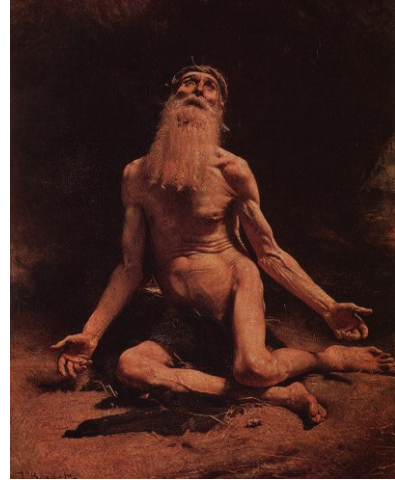


Job

Message

Job demonstrates that the reasons for suffering in a believer's life are not necessarily a result of personal unrighteousness or often open to human explanations or understanding, but are within the scope of God's loving and powerful providence and often result in the defeat of evil, and ultimately bring glory to Himself.¹



Title

The title, Job, is derived from the book's principal character. The etymology of the name Job is uncertain. The Hebrew root of Job (בַּיָּוָב) is believed to be derived from "ayels" meaning "to hate," "the hated/persecuted one," "to be at enmity," or "the object of enmity." Another possibility is that the name Job is derived from the Arabic 'aba meaning "repent," "turn back," or "one who turns back, (to God)."² The various meanings suggested by both the Hebrew and Arabic origins for Job are reflected in the experiences of the book's main character.³ Job is the title of the book in the Hebrew, Greek (Septuagint), and English Bibles.

Author

The book does not identify its author. Consequently, scholars have offered various opinions as to who the writer was. The Babylonian Talmud claims that the Book of Job, like the Pentateuch, was written by Moses (*Baba Bathra* 14b). Others have suggested Job, Moses, Elihu, Solomon, an unknown writer at the time of Solomon, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezra, or an unknown exilic or postexilic author. It must be concluded that we do not know who wrote Job. However, the fact that the author (not Job or his friends) frequently uses the Israelite covenant name for God (*Yahweh*)⁴ may indicate that he is an Israelite. There is no consistent tradition among Rabbinic scholars as to authorship. The author may have worked from a written and/or oral account about Job.

Date of Composition

¹The primary purpose of the Book of Job is "to show that the proper relationship between God and man is based solely upon the sovereign grace of God and man's response of faith and submissive trust" (Greg W. Parsons, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Job," *Bibliotheca sacra* 151 [Oct-Dec, 1994]: 398).

²See Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 438.

³Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament*, 257.

⁴In the prologue (chaps. 1-2), divine discourses (38:1-42:6) and epilogue (42:7-17) *Yahweh* occurs in the Hebrew a total of 31 times (NIV "LORD" occurs a total of 25 times), while in the rest of the book (chaps. 3-37) it appears only once in 12:9.

Views on the date of composition range from the patriarchal age (2100-1900 B.C.) to the postexilic community of the third century B.C. (Ezra, Nehemiah).⁵ While most liberal scholars assign the book's composition to a much later time, dating it in the postexilic era (c. 300–200 B.C.), most conservative scholars assign the book's writing to the time of Solomon (c. 950 B.C.). Primarily, because the book shares characteristics of other wisdom literature (e.g., Psalms 88, 89) written during the Solomonic age, and should be regarded as a dramatic poem describing real events, rather than a verbatim report.

