

**LECTURE 21: JOB**  
**“The God who is worth fearing and following”**  
 Jason S. DeRouchie, PhD

<b>Contents for Lecture 21</b>	
I. Orienting Data	1
A. Focus	1
B. Content	1
C. Emphases	1
D. Canonical Placement	1
II. Summary	2
III. The Structure: A Five Act Drama	2
IV. Overview of the Drama	2
A. Act 1: Prologue (chs. 1–2)	2
B. Act 2: Dialogue with Three Friends (chs. 3–31)	5
C. Act 3: Elihu’s Speeches (chs. 32–37)	6
D. Act 4: Yahweh’s Speeches with Brief Response (38:1–42:6)	7
E. Act 5: Epilogue (42:7–17)	8
V. The Message	8
A. Overview	8
B. Theological Synthesis	9
VI. Concluding Reflections	11
A. NT Uses of Job	11
B. Further Reflections on the Redeemer in Job	12
C. A Relevant Biblical Parallel with Job: Hebrews 11:29–40	14
VII. Guided Reading of Job	14
A. Focus Points	14
B. Questions	14

### 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.
- D. Canonical Placement:**
1. The Psalter highlighted the kingdom-hope that exists for all who take refuge in Yahweh’s Anointed King, whose triumph through tribulation will establish God’s eternal kingdom, overcome all enemies, and bring lasting peace to an omni-ethnic community.

2. Job supplies an example of the type of persevering hope those experiencing the suffering of this age must retain, and it elevates the worth and wisdom of God and cautions against justifying oneself rather than God.

**II. Summary:** Though Satan may cause the righteous person to suffer deep loss and pain, as a testimony to the sovereign God's worth, righteousness, and wisdom, the sufferer should continue to fear God because of who he is and should hope in the resurrection when the Redeemer will right all wrongs and defeat all evil.

### III. The Structure: A Five Act Drama

- A. Act 1: Prologue (chs. 1–2)
- B. Act 2: Dialogue with Three “Friends” (chs. 3–31)
  1. Interchange with Three “Friends” (chs. 3–26)
  2. 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)
  3. Job's final defense, wherein he justifies himself rather than God (chs. 29–31)
- C. Act 3: Elihu's Speeches (chs. 32–37)
- D. Act 4: Yahweh's Speeches (38:1–42:6)
- E. Act 5: Epilogue (42:7–17)

### IV. Overview of the Drama:

- A. **Act 1: Prologue (chs. 1–2)**
  1. Setting (1:1–5)
    - a. Job's piety (v. 1)
    - b. Job's progeny (v. 2)
    - c. Job's possessions (v. 3)
    - d. Job's pattern: a patriarchal-priestly role (vv. 4–5)
  2. Scene 1 (1:6–22):
    - a. Heavenly confrontation (1:6–13):
      - i. Setting: The Satan (“adversary/accuser”) before Sovereign Yahweh (v. 6)
      - ii. Q&A 1: The sphere of Satan's accusatory power (v. 7):
        - (1) Yahweh's query (v. 7a)
        - (2) The Satan's answer (v. 7b)
      - iii. Q&A 2: The object of the Satan's attack (vv. 8–12)
        - (1) Yahweh's query (v. 8)
        - (2) The Satan's response (vv. 9–11): “Does Job fear God for no reason?” (v. 9).
        - (3) Yahweh's guidelines (v. 12)
    - b. Test 1: Job's earthly suffering—deep loss (1:14–22):
      - i. The nature of Job's loss described (1:14–19)
        - (1) The setting (v. 13)
        - (2) The announcement (vv. 14–19)
          - (a) *Messenger 1*: Foreigners from the south steal oxen and donkeys and slay servants (vv. 14–15).

