

# Summary of Readings

## Day One: Job 1:1-2:13

The book of Job opens with the setting of the land of Uz, an area outside of Israel. Job is described as an upright man who feared God, the loving parent of many children, and the owner of a large herd of animals and servants.

The scene shifts to the gathering of angels and “the accuser” before God where a conversation begins between God and “the accuser.” God presents Job as a model for “upright living” to Satan who retorts that the only reason for Job’s faithfulness is that God has placed a “hedge” around him. Satan argues that if God were to “strike everything he has,” Job will, “surely curse you to your face.” At this point, God places “everything that he [Job] has in Satan’s hands. A series of events transpires that leads to the loss of Job’s animals and the death of his servants and children which is reported by four separate witnesses. At this news, Job tears his clothes and says, “the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.”

When Satan returns to God, God says, “He [Job] still maintains his integrity.” Satan responds that God needs to afflict Job himself by striking his flesh. Satan is given “permission” by God to afflict Job with painful sores. Job’s own wife challenges him to let go of his integrity, “curse God and die,” but Job will not.

Three friends of Job hear of his condition and go to be with their friend. Though they could hardly recognize him when they arrived, they sat with Job for seven days and seven nights with no one speaking.

## Day Two: Job 5; Job 8:1-7; Job 10

Chapter 5: Eliphaz is the one speaking in chapter five, and we are picking up halfway through his speech which begins in chapter four. Eliphaz is implying that Job bears some secret resentment to God and the best way to deal with that is to simply plead his case with God. Eliphaz argues that God is a just God who will give blessings to those whom God corrects. God punishes, but God also heals. God will bless Job if he comes to God in humility and confession.

Chapter 8: Bildad joins the conversation here and shows his impatience with Job’s “whining.” Bildad argues that if Job is still suffering, he must still be sinning and repentance is the key step in moving forward.

Chapter 10: Job continues his response in chapter 10 out of the “bitterness of his soul.” Job argues that God does not have any charges against Job and therefore assumes that God is angry with him, an innocent man. Job does not know the reason for God’s anger. Job continues his argument by wrestling with the picture of God [which has shaped him up until now] of God’s creative, loving acts and his perception of God’s “angry” activity in his life right now. Job does not understand what is happening.

## Day Three: Job 19

After hearing additional arguments from his friends, Job response in chapter 19 by saying that his friends are “crushing me with your words.” In so doing, he argues that they have elevated themselves above him and are “looking down” at him. Job then begins to lament that God is not responding to his suffering or his prayers. At the same time, the suffering and oppression continues. Life is spiraling at this point but near the end of his response, Job holds fast to his confession that, “my Redeemer lives,” believing that he will be vindicated in the end and warns his friends against their growing self-righteousness.

## **Day Four: Job 31**

Job continues his defense by affirming the ways in which he has kept himself from sin. He lists the sins of lust, falsehood, injustice, denial of the poor, widowed or orphan, lack of compassion, seeking after wealth, lack of care for the stranger and others as those he has avoided in his life. Job concludes his defense in dramatic fashion asking that God would answer him.

## **Day Five: Job 38**

God answers Job out of the storm, and challenges Job's authority to challenge God. He continues this theme for the entire chapter by continually comparing Job's lack of knowledge and experience to God's infinite wisdom and sovereignty.

## **Day Six: Job 40:1-14; 41:1-34; 42:1-6**

Chapter 40: God asks Job for a response. Job responds in humility saying that he can say no more. God continues to point out the gap between Job and God.

Chapter 41: God continues to challenge Job by lifting up God's strength over all the mighty creatures God has created.

Chapter 42: Job repents by saying, "Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know."

## **Day Seven: Job 42:7-17**

Returning to the narrative, God finally addresses the friends who have come to bring comfort to Job and rebukes them for, "you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." God instructs them to bring a sacrifice to Job that he might pray on their behalf. Job is made prosperous again and given twice as much as he had before. The final verse of the book are dedicated to recording the scope of the blessings that Job receives in the latter part of his life.

## Keep in mind...

This is a \_\_\_\_\_ book.

The central character is in \_\_\_\_\_.

It's supposed to be \_\_\_\_\_.

*To the reader who is willing to forego simplistic answers, however, the book offers a challenging exploration of religious issues of fundamental importance: the motivation for piety, the meaning of suffering, the nature of God, the place of justice in the world, and the relationship of order and chaos in God's design of creation.<sup>1</sup>*

## The opening of the story... Job 1:1-2:13

## Applying the appropriate pedagogy

## A reading from Job

## Final Questions

What does this book say about God?

What does this book say about humanity?

What does this book say about our relationship with God?

## A Final Word

New Interpreters Commentary, Introduction to Job, pg. 338

Job 28:1-12

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<sup>1</sup> New Interpreters Commentary, Introduction to Job, pg. 319