

## LECTURE 21: JOB

### “The God who is worth serving”

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### I. Orienting Data

- A. Focus:** How to retain fear of God amidst life’s challenges—the nature of true faith, calling the loyal follower of God to stand firm even in suffering.
- B. Content:** A brilliant wrestling with the questions:
  - 1. “Why do the righteous suffer?”
  - 2. “Why should we fear God?”
  - 3. “Where is wisdom found?”
- C. Emphases:**
  - 1. Wisdom is ultimately found in God alone.
  - 2. Human wisdom cannot on its own fathom all the ways of God.
  - 3. Undeserved suffering has no easy answer.
  - 4. God is not obligated to explain all things to fallen human beings.
  - 5. The fear of the Lord is the path to true wisdom.

### II. Structure and Overview

- A. The Structure: A Five Act Drama**
  - 1. Act 1: Prologue (chs. 1–2)
  - 2. Act 2: Dialogue with Three Friends (chs. 3–31)
    - a. Interchange with Three Friends (chs. 3–26)
    - b. Job’s extended response (chs. 27–28), including a meditation on the nature and source of wisdom (ch. 28: the question, vv. 12–22; the answer, vv. 23–24)

- c. Job's final defense (chs. 29–31)
- 3. Act 3: Elihu's Speeches (chs. 32–37)
- 4. Act 4: Yahweh's Speeches (38:1–42:6)
- 5. Act 5: Epilogue (42:7–17)

## B. Overview of the Drama:

- 1. *Act 1: Prologue* (chs. 1–2)
    - a. Setting (1:1–5)
      - i. Job's piety (v. 1)
      - ii. Job's progeny (v. 2)
      - iii. Job's possessions (v. 3)
      - iv. Job's pattern: a patriarchal-priestly role (vv. 4–5)
    - b. Scene 1 (1:6–22):
      - i. Heavenly confrontation (1:6–13):
        - (1) Setting: The Satan ("adversary/accuser") before Sovereign Yahweh (v. 6)
        - (2) Q&A 1: The sphere of Satan's accusatory power (v. 7):
          - (a) Yahweh's query (v. 7a)
          - (b) The Satan's answer (v. 7b)
        - (3) Q&A 2: The object of the Satan's attack (vv. 8–12)
          - (a) Yahweh's query (v. 8)
          - (b) The Satan's response (vv. 9–11): "Does Job fear God for no reason?" (v. 9).
          - (c) Yahweh's guidelines (v. 12)
      - ii. Test 1: Job's earthly suffering—deep loss (1:14–22):
        - (1) The nature of Job's loss described (1:14–19)
          - (a) The setting (v. 13)
          - (b) The announcement (vv. 14–19)
            - (i) *Messenger 1*: Foreigners from the south steal oxen and donkeys and slay servants (vv. 14–15).
            - (ii) *Messenger 2*: Fire from heaven consumes sheep and servants (v. 16).
            - (iii) *Messenger 3*: Foreigners from the north steal camels and slay servants (v. 17).
            - (iv) *Messenger 4*: Wind destroys house, killing all his sons and daughters (vv. 18–19).
        - (c) The significance: Job 9:13, 17–18. God will not turn back his anger; beneath him bowed the helpers of Rahab. . . .<sup>17</sup> He crushes me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause;<sup>18</sup> he will not let me get my breath, but fills me with bitterness.
- (2) Job's response detailed (1:20–22)
  - (a) *Job's posture*: grief and trust (v. 20)
  - (b) *Job's pronouncement*: Job 1:21. Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

- (c) *Job's purity*: Job 1:22. In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.
- (3) Significance:
  - (a) While Satan is a secondary cause unknown to Job, Job himself asserts that Yahweh is the ultimate causer of his pain (1:21) and yet is fully worthy of his trust and praise (1:20–21).
  - (b) The inspired narrator affirms that Job's massive view of God's sovereignty was correct (1:22).
- iii. Lesson:
  - (1) *Satan's query*: "Does Job fear God for no reason? . . . Stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face" (Job 1:9, 11).
  - (2) *The truth*: Yahweh's worth is greater than all possessions or family.
- c. Scene 2 (2:1–13)
  - i. Heavenly confrontation (2:1–6)
    - (1) Setting: The Satan ("adversary/accuser") before Sovereign Yahweh (v. 1)
    - (2) Q&A 1: Restating the sphere of the Satan's accusatory power (v. 2)
    - (3) Q&A 2: The object of the Satan's renewed attack (vv. 3–6)
      - (a) Yahweh's query and reassertion of Job's integrity and, ultimately, his own worth (v. 3)
      - (b) The Satan's response (vv. 4–5)
      - (c) Yahweh's guidelines (v. 6)
  - ii. Test 2 Introduced: Job's earthly suffering—deep physical, emotional, and theological pain (2:7–10):
    - (1) The source and nature of Job's physical pain described (v. 7)
      - (a) Satan is here explicitly marked as the secondary cause of Job's pain (2:7).
      - (b) Comparable texts relating ultimate and secondary cause:
        - (i) Example 1:
          - 2 Sam 24:1. Again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah."
          - 1 Chr 21:1. Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.
        - (ii) Example 2:
          - 2 Cor 12:7–9. So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that is should leave me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

