

Sermon, June 5, 2011
“The Patience of God”, Job 19:23-27
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

Wisdom/Poetry Writings

- Hebrew Poetry is characterized by its rhythmic structure, frequent use of figures of speech, heavy reliance on imagery, and intense emotional expression.
- Wisdom books contain large portions of poetry, but can be further distinguished in at least three ways by (1) the use of the word “wisdom” and its synonyms, (2) rely more on observations of life than supernatural visions, and (3) little direct reflection is made on grand redemptive events that took place in Israel’s history.

The Books of Poetry and Wisdom¹

- Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon are regarded as books of poetry; Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are also books of wisdom.
- Job: cosmic struggle between the Lord and angelic enemies
- Psalms: the full range of emotions
- Proverbs: a father’s and mother’s wisdom sayings to their son
- Ecclesiastes: musings about the human condition
- Song of Solomon: love song of a bride and groom

Overview of Job:

- The author of Job is unknown, some believe Moses or Solomon or another older writer,
- Scholars believe the book to be written anywhere from 2,000BC to 1,000BC.
- Job arguably takes place sometime after the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9 but before Abraham in Genesis 11:27ff.
- It may be the world’s oldest complete written book.
- The 1st book of wisdom/poetry, 18th book of the Bible.
- **Overall Outline Job²:**
 - I. Prologue; Job’s happiness, God and Satan, Job’s Testing (1:1–2:13)
 - II. Dialogue (Dispute) between Job and His Friends (3–27)
 - A. Job’s Opening Lament (3)
 - B. Round 1: Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar Speak; Job Answers (4-14)
 - C. Round 2: Three Friends Speak; Job Answers (15–21)
 - D. Round 3: (22-26)
 - E. Job’s Closing Speech (27)
 - III. Interlude on Wisdom (28)
 - IV. Monologues (29-42:6)
 - A. Job (29-31)
 - B. Elihu (32-37)
 - C. God (38-42:6)
 - V. Epilogue: God Judges Three Friends; Job Restored (42:7-17)

Major Themes of Job³:

- God has purposes behind all suffering, but these are largely hidden from us.
- Conventional wisdom applies easily to some situations, but not the suffering of the righteous
- Righteous sufferers must humbly submit their laments to affirmations of God’s goodness and justice.
- Human grasp of wisdom is limited and always begins with the fear of God and obedience to His commands.

Job is filled with many lessons and sermons. One is the lesson of patience through the trials and tribulations of life, trust in God, know your redeemer lives, and grow in your faith.

¹ Mears, H., “What the Bible is All About”, p.182

² Archeological Study Bible (2005), p734

³ Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible, (2003).

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1. Unknown to Job is the heavenly discourse between God and Satan

- Job was a righteous and upright man, who was blessed by God
- The narrative of this heavenly council of angels, the accuser Satan, and God is described in such a way that we can sort of apprehend the type of cosmic struggle taking place (anthropomorphic).
- We have read in the Pentateuch and the books of history that obedience is blessed and disobedience is cursed; (conventional wisdom)
- Here we have the opposite taking place; it is a point of the nature of God given faith to Satan that it is not possible for Him to take away God’s chosen people.
- Job was “tested” by the death of his children, sheep, camels...the taking away of all his worldly wealth
- Job’s faith response was, **Job 1:21-22**
- God permits the further suffering of Job, his health is taken away, painful sores over all his body.
- Job’s faith response to his wife... **Job 2:9-10**
- When life hits you hard and you cannot understand why things are happening to you, what is your response? Do you despair and turn away from God? Do you trust and draw closer to God?

2. In the midst of suffering you may never understand the reasons God allows you to go through agonizing circumstances

- Satan’s hope is that as long as things go well with a believer his/her faith will endure, but at the first sign of “unrighteous” trouble they will depart from serving a God of “injustice”.
- Job’s friends came to comfort him by their counsel, but his “friends” echo a similar theme as Satan
- Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar basically underscore conventional wisdom, that the unrighteous suffer because of their sins and the righteous are rewarded. Job must have sinned and so he suffers.
- Is faith in your life fleeting? Does it blow away or strengthen depending on your circumstances?
- Faith must transcend circumstances. What about...Joseph, Moses, David, Paul, Peter, Apostles...Jesus?
- Faithfulness in a relationship is built on trusting the one who you love.
- God promises good to all who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28)
- **Matthew 5:11-12** and **Matthew 6:19-21**

3. Your faith must be sure of what you hope for and certain of what you do not see (Hebrews 11:1)...your redeemer lives and in the end the blessings of God will pour forth upon you.

- **Job 19:25-27** ²⁵ *For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;* ²⁶ *and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God,* ²⁷ *whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!*
- Did Job question God regarding his circumstances? Yes.
- Did he complain and want his suffering to end? Yes.
- Was he tempted thru Satan and his friends to justify himself at God’s expense and blame God? Yes.
- Did he lose faith and trust in his savior? NO.

Conclusion:

- Satan’s goal is to alienate you from God and to lead you down the road to unbelief. **1 Peter 5:8** ⁸ *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*
- There are spiritual battles that transcend whatever material circumstances occur in your life. Some of these may indeed be your fault through disobedience to your Lord.
- In times of trouble draw closer to the Lord, speak to Him, read His word, listen for His voice to your soul; trust in Jesus and grow in your faith.
- **Philippians 4:7** ⁷ *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*