Those advocating a patriarchal date suggest a number of compelling reasons for regarding the historical events recorded in this book as having taken place in the time of the patriarchs. Consider the following facts derived from the internal evidence:

1. The family-clan type of tribal organization is more characteristic of Abraham's time than the Solomonic or postexilic periods.
2. There is no mention of an officiating priesthood, and in fact, sacrifices were offered by the head of the family, as in Job's case, a characteristic of patriarchal times.
3. The fact that Job lived to about 210 years of age would support the premise that he lived during the patriarchal age. As Zuck writes "Job lived 140 years after his calamities (Job 42:16) so he may have lived to about 210. This corresponds roughly to the length of the patriarchs' lives. Terah, Abraham's father died at the age of 205; Abraham lived to be 175; Isaac lived to be 180; and Jacob died at the age of 147."⁶
4. The writer measured Job's wealth in terms of livestock (1:3), a common characteristic of the patriarchal period.
5. The mention of the Hebrew word *gesitah*, which is translated "piece of silver" (42:11), supports a date as early as Jacob (Gen 33:19) or Joshua (Josh 24:32).
6. The Hebrew name *Shaddai*, "the Almighty," is used of God 31 times in Job, as compared with only 17 occurrences in the rest of the Old Testament, and was a name commonly used for God by the patriarchs (Gen 17:1; Exod 6:3).
7. The names of people and places recorded in the book (e.g., Sheba, Tima, Eliphaz, Uz, Job) were also common in the Patriarchal era. "Genesis, the Mari documents, and the Egyptian Execration texts, all of which refer to life in the Near East at this time, also refer to these names."⁷
8. The Sabeans and Chaldeans (1:15, 17) were nomads during the patriarchal period but not later.
9. There is no mention of the people of Israel's great Exodus from Egypt.
10. There is no mention of the Law of Moses, the tabernacle, or the temple.
11. There is no mention of Israel's monarchy or kingship.

By way of conclusion, it may be stated that while it is not possible to be dogmatic, a patriarchal date of between 2100-1900 B.C. is reasonable and perhaps best explains the material as we have it.

⁵Charles C. Ryrie, "Job," in *The Ryrie Study Bible* (Moody, 1978), 747.

⁶Roy B. Zuck, "Job," in *BKC*, 717.

⁷Thomas L. Constable, "Job" (unpublished class notes in course # 303 Old Testament History II and Poetry, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall 1995), 1.

Historical Background

There is no doubt, for conservatives anyway, that Job was a historical personage (Ezek 14:14; James 5:11). The events recorded in Job are said to have taken place in the “land of Uz,” an area generally regarded as having been located in the eastern part of the land of the Edomites, or northern Arabia.⁸ Job’s friend, Eliphaz, came from Teman (4:1), a city in Edom (Gen 36:11). Elihu was descended from the Buzites (32:2), who lived next to the Chaldeans in northeast Arabia.⁹ Bildad was from Shua (8:1), located in north Arabia. Zophar, a Naamathite (11:1), also lived east of Canaan on the edge of the Arabian desert.

Literary Genre

Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes comprise a collection in the Hebrew Old Testament generally called “Wisdom Literature” (*hokhmah*) because of their stress on principles of prudent or wise living. In the English Bible, Job is classified as one of five Old Testament books called the “Poetical Books.” The five books are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. Whereas Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are classified as “Wisdom Literature,” Psalms, of course, is the hymnal of the Hebrews (and the backbone of Christian worship) and the collection par excellence of Hebrew poetry. The Song of Solomon is an “ode to love,” filled with beautiful and picturesque images of romance and marital pleasure.

Literary Structure

Commenting on the unique literary structure of the Book of Job, Zuck writes:

Job is a mixture of prose and poetry, and of monologue and dialogue. The prologue (chaps. 1–2) and the epilogue (42:7-17) are narrative prose; while the lengthy material in between is poetry (except the opening verse in each chapter that introduces a new speech, and 32:1-6a). This pattern of *prose-poetry-prose*, though seen in other compositions of the ancient Near East, is unique among the books of the Bible. Another way of viewing the structure of the book is seen in the chart [below] ‘Parallels in the Structure of the Book of Job.’¹⁰

Parallels in the Structure of the Book of Job

- | |
|--|
| <p><i>a</i> Opening narrative (1:1–2:13)</p> <p><i>b</i> Job’s opening soliloquy (3:1-26)</p> <p><i>c</i> The friends’ disputations with Job (4:1–28:28)</p> |
|--|

⁸Archer writes, “the Septuagint refers to it as the land of the Aistai, a people whom Ptolemy the geographer locates in the Arabian desert adjacent to the Edomites of Mount Seir” (*ASOTI*, 464).