- (2) The response detailed (vv. 8–10)
    - (a) Job's *posture*: mourning and attempt to ease the physical pain (v. 8)
    - (b) Job's wife's *plea*: Curse God and die! (thus failing the test) (v. 9)
    - (c) Job's *pronouncement* (v. 10): Job 2:10. You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall be not receive evil?
    - (d) Job's *purity* (v. 10): Job 1:10. In all this Job did not sin with his lips.
  - (3) Significance:
    - (a) Job's wife succumbs to the very sin Satan anticipated in Job (2:9; cf. 1:11; 2:5).
    - (b) Job and the narrator again affirm Yahweh as the ultimate causer of all things—both good and evil (2:10).
  - iii. Transition: Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar mourn with Job (2:11–13)
  - iv. Lessons:
    - (1) Yahweh's worth is greater than life itself.
    - (2) God's purposes in our suffering are far greater than we can grasp. His wisdom is beyond us:
      - Job 28:20–28. From where, then, does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? <sup>21</sup> It is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the air. <sup>22</sup> Abaddon and Death say, "We have heard a rumor of it with our ears." <sup>23</sup> God understands the way to it, and he knows its place. <sup>24</sup> For he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. <sup>25</sup> When he gave to the wind its weight and apportioned the waters by measure, <sup>26</sup> when he made a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder, <sup>27</sup> then he saw it and declared it; he established it, and searched it out. <sup>28</sup> And he said to man, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding."
      - Rom 11:33–36. Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! <sup>34</sup> For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? <sup>35</sup> Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? <sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
    - (3) Why would God grant that suffering would his children?
      - (a) It must be for his own glory and for our good.
      - (b) We know "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Pet 5:5).
      - (c) When believers cry for help, God is magnified and we are satisfied.
2. *Act 2: Dialogue with Three Friends* (chs. 3–31)
    - a. Overview:
 

• Opening (ch. 3)	J >
• Round 1 (chs. 4–14, long)	E > J > B > J > Z > J >
• Round 2 (chs. 15–21, medium)	E > J > B > J > Z > J >
• Round 3 (chs. 22–26, short)	E > J > B > J > ?

- Initial climax (chs. 27–28) J >
- Final defense (chs. 29–31) J
- b. Job: “With the depth of my pain, death would be better than life to me!” (3:16–26)
- c. Dialogue between Job and his friends:
  - i. Overview: E (4:2, 7–9) > J (6:1–4, 24–27; 7:20–21) > B (8:1–7) > J (9:1–4, 14–20; 10:2–7) > Z (11:1–6, 13–15)
  - ii. Job’s friends: Cold, simplistic theology that does not provide a comprehensive understanding of how God works in his world—“God is good and therefore surely has made a good world; God causes bad things to happen to bad people and rewards good people; one can infer from the events whether God is punishing you or not.” Eliphaz: “As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same” (4:8).
- d. Job:
  - i. Overview: J (27:1–6; 28:12–28) > J (ch. 31)
  - ii. Job: “I didn’t do anything wrong to deserve this suffering, but who am I to talk back to God? Wisdom is found in God alone!” (28:21, 23, 28): “[Wisdom] is hidden from the eyes of all living.... God understands the way to it.... Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.”
- e. Job justifies himself by asserting his integrity (ch. 31)
  - i. 31:5 – He has not been a liar or deceiver.
  - ii. 31:7 – He has not traveled off the right path, or allowed his heart to be lured in by what he sees, or acquired any blemish by what he has touched.
  - iii. 31:9 – He has not lusted after a woman or played around with his neighbor’s wife.
  - iv. 31:13 – He has not failed to heed the formal complaints of his own servants against him.
  - v. 31:16–21 – He has not failed to care for the less fortunate.
  - vi. 31:29–33 – He has not rejoiced at the enemy’s destruction, failed to provide for his own, or acted as a hypocrite, concealing his iniquity in the eyes of all others.
  - vii. 31:38–39 – He has not profaned his land by failing to pay his workers/land-managers.
- 3. *Act 3: Elihu’s Speeches* (chs. 32–37): Elihu responds in ch. 33 to Job’s charge of God’s remoteness:
  - a. Setting:
    - 32:2–3. [Elihu] burned with anger at Job because he justified himself rather than God. He burned with anger also at Job’s three friends because they had found no answer.
  - b. Response: “In the midst of pain, the proper response is not self-justification but God-dependence, resting in the awesome Creator and Sustainer of all, who has bestowed on man amazing blessing and purpose and yet whose ways are always higher than man’s ways.”
    - 36:3. I will ... ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

