

JOB: Introduction

There is no other book in the Bible quite like Job. It reads like a grand epic poem and at times like a play, telling the story of a righteous man's suffering. Job—who lived outside of the land of Israel, possibly as early as the time of the Patriarchs—is described as “blameless and upright” (1:1), and yet terrible things happen to him.

But the purpose of this book is not just to tell the story of Job. It first and foremost seeks to understand why and how suffering happens to the people of a sovereign God. Why do bad things happen? How does God treat those He loves? Is there even such a thing as suffering that is undeserved?

The characters in the book try to answer these questions (often wrongly!) in a series of dialogues and monologues, until God Himself finally silences them all:

- Job 1-3** — Introduction
- Job 4-26** — Dialogues: Job and His Friends
- Job 27-31** — Monologue: Job
- Job 32-37** — Monologue: Elihu
- Job 38-41** — Monologue: God
- Job 42** — Conclusion

Let these ideas help guide your reading of Job:

- Except for the introduction and conclusion, Job is written entirely in **poetry** and full of beautiful language and imagery. Pay attention to how this poetic form adds to your reading experience.
- One of the main themes of the book of Job is **the meaning of true comfort**. How do Job's friends offer him false comfort? What kind of comfort does he really need and ultimately receive?
- Don't get so bogged down in the story of Job that you forget to **lift your eyes to Jesus**. When Job suffers, think of the suffering of Jesus. When Job trusts God, think of Jesus' trust in His Father. And when Job's life is finally restored, praise Jesus that He will come again and make all things right!