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Roy B. Zuck, “Job,” in *BKC*, 715-16.

- b'* Job's closing soliloquy (29:1–31:40)
c' Elihu's disputation with Job (32:1–37:24)
c² God's disputation with Job (38:1–42:6)
a' Closing narrative (42:7-17)

Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry

The principal feature of Hebrew poetry is that of parallelism and not the elements of rhyme and meter, as is common in most other languages. In Hebrew poetry the main idea or thought presented in the first line is repeated in subsequent (parallel) lines. There are several different kinds of parallelism in Hebrew poetry, these would include:

1. **Synonymous Parallelism:** The same idea is repeated in different words for emphasis in both lines of a couplet (Ps 3:1; 49:1; 92:12 and Prov 19:29; 38:7).
2. **Anthithetic Parallelism:** The thought of the first line is emphasized by a contrasting thought in the second line (Ps 1:6; Prov 3:5,6; 14:34; 15:1).
3. **Synthetic Parallelism:** The thought of the first line is restated, in different words (as in synonymous parallelism) but the second line develops the thought in the first line—either as a consequence, or an expansion (Ps 1:3; 19:7-9).
4. **Climatic Parallelism:** The thought of the first line proceeds step by step to a climax in thought (Ps 103:1).
5. **Emblematic Parallelism:** The second line forms a simile of the first (Ps 42:1).

Another feature of Hebrew poetry is referred to as “**Acrostic**.” By way of example, the first line of the poem begins the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and the next line would begin with the second letter and so on in alphabetical order. One of the best examples of this is found in Psalm 119 (a wisdom Psalm concerning the law of the Lord), classified as an alphabetic acrostic, in which each stanza of eight verses is devoted to successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet, each verse of a particular stanza beginning with the same letter. The Book of Lamentations is another excellent example of this phenomenon.

One final literary feature of Hebrew poetry is “**Chiasm**.” The word “chiasm” comes from the Greek letter “chi,” which is written like the letter “X.” Chiasm occurs when successive lines of poetry reverse the order in which parallel themes appear, criss-crossing each other, hence the X pattern of chiasm. Another name for chiasm is inverted parallelism.

Psalm 8 provides a good example of chiasm and highlights the purpose for man's creation:

a God's excellent name (8:1a)¹¹

¹¹Adapted from Robert L. Alden, *Psalms Songs of Devotion* (Chicago: Moody, 1974), 24.

Note: this Psalm displays yet another feature of Hebrew poetry, the element of “Inclusio,” in which the first and last line are the same; here the Psalm describing God's greatness is wrapped in praise to God for His greatness—“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth” (8:1a and 9)

- b* God's eternal rule (8:1b-3)
- c* Humanity's smallness (8:4)
- c'* Humanity's greatness (8:5)
- b'* Humanity's rule (8:6-8)
- a'* God's excellent name (8:9)

Theological Purposes

While the purpose of Job is **NOT** to provide an answer to the age-old problem of theodicy,¹² that is, why do righteous men suffer if there is a God of mercy and love, Job nonetheless answers this disturbing and often baffling question in a twofold treatment:

1. **The Greatness of God.**¹³ *We see His greatness in the following ways:*

- a. Greatness of His person (42:1-5). His greatness is evidenced in Job's confession of God's sovereignty over him.
- b. Greatness of His power (1:6; 38:1ff.; 41:10-11). His power extends beyond the physical universe. He also commands love and devotion from His people.
- c. Greatness of His program (1:6-7; 19:26-27). His program encompasses all time and eternity and He will hold His creature accountable at a coming day of judgment.
- d. Greatness of His purposes (1:8-12; 2:3). His purpose for humans is not just to pamper them with an easy life here and now, but to perfect them for Himself and eternity. In the process of equipping believers for heaven, God may choose to use any means at His disposal, including Satan.
- e. Greatness of His people (1:20-22, 13:15; 23:10). The Book of Job teaches that the truly great people of God are those who have been refined as "gold," and in spite of suffering and pain they have chosen to serve their glorious God.