- 36:22–23. Behold, God is exalted in power; who is a teacher like him? <sup>23</sup>Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, “You have done wrong?”
  - 37:23–24. The Almighty—we cannot find him; he is great in power; justice and abundant righteousness he will not violate. <sup>24</sup>Therefore men fear him; he does not regard any who are wise in their own conceit.
4. *Act 4: Yahweh’s Speeches with Brief Response* (38:1–42:6)
- a. Overview: Y > Y > J > Y > J
  - b. Setting: Judging by the final position, exalted nature, and unparalleled magnificence in poetic style, God’s speeches are the climax of the book.
  - c. Yahweh: “Can you do all the things I have done? Do you think I know how to handle your case?”
    - 38:4–5. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? ... Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
    - 38:8–11. Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb, when I ... prescribed limits for it and set bars and doors, and said, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed?”
    - 38:12. Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place?
    - 38:16–18. Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this.
    - 38:22. Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail?
    - 38:24. What is the way to the place where the light is distributed, or where the east wind is scattered upon the earth?
    - 38:25–27. Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain and a way for the thunderbolt to bring rain on a land where no man is ... to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground sprout with grass?
    - 38:28–29. Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew? From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the frost of heaven?
    - 38:33. Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth?
    - 38:34–35. Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, that a flood of waters may cover you? Can you send forth lightnings?
    - 38:36. Who has put wisdom in the inward parts or given understanding to the mind?
    - 38:41. Who provides for the raven its prey, when its young ones cry to God for help, and wander about for lack of food?
    - 39:1. Do you know when the mountain goats give birth?
    - 39:5. Who has let the wild donkey go free?
    - 39:19–20. Do you give the horse his might? Do you clothe his neck with a mane? Do you make him leap like the locust?
    - 39:26–27. Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high?
  - d. An added question and response:
    - 40:1–2. Yahweh: “Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it.”
    - 40:3–5. Job: “Behold, I am of small count; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.”

## e. The final questioning and response:

- 40:8–9. Yahweh: “Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me that you may be in the right? Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like his?”
- 42:2–6. Job: “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.... I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.... I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

**NOTE:** The speeches are completely silent on Job’s suffering and alleged sin; they make no allusions to Job’s friends. Job’s reply: “Silence! God knows what he is doing.”

5. *Act 5: Epilogue (42:7–17):*

- a. Job never finds out why he suffered; the reader learns that Job was not reason but that God was the reason—not simply as the source but as the goal.
- b. No word is given regarding Elihu.
- c. Job’s three friends get scolded, whereas Job is affirmed and blessed.

**III. The Message****A. Overview:**

1. Job is a book wrestling with *why* the righteous suffer, but it does so in an unexpected way. It does not attempt to answer questions like, “Why me and not him? *or* Why this hard or this long?” Instead, rather than focusing on the human, it focuses on the worth and wisdom of God. The context of human pain is first and foremost designed to exalt Yahweh’s infinite value as one who is to be praised and feared at all times and in all circumstances. We suffer to display the surpassing worth of God, who holds our trust and remains our treasure even amidst the greatest trials.
2. The Foundational Issue:
  - a. Question (1:9): “Does Job fear God for nothing?”
  - b. Answer: We fear God because of who he is not because of what he gives (or takes away)! The only kind of faith that will stand up under the problems of life is one that is based on the person of God, not just on his actions as we understand them.
3. The Secondary but Related Issue:
  - a. Question: Where is true wisdom found?
  - b. Answer: True wisdom is found in God alone and is gained by humans only through fearing God and running from evil (28:28).
4. Why does the book end the way it does, showing Job restored?
  - a. While it may seem more like a fairy-tale ending that is not true to life, the ending seems to play a vital role in the whole book.
  - b. As in the story of Lazarus (John 11), where Jesus’ raising him from the dead gave visible proof that he held the power to provide future resurrection, the ending of Job gives tangible evidence that God *will* make good for his righteous. Whereas the glories of the future are at times portrayed in new creational images of the “out there,” Job ends in a way that gives visual evidence in the “right here” that God is both able and willing to overcome all evil for his beloved. Job’s life gives all believers hope.

