith must remain even when understanding fails.”



Job's response to God

Job responds in praise, worship, and repentance (42:2-6):

² “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.

³ ‘Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore, I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

⁴ ‘Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.’

⁵ I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;

⁶ therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”

The story format of Job

1. It is not told in the format of a 21st century American novel.
2. God speaking from the whirlwind is not the “climax.”
3. Job is a chiasm in which the perspective that provides the lesson is 28:28: “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.”
4. As a chiasm we must compare the beginning of Job with the end of Job in light of the perspective of faith in 28:28 to see the lesson of Job’s story.

What God has done

1. God has taken the weapons of the enemy and made them His own.
2. God has replaced:
 - a. hatred with love,
 - b. accusation and incrimination with forgiveness
 - c. cursing God with worship of God
3. Instead of destroying Job, God has molded Job and made Job more godly.
4. (42:7-9): Job shares God's love to his three friends through prayer, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
5. (42:10): God "restores" Job.

The miracle of Job

1. The miracle of Job is the miracle of faith in God.
2. The miracle of trusting God's sovereignty.
3. The miracle of trusting our sovereign God to take even the worst that can happen to us and use it for our good.
4. The miracle of trusting our sovereign God to share God's love, mercy, and forgiveness, even while we are still suffering.
5. The miracle of our sovereign God's power to restore, even twice as much as before.

Lessons for Today