**Overview of the Book of Job**

I. Job's Distress (1-3)

A. His prosperity (1:1-5)

 1. spiritual 1:1

 2. physical 1:2-3

 3. spiritual provision for his family 1:4-5

B. His adversity (1:6-2:13)

 1. the first test 1:6-22

 a. Satan’s challenge 1:6-11

 b. God’s permission to test Job 1:12

 c. Job loses his oxen and donkeys and servants 1:13-15

 d. Job loses his sheep and servants 1:16

 e. Job loses his camels and servants 1:17

 f. Job loses his children 1:18-19

 g. Job’s reaction 1:20-22

 2. the second test 2:1-13

 a. Satan’s challenge 2:1-5

 b. God’s permission to test Job again 2:6

 c. Job’s suffering 2:7-8

 d. Satan tempts Job to curse God 2:9-10

 e. Job’s friends come to comfort him 2:11-13

C. His perplexity (3)

 1. Job curses the day of his birth 3:1-10

 2. Job questions why life is given to those who suffer 3:11-23

 3. Job declares that his suffering is very great 3:24-26

II. Job's Defense (4-37)

A. The first round (4-14)

1. Eliphaz (4-5) — Job's reply (6-7)

 a. Eliphaz accuses Job 4:1-5:27

 1) He delicately introduces his indirect accusation 4:1-6

 2) He establishes his principle argument that suffering is a punishment from God 4:7-11

 3) Then he claims special revelation to say that man cannot be more righteous than God 4:12-21

 4) Men are often foolish and get into trouble 5:1-7

 5) “I would repent to avoid God’s punishment” 5:8-16

 6) “God will reward you if you repent, Job” 5:17-27

 b. Job answers Eliphaz 6:1-7:21

 1) “If only my suffering could be measured, you would see why I said some of the rash things I did” 6:1-7

 2) He wishes to die because he is hopeless 6:8-13

 3) Those who suffer need kindness from friends even if they don’t deserve it, but they are speaking wrong about him 6:14-23

 4) Job tells his friends to prove where he has done wrong, not rebuke his foolish words 6:24-30

 5) Job wants God to understand that man has a hard life 7:1-8

 6) Job wants for God to give him a break 7:9-16

 7) Job wonders why God gives man so much attention 7:17- 21

2. Bildad (8) — Job's reply (9-10)

 a. Bildad more strongly rebukes Job 8:1-22

 1) If Job would repent, God would bless him again 8:1-7

 2) This is an ancient universal truth 8:8-10

 3) The apostate and the hypocrite will not stand 8:11-18 4) Job would be happy if he was obedient 8:19-22

 b. Job answers Bildad 9:1-10:22

 1) God is too powerful to compete with 9:1-13

 2) Job believes he is righteous but would plead for mercy in God’s court so his suffering would end 9:14-20

 3) He feels he is in a no-win situation with God 9:21-31

 4) He wishes for a mediator between him and God 9:32-35

 5) He believes his suffering from God is unfair 10:1-7

 6) Why create him just to kill him? 10:8-12

 7) He thinks God is out to get him 10:13-17

 8) He asks God to let him die in peace 10:18-22

3. Zophar (11) — Job's reply (12-14)

 a. Zophar more strongly rebukes Job 11:1-20

 1) Job deserves worse than he received from God 11:1-6

 2) God’s wisdom is way beyond man’s wisdom 11:7-12

 3) God would bless Job if he would repent 11:13-20

 b. Job answers again 12:1-14:22

 1) Job claims as much wisdom as his friends 12:1-3

 2) He is just but suffers while the wicked are safe 12:4-6

 3) The animals demonstrate the wisdom of God 12:7-12

 4) God puts an end to all people, even the great ones 12:13-25

 5) “You would be wiser if you keep silent; how would you stand if God held you to the same standard as He holds me?” 13:1-12

 6) Job is confident in his stand before God 13:13-19

 7) Job calls for God to cease His affliction upon him and tell him how he has done wrong against Him 13:20-28

 8) Life is fragile, so let man have it easier 14:1-6

 9) Trees can spring back to life but man can’t 14:7-12

 10) Job wishes for life after death so he can avoid the suffering and then receive the reward of his right life 14:13-17

 11) But he believes he won’t have that chance with God 14:18-22

B. The second round (15-21)

1. Eliphaz (15) — Job's reply (16-17)

 a. Eliphaz says that Job is foolish 15:1-35

 1) Job’s own words condemn himself 15:1-6

 2) Rhetorical questions to imply Job is not wise 15:7-13

 3) Man’s depravity implies that man (Job) is not wise 15:14-16

 4) He pointedly uses descriptions of the wicked suffering to parallel the suffering of Job 15:17-35

 b. Job’s response 16:1-17:16

 1) “It’s easy to sit back and make accusations, but if we switched places, I would show you how to comfort the afflicted” 16:1-5