- (b) *Messenger 2*: Fire from heaven consumes sheep and servants (v. 16).
- (c) *Messenger 3*: Foreigners from the north steal camels and slay servants (v. 17).
- (d) *Messenger 4*: Wind destroys house, killing all his sons and daughters (vv. 18–19).
- (3) 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.
- ii. Job's response detailed (1:20–22)
  - (1) *Job's posture*: grief and trust (v. 20)
  - (2) *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.
  - (3) *Job's purity*: Job 1:22. In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.
- iii. Significance:
  - (1) 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).
  - (2) The inspired narrator affirms that Job's massive view of God's sovereignty was correct (1:22).
- c. Lesson:
  - i. *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).
  - ii. *The truth*: Yahweh's worth is greater than all possessions or family.
- 3. Scene 2 (2:1–13)
  - a. Heavenly confrontation (2:1–6)
    - i. Setting: The Satan ("adversary/accuser") before Sovereign Yahweh (v. 1)
    - ii. Q&A 1: Restating the sphere of the Satan's accusatory power (v. 2)
    - iii. Q&A 2: The object of the Satan's renewed attack (vv. 3–6)
      - (1) Yahweh's query and reassertion of Job's integrity and, ultimately, his own worth (v. 3)
      - (2) The Satan's response (vv. 4–5)
      - (3) Yahweh's guidelines (v. 6)
  - b. Test 2 Introduced: Job's earthly suffering—deep physical, emotional, and theological pain (2:7–10):
    - i. The source and nature of Job's physical pain described (v. 7)
      - (1) Satan is here explicitly marked as the secondary cause of Job's pain (2:7).
      - (2) Comparable texts relating ultimate and secondary cause:
        - (a) Example 1:
          - (i) 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.”

- (ii) 1 Chr 21:1. Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.
- (b) Example 2:
  - (i) 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.
- ii. The response detailed (vv. 8–10)
  - (1) Job’s *posture*: mourning and attempt to ease the physical pain (v. 8)
  - (2) Job’s wife’s *plea*: Curse God and die! (thus failing the test) (v. 9)
  - (3) 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?
  - (4) Job’s *purity* (v. 10): Job 1:10. In all this Job did not sin with his lips.
- iii. Significance:
  - (1) Job’s wife succumbs to the very sin Satan anticipated in Job (2:9; cf. 1:11; 2:5).
  - (2) Job and the narrator again affirm Yahweh as the ultimate causer of all things—both good and evil (2:10).
- c. Transition: Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar mourn with Job (2:11–13)
- d. Lessons:
  - i. Yahweh’s worth is greater than life itself.
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. Why would God grant that suffering would his children?
    - (1) It must be for his own glory and for our good.
    - (2) We know “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet 5:5).

(3) When believers cry for help, God is magnified and we are satisfied.

**B. Act 2: Dialogue with Three “Friends” (chs. 3–31)**

1. 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
2. Job: “With the depth of my pain, death would be better than life to me!” (3:16–26)
3. Dialogue between Job and his friends:
  - a. *Round 1 (Job 4–14)*: E (4:2, 7–9; 5:17) > J (6:1–4, 24–27; 7:20–21) > B (8:1–7) > J (9:1–4, 14–20, 30–35; 10:1–7) > Z (11:1–6, 13–15) > J (13:15–16; 14:13–14)
  - b. *Round 2 (Job 15–21)*: E (15:2–4, 9–10, 17, 20–21, 33–35) > J (16:6–11, 18–19) > B (18:5–8, 18–19) > J (19:5–9, 25–27) > Z (20:4–8, 27–29) > J (21:7–9, 17–20)
  - c. *Round 3 (Job 22–26)*: E (22:5–11, 21–23) > J (23:3–7, 10–12; 24:13, 21–25) > B (25:2–6) > J (26:2–3, 12–14)
  - d. 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).
  - e. Job: He identifies that the wicked often prosper, reaffirms his innocence, and grieves that God will not hear his cry. He recognizes that God is judge over all, but he identifies that no one can fully discern his ways.
4. Job’s extended response:
  - a. Overview: J (27:1–6; 28:12–28)
  - b. 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.”
5. Job final defense, wherein he begins to justify himself over God (chs. 29–31)
  - a. Job identifies God’s past favor to him (29:2–4) and his righteousness (29:14).
  - b. Job identifies that his once-friends now disdain him because God has turned from him (30:9–11).
  - c. Job directs prays by asserting God’s injustice in not answering him but instead treating him cruelly (30:19–23). He adopts the foundational teaching of his friends and uses it against God, declaring, “Is not calamity

for the unrighteous, and disaster for the workers of iniquity? Does not he see my ways and number all my steps?"

