



Key Passage: Job 42:3

Key Thought: God is involved in more ways than we can ask or imagine.¹

The gospel in Job:

Some starting premises:

1. Job is a profoundly righteous man. (Narrator says so—1:1; God says so—1:8).
2. God has ultimate control. (Everyone, including Satan agrees).
3. Job suffers terribly.
 - a. Chapter 1: Job suffers loss of sons, daughters, servants, flocks and herds.
 - b. Chapter 2: Painful sores all over his body.
4. While other agents may be the direct cause of the suffering, it happens with God's knowledge (sometimes by God's permission; sometimes by God's direction) and thus God can be seen as either the final cause or at least answerable for the final cause.
5. Job's friends are most helpful when they say absolutely nothing.
6. Job and his friends seem to discuss these possibilities:

¹ Note, key passages, key thoughts, and hook questions come from Michael Williams, *How to Read the Bible through the Jesus Lens*. These notes are compiled from 4 principal sources. In addition to Michael Williams book, notes are also derived from Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Old Testament in Seven Sentences*, Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament*, and H. H. Drake Williams, *Making Sense of the Bible*.

- a. God blesses the good, curses the bad.
 - b. Job sinned, therefore he was cursed (and Job is being defiant).
 - c. If you are good you are blessed; if you are bad you are cursed.
 - d. Job didn't sin, yet he was cursed.
 - e. If d is correct, then it turns our world upside down (requiring rethinking).
7. Since d seems true, then we have to consider some alternatives:
- a. Maybe God isn't all knowledgeable
 - b. Maybe God isn't all powerful
 - b. Maybe God isn't all good
 - c. Maybe God is all those things, and sin still has effects, and God can allow such effects, and still be faithful to all these things.
8. God's Response to Job
- a. Consider what you don't know. (humility)
 - b. Consider what you do know. (Knows Job by name; readers know God is proud of him. History of God caring for his people).
 - c. God never fully answers the question, focusing instead on the relationship of trust.
9. New Testament help
- a. Jesus suffered as one of us, undeservedly.
 - b. His suffering was used as part of a larger plan.
 - c. Jesus submitted to it and the effects of that submission ends up being greater than the effects of the problem. (1 pet 3:18)
 - d. God endures suffering as one of us.
 - e. Suffering is not an "if" but a "when": part of the role of Christianity in the world. (Rom 12:1; 1 Pet 4:12-13)
 - f. God promises the end to all suffering, and proves it through suffering and redemption.
10. Ending of Job
- a. Job shows humility.
 - b. Job allows trust in the relationship to lead the way.
 - c. Job experiences abundant blessing.
11. The Gospel in Job
- a. Consider what we don't know.
 - b. Consider what we do know.
 - c. Consider the story of Christ and the character of God.
 - d. Consider the multiple ways God can be sovereign (sending, allowing, correcting, using, etc).
 - e. Jesus is the only solution to the problem of evil.

Hook Questions:²

1. Where is God when it hurts? Are pain and suffering always bad? Was God wrong for allowing his own Son to suffer? What is the ultimate cause of suffering? Do you believe that God knows what he is doing?
2. When things go the way you want, does that mean that God is blessing you? Does the lack of any suffering mean that you are living a godly life?

² Taken from Michael Williams, *How to Read the Bible through the Jesus Lens*, p.64.