2. **The Suffering of the Righteous.** *The problem of Theodicy*

Suffering, especially "undeserved" suffering has been a great problem for man. Man has his theories as to why men suffer, which may at times lack validity. This book provide answers from the divine perspective.

- a. **Satan:** Suffering is a tool with which he can force anyone to renounce God, however, he must seek permission to promote his wicked schemes (1:1 1; 2:4-5).
- b. **Job's three Friends:** Suffering is always a punishment for sin (4:7-9; 8:3-6; 11:13-15).
- c. **Elihu:** Suffering is used by God to correct or discipline (33:13-17, 29).
- d. **Job:**
 - 1) *At first*—Suffering is for the wicked, not the righteous (6:24; 7:20).

¹²"Theodicy" is concerned with the justification of God and His sovereign activity in human affairs despite human inability to comprehend His actions (Gene Merrill, "Job" in *Old Testament Explorer*, 377).

¹³Adapted from Stanley A. Ellisen, *Knowing God's Word* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 129.

2) *Later*—Suffering is a part of God’s refining process to produce pure gold (23:10).

e. **God:**

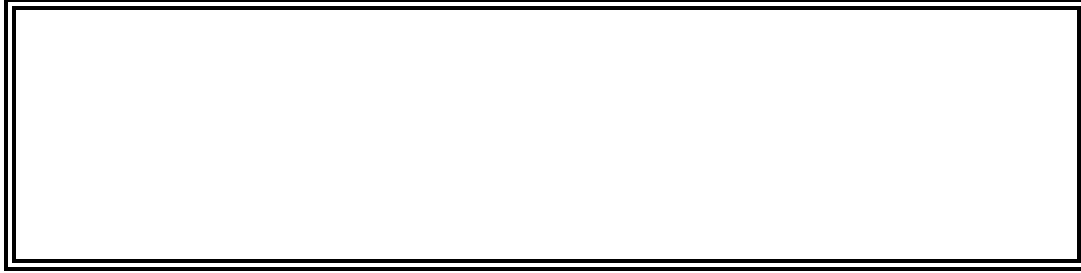
- 1) Suffering is a privilege God gives His people to help them fulfill some great purpose, such as refuting the claims of the devil (1:8, 12).
- 2) Suffering is a call to trust when we do not understand, because to know the purpose might destroy the effect (13:15).
- 3) Suffering may be God’s tool to bring one to the end of himself and his protective defenses so that God may become his defender (42:3-7).

Additional Contributions:

1. One is provided a rare glimpse of the throne of God in heaven. It is akin to the visions of God experienced by Daniel in chapter 7 of his book, and by John in Revelation 5.
2. Man’s great adversary, Satan, is introduced. Although he is powerful, he is still only a created personage (Ezek 28:13); who will ultimately be defeated (Rev 20:1-3, 10).
3. The contemporary “prosperity theology” of today’s western church clearly does not square with Job. “The early Hebrews denied materialism. Righteousness and faithful service to God does not always bring health, wealth, and prosperity.”¹⁴
4. There are several interesting parallels between the books of Job and Esther. Notice the following chart:

| <i>Esther</i> | <i>Job</i> |
|--|---|
| Narrative Drama: Hero goes from <i>rags to riches</i> | Poetic Drama: Hero goes from <i>riches to rags</i> |
| God’s sovereign <i>protection</i> in times of distress | God’s sovereign <i>purpose</i> in times of distress |
| God’s people preserved <i>from</i> the devil’s destructive schemes | God’s people preserved <i>through</i> the devil’s destructive schemes |
| Battle is on the <i>international or political scene</i> | Battle is in the <i>interpersonal or religious scene</i> |
| Satan’s scheme defeated | Satan’s scheme defeated |

¹⁴ See Andrew L. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 252.