- d. Job restates his innocence (ch. 31, against 22:5–11)
  - i. 31:5 – I have not been a liar or deceiver.
  - ii. 31:7 – I have not traveled off the right path or allowed my heart to be lured in by what I see, or acquired any blemish by what I have touched.
  - iii. 31:9 – I have not lusted after a woman or played around with my neighbor’s wife.
  - iv. 31:13 – I have not failed to heed the formal complaints of my own servants against m.
  - v. 31:16–21 – I have not failed to care for the less fortunate.
  - vi. 31:29–33 – I have not rejoiced at my enemy’s destruction, failed to provide for my own, or acted as a hypocrite, concealing my iniquity in the eyes of all others.
  - vii. 31:38–39 – I have not profaned my land by failing to pay my workers/land-managers.

**C. Act 3: Elihu’s Speeches (chs. 32–37):** Elihu responds in ch. 33 to Job’s charge of God’s remoteness and unjustic.

1. 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.
2. 5 reasons why Elihu’s voice aligns with the narrator and God:
  - a. He arrives on the scene in chapter 32 with a different perspective than Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Job.
  - b. The writer devotes six chapters to Elihu, and the misguided speeches of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar had been getting shorter and shorter and shorter until, by the end, they had nothing more to say. The narrator portrays him as a counter to Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar rather than like them.
  - c. In chapters 40 and 42, Job repents of the very things of which Elihu criticizes him.
  - d. In Job 42:7, Yahweh explicitly rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, but he never says a negative word about Elihu.
  - e. Elihu truly offers a more balanced perspective on suffering than Job had, for he counters human arrogance (32:1; 33:14–18) and seeks to justify God (32:2; 34:10–20; 36:2–16, 22–23).
3. 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.”
  - 34:10–15. Therefore, hear me, you men of understanding: far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should do wrong. <sup>11</sup> For according to the work of a man he will repay him, and according to his ways he will make it befall him. <sup>12</sup> Of a truth, God will not do wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice. <sup>13</sup> Who gave him charge over the earth, and who laid on him the whole world? <sup>14</sup> If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath, <sup>15</sup> all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.

- 36:3–6, 13–15, 17–18, 21–23. I will get my knowledge from afar and ascribe righteousness to my Maker. <sup>4</sup> For truly my words are not false; one who is perfect in knowledge is with you. <sup>5</sup> “Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise any; he is mighty in strength of understanding. <sup>6</sup> He does not keep the wicked alive, but gives the afflicted their right.... <sup>13</sup> “The godless in heart cherish anger; they do not cry for help when he binds them. <sup>14</sup> They die in youth, and their life ends among the cult prostitutes. <sup>15</sup> He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.... <sup>17</sup> “But you are full of the judgment on the wicked; judgment and justice seize you. <sup>18</sup> Beware lest wrath entice you into scoffing, and let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside.... <sup>21</sup> Take care; do not turn to iniquity, for this you have chosen rather than affliction. <sup>22</sup> Behold, God is exalted in his 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.

#### D. Act 4: Yahweh’s Speeches with Brief Response (38:1–42:6)

1. Overview: Y > Y > J > Y > J
2. Setting: Judging by the final position, exalted nature, and unparalleled magnificence in poetic style, God’s speeches are the climax of the book.
3. 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?

4. 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.”
  - 40:4–5. 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.”
5. 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.”

#### E. Act 5: Epilogue (42:7–17)

1. 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.
2. No word is given regarding Elihu.
3. Job’s three friends get scolded, whereas Job is affirmed and blessed.
4. Job receives double what he lost.

## V. 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 and wisdom 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 Jesus himself 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 fearing and following, 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. Jonathan Edwards wrote: “God tries the graces of his people by persecutions, that the truth and power of his grace in them may appear to his own glory, both before men, angels and devils. One end is that by such a discovery of the truth and strength of their faith and love, he may as it were triumph over Satan; and make him to see what a victory is obtained over him, by so rescuing those souls that were once his captives from his power; and convince him of the real success of his design of redeeming and sanctifying souls—notwithstanding all that he has done to [them], whereby he thought he had utterly ruined mankind, and put them past the possibility of cure. For this end God tried Job. God gloried in Job as a perfect and upright man, that did good and eschewed evil [Job 1:8]. Satan don’t own the truth of it, but charges Job was a hypocrite, and his service mercenary. But God tries Job with grievous affliction for Satan’s conviction. So it is in the church in general, their trials being for Satan’s conviction. (Entry 52 in “Notes on the Apocalypse,” Yale Edition 5, p. 146)
7. 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.