**B. Theological Synthesis:**

1. Within the covenant structure, faith in and faithfulness to God results in blessing, whereas lack of surrender and loyalty results in curses.
2. Job experiences what appears to be “curses” (so say his friends), though he is “blameless and upright,” a man of integrity in the eyes of the narrator (1:1) and God (1:8; 2:3). Indeed, God declares that his inflicting Job was “without reason” (2:3), and after Job argues his innocence, God’s fault with him is not in his understanding of God’s ways (42:7) but in his attempt to craft a defense to God for why he should receive good from God and not evil (40:2; cf. 32:2; 36:3, 22–23).
3. Job was indeed blameless and upright. Though aware of his past sins, he was confident in God’s forgiveness, and he was also confident in his present integrity (9:20; 10:7; 27:5–6; ch. 31). God never questions this, saying, for example, “No one is righteous, Job.” Job’s friends declare this, but Job is compelled to maintain his conviction in his integrity, and in the end he appears vindicated, at least at some levels. In God’s words at the end of the book against the three friends, “You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has” (42:7).
4. On what basis do the righteous suffer? Job suggests that not all suffering is a consequence of human failure—a sentiment that Jesus affirmed (John 9:2–3), though he also asserted that all will receive God’s just wrath unless they repent (Luke 13:1–4). Pain is part of the curse-filled frustration brought by God on the world due to the sin of Adam (Rom. 8:20). Nevertheless, not all pain is “deserved,” though God is always just in his dealings (Deut. 32:4). At times, suffering is the disciplinary means of God to bring people back (see Lev. 26:18, 21, 23, 27) or to develop holiness (Heb. 12:7–10). Other times it is indeed the just punishment for human failures (e.g., Num. 12:10–11; Acts 5:1–11; 12:23; 1 Cor. 11:29–30).

However, within Job, the reality of universal curse does not appear as part of the picture. Rather, the focus is on the reality of a truly righteous person suffering without just human cause and God having a right, simply because he is God, to allow such suffering to occur. To what end? The initial scene of the book opens with Satan asking God (1:9–11): “Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” In this light, the point of Job’s suffering appears to be to justify God as one who is worth fearing or serving, not because of what he gives but because of who he is, regardless of how bad life gets. We serve God not for the blessings—though they will ultimately come; we serve him because he is God over all.

5. If we end our probing with the question, “Why am *I* suffering or being cursed?”, we fail to exalt the justness of God in all things and fall into the same debacle of which Elihu (Job 32:2; 36:3, 22–23) and Yahweh himself (40:2, 8–9; 41:10–11) corrected Job. Our goal instead must be to recognize—even through the pain—that God is worth serving, regardless of how difficult life gets. The answer, therefore, to the question “Why do the righteous suffer?” has more to do with God than with us; it has to do with declaring his inexhaustible worthiness to be



feared in all circumstances and all times—not because of what he gives but because of who he is. A key reason trials come to the righteous is to strengthen our conviction and witness even to the invisible, spiritual realm that God is forever worth serving!

6. The New Testament captures the teaching in this way.
  - a. God is absolutely sovereign over all things, including the evil one.
    - Col 1:16. For by [God's Son Jesus] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and *invisible*, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and *for him*.
  - b. The very evil powers that we fight against were created by Jesus.
    - Eph 6:12. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
  - c. The very evil powers that we fight against were created *for* Jesus.
    - Col 6:12. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them.
    - Eph 1:16–23. I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,<sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,<sup>18</sup> having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,<sup>19</sup> and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might<sup>20</sup> that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,<sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.<sup>22</sup> And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,<sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
  - d. Our perseverance in hope displays God's wisdom and worth to the very rulers and authorities Christ triumphed over at the cross.
    - Eph 3:8, 10. To me . . . this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ . . .<sup>10</sup> so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