Structure of the Book

The central core of Job (chaps. 4–37) revolves around three major cycles of poetic speeches between Job and his three friends (four including Elihu). **The speeches get shorter and shorter from the first cycle to the third.** In the third cycle, there is the introduction of a fourth “friend,” Elihu, the youngest of them all. Interestingly, Zophar did not speak at all in the third cycle, and in fact, is replaced by Elihu. The book starts with a prose section giving the reader a behind the scene look at why Job was going through his sufferings. This prologue is then followed by thirty-three chapters of highly poetic dialogue between Job and his friends. The concluding epilogue is another prose section which summarizes and closes the story.

Structural Overview

- I. Prologue: Job’s Test Allowed 1:1–2:13 [**Prose Narrative**]
- II. Dialogue: Job’s Disputes With His Three Friends 3:1–31:40
 - A. Job’s Opening Lamentation 3:1-26 [**Monologue**]
 - B. Three Cycles of Speeches with His “Friends” 4:1–31:40 [**Poetry**]
 - 1st Cycle:** 1. Eliphaz’s reply, 4:1–5:27; and Job’s response 6:1–7:21
 2. Bildad’s reply, 8:1-22; and Job’s response 9:1–10:22
 3. Zophar’s reply, 11:1-20; and Job’s response 12:1–14:22
 - 2nd Cycle:** 1. Eliphaz’s reply, 15:1-35; and Job’s response 16:1–17:16
 2. Bildad’s reply, 18:1-21; and Job’s response 19:1-29
 3. Zophar’s reply, 20:1-29; and Job’s response 21:1-34
 - 3rd Cycle:** 1. Eliphaz’s reply, 22:1-30; and Job’s response 23:1–24:25
 2. Bildad’s reply, 25:1-6; and Job’s response 26:1–31:40
- III. Elihu’s Four Speeches 32:1–37:24 [**Poetry**]
- IV. The LORD’s Speeches and Job’s Responses 38:1–42:6 [**Poetry**]
- V. Epilogue: God’s Rebuke of Job’s Friends and Job’s Restoration 42:7-17 [**Prose**]

Outline

I. Prologue: Job’s Test Allowed 1:1–2:10

A. The Character of Job 1:1-5

1. Job was blameless—morally upright, righteous 1:1
2. Job was blessed—materially and spiritually 1:2-5
 - a. *He possessed great riches* 1:2-3
 - b. *He performed priestly rituals* 1:4-5

B. The Controversy Over Job’s Character 1:6–2:10

1. The first assault against Job 1:6-22
 - a. Satan’s accusations of Job 1:6-12

Scene One—Heaven

C. Satan’s assault on Job’s integrity in loss of family and property 1:13-22

Scene Two—Earth

2. The second assault against Job 2:1-10
 - a. Satan’s accusations of Job 2:1-6
 - b. Job’s integrity in suffering 2:7-10

Scene Three—Heaven

Scene Four—Earth

D. The Coming of Job’s Comforters 2:11-13

II. Dialogue: Job Disputes With His Three Friends 3:1–31:40

A. Job’s Opening Lamentation 3:1-26 (cf. Jer 20:14-18)

1. The wish that he had not been born: “Why was I born?” 3:1-10
2. The wish that he had died at birth: “Why not death at birth?” 3:11-19
3. The wish that he could die then: “Why continue living?” 3:20-26