## VI. Concluding Reflections

### A. NT Uses of Job

1. *God has no creditors (Job 41:11 in Rom 11:35).*
  - a. In Rom 11:34–35, the apostle asks, “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who [among humans] has given a gift to him [i.e., the Lord] that he might be repaid?” In v. 34 he cites Isa 40:13 (“Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel?”). In v. 35 he cites part of Yahweh’s speech at the end of Job, where God rhetorically queries, “Who has first given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine” (Job 41:11). He may also be alluding to two earlier statements by Elihu. In 35:7 he queries, “If you are righteous, what do you give to him? Or what does he receive from you hand?” And again in 36:22–23, “Behold, God is exalted in his power; who is a teacher like him? *Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, “You have done wrong”?*”
  - b. With respect to Job 41:11, Job thought he had right to call into question Yahweh’s justice. However, out of the whirlwind the Lord asserted his claim over all things, including Job’s suffering, and thus identified that he alone did hold the right to do with his world what he will. For Paul, Yahweh’s unique freedom and sovereignty realized in Job’s life at the very least supplied a constant and compelling truth that was equally needed in relation to God’s lasting elective purposes for some Israelites and Gentiles. What the Lord’s stated to Job was timeless, telling, and true “for from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen” (Rom 11:36).
2. *God catches the wise one in his craftiness.* Paul writes, “For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in his craftiness” (1 Cor 3:19). Here he identifies Eliphaz in Job 5:13 as declaring true doctrine about God. However, in citing this text he likely views the statement ironically, applying it to what God is doing toward Eliphaz when he speaks against Job. As Yahweh declared to Eliphaz and his two friends at the end of the book, “You have *not* spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has” (Job 42:7). Somehow, then, Eliphaz could declare right things, while still misrepresenting the Lord.
3. *Job hoped in the resurrection.*
  - a. In Job 13:15–16 Job declares, “Though [God] slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face. Indeed, *this will turn out for my deliverance*” (NIV). Job retained his hope in God, anticipating that after his own death he would plead his cause face-to-face before the Lord and that the result would be his salvation. He, thus, queries, “If a man dies, shall he live again?” He believes that he will, for he adds, “All the days of my service I would wait, till my renewal should come” (14:14). Then in 19:25–26 we find the second potential allusion: “*For I know that my Redeemer*

lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.”

- b. The Greek clause rendered “this will turn out for my deliverance” in Job 13:16 is found elsewhere only in Phil 1:19. The apostle writes: “Yes, and I will rejoice, *for I know that* through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ *this will turn out for my deliverance*, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death” (Phil 1:18–20). By alluding to the LXX of Job 13:16, Paul appears to be stressing his confidence that, like Job, he too will experience eternal (even messianic) salvation from his suffering, “whether by life or by death” (1:20). The Greek phrase rendered “for I know that” in Job 19:25 occurs elsewhere only five other places, two of which are in Job (Deut 31:29; Job 9:28; 30:23; Rom 7:18; Phil 1:19). The likelihood that Paul alludes to Job’s resurrection hope in Job 13:16 suggests the possibility that with “for I know” he is also alluding to 19:25.<sup>1</sup>
4. *Job is a model for godliness.* Twice Ezekiel elevates Job as an example of the righteous life that contrasts with the wickedness of Jerusalem. “Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it and break its supply of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast, even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord GOD” (Ezek 14:13–14). And again, “Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out my wrath upon it with blood, to cut off from it man and beast, even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they would deliver neither son nor daughter. They would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness” (14:19–20). Much later, James points to Job as an example of longsuffering and endurance: “As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful” (Jas 5:10–11).

### **B. Further Reflections on the Redeemer in Job**

1. As noted, Job 19:25–27 reads: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!” Within the broader canonical context, Job’s “Redeemer” from Job 19:25 gains greater clarity.
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.”

---

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to my research assistant Brian Verrett for pointing me to this NT use of the OT. Cf. Moisés Silva, who equally affirms that Paul is citing Job 13:16 but gives no thought to 19:25: “Philippians,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 836.

- 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.

**C. 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).

**VII. 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?