 2) God has handed him over to the ungodly 16:6-14

 3) He wishes to be heard by God 16:15-22

 4) God is his only hope to be considered righteous 17:1-5

 5) People now consider Job a bad man 17:6-10

 6) Job feels that death is his only hope 17:11-16

2. Bildad (18) — Job's reply (19)

 a. Bildad repeats his thesis 18:1-21

 1) He feels Job’s words insult their intelligence 18:1-4

 2) examples of God punishing the wicked 18:5-21

 b. Job’s response 19:1-29

 1) Job is insulted by his friends; words 19:1-6

 2) He feels that God is working against him 19:7-12

 3) God has made him repulsive to everyone 19:13-22

 4) Job’s hope and faith in spite of suffering 19:23-29

3. Zophar (20) — Job's reply (21)

 a. Zophar speaks again 20:1-29

 1) He is anxious to answer Job’s nonsense 20:1-3

 2) The wicked rejoice a short time but will end 20:4-11

 3) The wicked won’t escape God’s justice 20:12-19

 4) He may appear to escape the consequences of his sin for a time, he wil suffer 20:20-29

 b. Job’s response 21:1-34

 1) The wicked aren’t suffering as he is 21:1-16

 2) The good and bad both die 21:17-26

 3) The wicked can even have a nice burial 21:27-34

C. The third round (22-37)

1. Eliphaz (22) — Job's reply (23-24)

 a. Eliphaz’ makes specific accusations 22:1-30

 1) He accuses Job of neglecting the poor 22:1-11

 2) He accuses Job of speaking as the wicked do 22:12-18

 3) His call to Job to repent 22:19-30

 b. Job’s answer 23:1-24:25

 1) God would notice him if he could find Him 23:1-7

 2) I am innocent, and God would know it 23:8-12

 3) Apparently God has another plan for him 23:13-17

 4) The wicked do wrong and get by with it 24:1-12

 5) God does punish the wicked eventually 24:13-25

2. Bildad (25) — Job's reply (26-31)

 a. Bildad’s short reply that God is superior to man 25:1-6

 b. Job’s long reply and defense 26:1-31:40

 1) He questions his friends’ usefulness and source of their wisdom 26:1-4

 2) God’s greatness is over everything 26:5-14

 3) Job refuses to compromise his stand 27:1-6

 4) Job prays that God will punish his enemies 27:7-10

 5) Job wishes he could teach his friends the truth 27:11-12

 6) God will punish the wicked 27:13-23

 7) Poem about wisdom

 a) gems and precious metals are found 28:1-11

 b) wisdom can’t be found as easily 28:12-19

 c) Wisdom is with God 28:20-28

 8) Job wishes for the good ol’ days 29:1-6

 9) He was righteous when he was blessed 29:7-20

 10) His wisdom was greatly respected 29:21-25

 11) Now it is different 30:1-19

 a) He describes those who taunt him 30:1-8

 b) They no longer feel restrained by Job 30:9-15

 c) His physical suffering is also great 30:16-19

 12) Job complains that God doesn’t hear him 30:20-23

 13) He responded to others’ cries for help, but nobody helps him 30:24-31

 14) Job’s final defense 31:1-40

 a) He made a covenant with his eyes not to look on a young woman 31:1-4

 b) He was honest in all his dealings 31:5-8

 c) He never committed adultery 31:9-12

 d) He didn’t abuse his authority 31:13-15

 e) He didn’t neglect the poor 31:16-23

 f) He didn’t worship money or idols 31:24-28

 g) He didn’t rejoice in bad things happening to bad people 31:29-30

 h) He showed hospitality to everyone 31:31-32

 i) He didn’t hide from standing up for right 31:33-34

 j) He asks for a hearing with God 31:35-37

 k) He did not acquire land dishonestly 31:38-40

3. Elihu (32-37)

 a. Elihu reacts to the discussion 32:1-5

 b. He expresses his respect for letting the older men speak first and only speaks up when they have no answer to Job 32:6-22

 c. Elihu addresses Job respectfully so he will hear 33:1-7

 d. He responds to Job’s charge that God doesn’t answer 33:8-33

 e. He responds to Job’s charge that he can’t get justice for his situation 34:1-27

 f. Job is unjust in his claims about God’s justice and God’s care for him 35:1-16

 g. God is just 36:1-37:24

 1) God cares for everyone 36:1-12

 2) the faithless will not be heard 36:13-16

 3) don’t let anger cause you to sin 36:17-23

 4) God works through nature 36:24-33

 5) Nature reveals God’s greatness 37:1-24

III. Job's Deliverance (38-42)

A. God humbles Job (38:1-42:6) (see 40:3-5 and 42:1-6)

 1. God challenges Job by questions requiring God’s wisdom 38:1- 40:2

 2. Job’s humility 40:3-5

 3. God has more tests to determine if Job can save himself 40:6- 41:34

 a. questions about behemoth 40:15-24

 b. questions about leviathan 41:1-34

 4. Job’s repentance 42:1-6

B. God honors Job — 42:7-17

1. God rebukes his critics (42:7-10)

2. God restores his wealth (42:11-17)