B. Three Cycles of Speeches with His “Friends” 4:1–31:40

1. *The First Cycle of Speeches 4:1–14:22*

- a. Eliphaz’s response to Job’s lament 4:1–5:27
 - 1) Eliphaz rebukes Job for a lack of confidence in his suffering 4:1-6
 - 2) Eliphaz reminds Job that only sinners suffer: he must have sinned 4:7-11

- 3) Eliphaz relates a vision to Job: sinners suffer because they sin 4:12-21
 - 4) Eliphaz reflects on his experience: “a man is born for trouble” (5:7a) 5:1-7
 - 5) Eliphaz requests Job to submit to God who will heal him 5:8-27
- b. Job’s reply to Eliphaz 6:1–7:21
- 1) His defense of complaining 6:1-7
 - 2) His despair in suffering 6:8-13
 - 3) His disappointment in his friends 6:14-23
 - 4) His defense of his uprightness 6:24-30
 - 5) His discomfort in his suffering 7:1-6
 - 6) His desires of God 7:7-21
- c. Bildad’s response to Job 8:1-22
- 1) The proposition of God’s justice 8:1-7
 - 2) The proof of history: the wisdom of the ancients 8:8-10
 - 3) The path of ungodliness 8:11-19
 - 4) The possibility of blessing 8:20-22
- d. Job’s reply to Bildad 9:1–10:22
- 1) The greatness of God 9:1-12
 - 2) The arbitrariness of God 9:13-24
 - 3) The unfairness of God 9:25–10:22
- e. Zophar’s response to Job 11:1-20
- 1) His rebuke of Job’s words 11:1-6
 - 2) His respect for God’s wisdom 11:7-12
 - 3) His requests for Job’s repentance 11:13-20
- f. Job’s response to Zophar 12:1–14:22
- 1) His disgust with his three friends 12:1–13:19
 - 2) His demands of God 13:20-28
 - a) Job defends his righteousness 13:13-19
 - b) Job demands to know why God is afflicting him 13:20-28
 - 3) His despair against hope 14:1-22
 - a) Job discusses the frailty of human life 14:1-6
 - b) Job discusses the finality of death 14:7-12
 - c) Job desires death and resurrection 14:13-17
 - d) Job despairs over man’s irrevocable end: death 14:18-22

2. *The Second Cycle of Speeches 15:1–21:34*

- a. Eliphaz's assessment of Job's guilt 15:1-35
 - 1) His rebuke of Job's attitude 15:1-16
 - 2) His reminder of the wicked's fate 15:17-35
- b. Job's response to Eliphaz 16:1–17:16
 - 1) His disgust with his three friends 16:1-5
 - 2) His distress at the hand of God 16:6-17
 - 3) His desires for an intercession 16:18–17:2
 - 4) His disclaimer of his friends 17:3-5
 - 5) His despair before his friends 17:11-16
- c. Bildad's warning to Job 18:1-21
 - 1) The denunciation of Job 18:1-4
 - 2) The downfall of the wicked 18:5-21
- d. Job's reply 19:1-29
 - 1) The hostility of the friends 19:1-6
 - 2) The hostility from God 19:7-12
 - 3) The hostility from others 19:13-22
 - 4) The hope of seeing God 19:23-29
- e. Zophar's perplexity with Job 20:1-29
 - 1) The expression of outrage at Job 20:1-3
 - 2) The explanation of the wicked's brief prosperity 20:4-11
 - 3) The evident punishment of sin 20:12-19
 - 4) The exasperation over Job's refusal to repent 20:20-29
- f. Job's rejection of Zophar's premises 21:1-34
 - 1) His call for silence 21:1-6
 - 2) His claim that the wicked do prosper, even die in prosperity 21:7-34

3. *The Third Cycle of Speeches 22:1–26:14*

- a. Eliphaz's accusations against Job 22:1-30
 - 1) His assertion of God's disinterest 22:1-5
 - 2) His accusation of Job's disobedience 22:6-20
 - 3) His appeal for Job's repentance 22:21-30
- b. Job's reply to Eliphaz 23:1–24:25

