

Introduction to Job

Background and Main Idea

To begin our discussion of book of Job, let's get some context for its place in the Bible.

The Old Testament is divided into 3 basic units: The Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Writings contain some of the history of Israel after the exile to Babylon, plus five books of wisdom: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. This section of the Old Testament is closely connected to King David and his descendants who sat on the throne of Judah.

Wisdom literature is a unique genre prevalent in many cultures of the Ancient Near East. It was typically a way of presenting truth that might run against the commonly accepted norms of the culture. It typically uses poetry more than prose, seeking to connect with emotions as much as the logic of the reader.

Deeper Study

This outline from Bible.org can might be helpful as an introduction to wisdom literature.

<https://bible.org/seriespage/introduction-wisdom-literature>

The Bible Project has created some really great videos to help understand some of the individual books of wisdom in the Bible. Your life group may enjoy watching their introduction to Job together.

<https://thebibleproject.com/videos/wisdom-job/>

The Point of Job

The text of Job itself gives us very little information about who wrote it, when they wrote it, why they wrote it, or who Job even was. Because it doesn't tell us any of those things, we should assume that they are not very important to understanding what Job is trying to tell us.

Job's primary purpose is to challenge 3 commonly held theologies:

- Good things happen to good people,
- Bad things happen to bad people, and
- God can be easily explained by the human mind.

Now read Job 1 together as a group.

Discussion Questions

- Would you like to have the kind of wealth and family in Job 1?
- How do you know that Job was a righteous man?
- What do you learn from this chapter about God?
- What do you find out about the Satan?
- Do you think that Job knew anything about the conversation between God and the Satan?
- What kind of faith do you think Job had at this point in his life?
- What do you find disturbing about this chapter?
- Reflect on the challenge question from Austin's sermon: How is your life demonstrating the worthiness of God to be loved, trusted, obeyed, and ultimately worshipped?