#### IV. Concluding Reflections

##### A. The Redeemer in Job

1. Job 19:25 declares, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.” When read canonically, this reference must be seen in light of the previous uses of Redeemer that ready the reader for this book.
2. From the exodus forward, Yahweh declares himself to be Israel's redeemer.
  - Exod. 6:6. Say therefore to the people of Israel, “I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will *redeem* you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.”
  - Exod. 15:13. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have *redeemed*; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.
3. Throughout Isaiah (no less than 23x), Yahweh was exalted as Israel's Redeemer, even with direct echo of the exodus (51:10).
  - Isa. 41:14. Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I am the one who helps you, declares Yahweh; your *Redeemer* is the Holy One of Israel.
  - Isa. 43:14. Thus says Yahweh, your *Redeemer*, the Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I send to Babylon and bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, in the ships in which they rejoice.”

- Isa. 44:6. Thus says Yahweh, the King of Israel and his *Redeemer*, Yahweh of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.”
- Isa. 44:24. Thus says Yahweh, your *Redeemer*, who formed you from the womb: “I am Yahweh, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself.”
- Isa. 49:7. Thus says Yahweh, the *Redeemer* of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: “Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of Yahweh, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”
- Isa. 51:10. Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the *redeemed* to pass over?
- Isa. 54:5. For your Maker is your husband, Yahweh of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your *Redeemer*, the God of the whole earth he is called.

Isaiah, however, highlights that this redemption would come through Yahweh’s servant-king—a fact that suggest that Job’s ultimate deliverance through suffering is intended to heighten hope for all sufferers in God’s coming kingdom.

- Isa. 9:2–7. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. <sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. <sup>4</sup> For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup> For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.
  - Isa. 11:1–5. There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. <sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh. <sup>3</sup> And his delight shall be in the fear of Yahweh. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
4. Similarly, in the Psalter we read of God as redeemer ten times, as in Ps. 19:14:
- Ps. 19:14. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Yahweh, my rock and my *redeemer*.

And again it is royal Son of God by whom God redeems.

- Ps. 2:7–9. I will tell of the decree: Yahweh said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. <sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”
5. For the reader, the hope of redemption from suffering and bondage would be found in God alone, ultimately through faith in Christ Jesus.
- Luke 1:68–71. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people <sup>69</sup> and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, <sup>70</sup> as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, <sup>71</sup> that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
  - 1 Thess. 1:10. . . . and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who *delivers* us from the wrath to come.
  - Titus 2:13–14. . . . waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to *redeem* us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

**B. A Relevant Biblical Parallel with Job: Hebrews 11:29–40**

1. Living by faith will often be accompanied by great miracles, success, and joy (11:29–35a). This is not always the case, for living by faith will also be accompanied by great suffering (11:35b–38).
2. Our faith is not the determining factor in whether we experience miracles or suffering; God is the determining factor as he works for his good purposes, which are often not disclosed to us. We often do not learn, “Why me and not him?” or “Why so hard or so long?” But we push ahead with the conviction that God is worth living for, trusting in, persevering with; that he has called us to a life of faith; that God in Christ is for us and not against us; and that in him we hope for joy beyond this cursed world, for joy in a “better life” (11:35b).
3. The common feature of the faith that enjoys miracles and the faith that sustains through suffering is that God is better than this life and that he is always worthy of persevering faith (11:35b).
4. Those who suffer by faith are a gift to the world as reflectors of the great worth of God (11:37b–38a).

**V. Guided Reading of Job****A. Focus Points:**

1. Key chapters: 1–2, 19, 28, 31, 38–42
2. Key characters: Bildad, Elihu, Eliphaz, Job, the Satan, Yahweh, Zophar

**B. Questions:**

1. Define “theodicy” and clarify how it relates to the issues raised in Job. What evidence in the book is given that Yahweh is indeed both good and sovereign over evil?
2. What overwhelming enigma does Job have, and what key question is left a mystery at the end of the book?
3. Taking your clue from the introduction in Job 1–2, what is the main question being addressed in the book? (Hint: What does the Satan ask God regarding Job that begs a response?)
4. Summarize in three sentences or less the main message of Job’s “three friends” and Job’s response in chs. 3–27.
5. What is Elihu’s main problem with Job?
6. Summarize Yahweh’s comments to Job?