- 1) His longing to meet God 23:1-7
 - 2) His innocence maintained 23:8-12
 - 3) His frustration with God's seeming inequity 24:1-25
- c. Bildad's reply to Job 25:1-6
- 1) God is infinite: declaration of God's greatness 25:1-3
 - 2) Man is finite: declaration of man's sinfulness 25:4-6
- d. Job's response to Bildad 26:1-14
- 1) His denunciation of his so-called friends 26:1-4
 - 2) His description of God's greatness 26:5-14

4. *Job's concluding words 27:1–31:40*

- a. His protestation of innocence 27:1-23
- b. His pronouncements on wisdom 28:1-28
- 1) Man's ability to find wealth 28:1-11
 - 2) Man's inability to find wisdom 28:12-22
 - 3) God's wisdom is given to those who fear Him 28:23-28
- c. His panoramic review of his life 29:1–31:40
- 1) His past honor and blessing 29:1-25
 - 2) His present dishonor and suffering 30:1-31
 - a) Mocked by evil young children 30:1-15
 - b) Avoided by God 30:16-23
 - c) Racked by pain 30:24-31
 - 3) His parting denials, and desire to present his case to God 31:1-40
 - a) His denial of hidden sins 31:1-4
 - b) His denial of falsehood 31:5-8
 - c) His denial of sexual sins 31:9-12
 - d) His denial of iniquities 31:13-23

- e) His denial of idolatry 31:24-28
- f) His denial of vengeance 31:29-30
- g) His denial of selfishness 31:31-34
- h) His desire to present his case before God 31:35-40

III. Elihu's Four Speeches 32:1–37:24

A. Elihu's Introduction 32:1-22

- 1. The appearance of Elihu 32:1-5
- 2. The reasons for Elihu's intervention 32:6-22
 - a. His respect for the three 32:6-10
 - b. His evaluation of the three 32:11-14
 - c. His desire to address the three 32:15-22

B. Elihu's First Speech 33:1–33

This speech answers Job's charge in 33:10 that God is his enemy and doesn't hear him.

- 1. He appeals to Job to "refute him if he can" (33:5) 33:1-7
- 2. He dismisses Job's claims to innocence 33:8-12
- 3. He refutes Job 33:13-28
 - a. God speaks to men through dreams and visions 33:13-18
 - b. God speaks to men through illness 33:18-22
 - c. God speaks to men through angels 33:23-28
- 4. He pleads for Job to listen 33:29-33

C. Elihu's Second Speech 34:1-37

This speech answers Job's charge that God is unjust in punishing Job who hadn't sinned.

- 1. He rejects Job's claims of innocence a second time 34:1-9
- 2. He refutes Job's theology 34:10-37
 - a. God is just 34:10-12
 - b. God is sovereign 34:13-15
 - c. God is impartial 34:16-20
 - b. God is just 34:16-20

- d. God is knowledgeable 34:21-25a
- e. God is just in condemning the wicked 34:25b-30
- f. God is free 34:31-37

D. Elihu's Third Speech 35:1-16

This speech answers Job's charge in 34:9 and 35:3 that it doesn't pay to serve God.

- 1. He rejects Job's complaint that godliness is unprofitable 35:1-3
- 2. He refutes Job's conclusions 35:4-16

E. Elihu's Fourth Speech 36:1–37:24

- 1. His explanation of suffering 36:1-24
 - a. God is omniscient 36:1-5
 - b. God applies suffering for instruction 36:6-11
 - c. God responds to the penitent 36:12-18
- 2. His exhortation to Job 36:19–37:24
 - a. His need to acknowledge God's words 36:19-21
 - b. His need to acknowledge God's power 36:22–37:16
 - 1) In nature 36:22-33
 - 2) In thunderstorms 37:1-5
 - 3) In snow and rain 37:6-16
 - c. His conclusion 37:17-24

IV. God's Two Speeches and Job's Replies 38:1-42:6

- A. God's First Discourse: Revelation of God's Knowledge 38:1–40:2
 - 1. The LORD grants Job a meeting and issues him a challenge 38:1-3
 - 2. The LORD's knowledge is displayed in His marvelous creation 38:4–39:30
 - a. The mystery of the world's creation 38:4-14
 - 1) Creation of the earth 38:4-7
 - 2) Creation of the sea 38:8-11
 - 3) Creation of day and night 38:12-15

- b. The mysteries of earth and sky 38:16-38
 - 1) The deep and the extremities of the earth 38:16-18
 - 2) The source of light and darkness 38:19-21
 - 3) The source of snow, hail, and lightning 38:22-24
 - 4) The source of rain, dew, and ice 38:25-30
 - 5) The movement of constellations, clouds, and mist 38:31-38
- c. The mysteries of the creatures 38:39–39:39
 - 1) The lion and raven: *providing their food* 38:39-41
 - 2) The mountain goat and deer: *knowing their birthing patterns* 39:1-4
 - 3) The wild donkey and ox: *created to roam free* 39:5-12
 - 4) The ostrich: *peculiar treatment of her young* 39:13-18
 - 5) The horse: *created with might and majesty* 39:19-25
 - 6) The hawk and eagle: *they soar and nest securely on high* 39:26-30
- 3. Job's humbling before God 40:1-5
 - a. God's demand for Job to answer Him 40:1-2
 - b. Job's humble reply 40:3-5
- B. God's Second Discourse: Revelation of His Power and Job's Impotence 40:6–42:6
 - 1. The LORD calls for Job to listen 40:6–14
 - 2. The LORD challenges Job's knowledge of creation 40:15–41:34
 - 3. The LORD describes the ways of the behemoth (hippopotamus) 40:15-24
 - 4. The LORD describes the ways of the leviathan (crocodile) 41:1-34
- C. Job's change and repentance 42:1-6
 - 1. Job affirms God's greatness 42:1-2
 - 2. Job acknowledges his pride 42:3
 - 3. Job asks God to instruct him 42:4-5
 - 4. Job asks God to forgive him 42:6

V. The Epilogue: Job's Deliverance 42:7-17

- A. God's Rebuke of Job's Friends 42:7-9
 - 1. Their rebuke 42:7
 - 2. Their sacrifice: mediated through Job 42:8
 - 3. Their obedience 42:9

B. God's Restoration and Blessing of Job 42:10-17

1. Job's restoration 42:10-11
2. Job's blessing 42:12-17

Job and his friends all have slightly different answers to the problem of Job's sufferings. The chart¹⁵ below attempts to present the differences in perspectives of the various speakers.

| | Eliphaz | Bildad | Zophar | Elihu |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Characteristics: | Theologian | Historian, Legalist | Moralist, Dogmatist | Young theologian, intellectual |
| Relies on: | Observation, Experience | Tradition | Assumption, Intuition | Education |
| Personality: | Considerate | Argumentative | Rude, blunt | Perceptive, some conceit |
| Voice of: | Philosophy | History | Orthodoxy | Logic |
| Argument: | "If you sin, you suffer" | "You must be sinning" | "You are sinning" | "God purifies and teaches" |
| Advise to Job: | Only the wicked suffer | The wicked always suffer | The wicked are short- lived | Humble yourself and submit to God |
| Key verse: | 4:8; 5:17 | 8:8 | 20:5 | 37:23 |
| Concept of God: | Righteous; punishes wicked, blesses good | Judge; Immovable lawgiver | Unbending, merciful | Disciplinarian, teacher |
| Name meaning: | "God is gold" or "Gold Dispenses" | "Son of Contention" | "Rough" or "Chipper" | "He is my God" |

¹⁵Chart adapted from Bruce Wilkinson and Ken Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 1983), 147.