



## Putting the Puzzle Pieces Together

Fourth Series: "The Right Edge" Old Testament: Poetry  
Lesson 13: Job and Psalms

### I. Introduction

- A. More than one-third of the Hebrew Bible was written in poetry. Only 5 books in the Old Testament do not have poetry in them (Ruth, Ezra, Haggai and Malachi).
- B. Unlike the historical books, the 5 poetry books (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon) do not tell the story of Israel.
- C. These 5 books explore more personal themes and emphasize a life style of godliness. They discuss pain, wisdom, issues of life and they do it in the present tense.

### II. Job

- A. Date: Job is probably the earliest book of the Bible. It appears to be set in the period of the patriarchs (maybe between Genesis 11 and 12).
  1. His life span matches that of the patriarchs
  2. Job – 200 years (140 years after the writing of the book, see 42:16) as compared to Abraham – 175 years.
  3. His wealth is measured in livestock, not gold and silver
  4. Job's family clan fit the pattern found in the Patriarchal Period
  5. There are no references yet to Israel, the Exodus, the Law, etc.
- B. Author: Unknown (although Job, Elihu, Solomon, Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah have all been mentioned as the author).
- C. Setting: Uz in the area of Edom (Lamentations 4:21). This is southeast of the Dead Sea.
- D. Theme: "Suffering itself is not the central theme. Rather it is the focus on what Job learns from his suffering." (Talk through the Bible, p. 145)

E. An outline of the chapters:

- |                                                                              |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. The dilemma of Job                                                        | 1:1 – 2:13   |
| 2. The first round of debates<br>(Bildad, Eliphaz, Zophar and Job)           | 3:1 – 14:22  |
| 3. The second round of debates<br>(Bildad, Eliphaz, Zophar and Job)          | 15:1 – 21:34 |
| 4. The third round of debates<br>(Bildad, Eliphaz and Job. Zophar is silent) | 22:1 – 26:14 |

Job's Difficulties

5. Job's defense 27:1 – 31:40  
 6. Elihu's solution 32:1 – 37:24  
 7. The deliverance of Job 38:1 – 40:5

|                   |
|-------------------|
| Job's Deliverance |
|-------------------|

F. The characters

1. Job and his family

- Job – devout, upright, wealthy, middle-aged family man (1:1-5) "...a man of unparalleled and genuine piety, a godly gentleman, fine husband, faithful father..." (Chuck Swindoll)
- Job's wife – she lost ten children, all her possessions, and her loving companion.
- Job's seven sons – varying ages, wealthy, devoted to family
- Job's three daughters – beautiful, intelligent

2. Satan

Tempter (Gen. 3), Slanderer (Job 1:9), Liar (John 8:44), Afflicter (Job 1:12), Accuser (Rev. 12:10) and Adversary (1 Pet. 5:8).

3. Job's "friends"

|                 | Eliphaz                                  | Bildad                    | Zophar                     | Elihu                             |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Relies on:      | Observation, experience                  | Tradition                 | Assumption                 | Education                         |
| Characteristic: | Theologian                               | Historian, legalist       | Moralist, dogmatist        | Young, theologian, intellectual   |
| Personality:    | Considerate                              | Argumentative             | Rude, blunt                | Perceptive, some conceit          |
| Voice of:       | Philosophy                               | History                   | Orthodoxy                  | Logic                             |
| Advice 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, merciless       | Disciplinarian, teacher           |

(Talk thru the Bible, p. 147)

G. Job makes three basic complaints

- God does not hear me (13:3, 24, 19:7, 23:3-5 and 30:20)
- God is punishing me (6:4, 7:20, 9:17)
- God allows the wicked to prosper (21:7)

H. The book of Job reveals five ways in which God uses hardships that are reflected in Deuteronomy 8:

- To humble us Job 22:29; Deut. 8:2
- To test us Job 2:3; Deut 8:2

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 3. To rearrange our priorities        | Job 42:5-6; Deut. 8:3 |
| 4. To discipline us                   | Job 5:17; Deut 8:5    |
| 5. To prepare us for future blessings | Job 42:10; Deut. 8:7. |

### III. Psalms

- A. The word “psalm” is a Greek word that means “a song sung to the accompaniment of a plucked instrument.” They were used as the temple hymn book and as a kind of devotional guide for the nation of Israel.
- B. This is the longest book in the scriptures and perhaps the most widely read. It is quoted more times in the New Testament than any other book. It covers a full range of human emotions and needs. The topics include praise, lament, war, peace, suffering, fear and jubilation. The Psalms were written for varying audiences and time frames. They reflect a multitude of moods and purposes.

C. Dating and authors

Written between c. 1500-500 BC. Compiled after the exile. Of the 150 psalms, 100 have an author indicated. 73 are attributed to David. Asaph wrote Ps. 50 and Ps. 73-83. The sons of Korah wrote Ps. 42, Ps. 44-49, 84-85 and 87. Moses wrote Ps. 90 and Solomon wrote Ps. 72 and 127.

It is assumed that various editors compiled the Psalms (David, Hezekiah, Ezra or Nehemiah)

D. The book of Psalms is divided into 5 books:

1. Book 1: Psalms 1-41
2. Book 2: Psalms 42-72
3. Book 3: Psalms 73-89
4. Book 4: Psalms 90-106
5. Book 5: Psalms 107-150

These were not all compiled at the same time.

E. Scholars believe that smaller collections exist within those main books:

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Davidic Group 1:               | 3-41           |
| Sons of Korah Group 1:         | 42-49          |
| Davidic Group 2:               | 51-65          |
| Asaph Group:                   | 73-83          |
| Sons of Korah Group 2:         | 84-88 (exc.86) |
| Congregational Praise Group 1: | 95-100         |
| Halleluyah Group:              | 111-117        |
| Songs of Ascent to Jerusalem:  | 120-134        |
| Davidic Group 3:               | 138-145        |
| Congregational Praise Group 2: | 146-50         |

(A Survey of the Old Testament, p. 342)

- F. Some scholars see “seam” Psalms at the end of each of the four books (41, 72, 89, and 106) that were likely used by editors to distinguish the primary topic of each book.

- G. If indeed there is an intent to the editor's arrangement, an outline of the Psalms might follow a historical path:

- I. Introduction (1-2)
- II. David's Conflict with Saul (3-41)
- III. David's Kingship (42-72)
- IV. The Assyrian Crisis (73-89)
- V. Introspection About the Destruction of the Temple and the Exile (90-106)
- VI. Praise and Reflection on the Return and the New Era (107-145)
- VII. Concluding Praise (146-15)

(A Survey of the Old Testament, P. 346)

- H. The Psalms like the Gospels, give varying perspectives on the person and work of Christ.

- *Jesus Christ, the King* (portrayed in Matthew)
  - 2: Christ rejected as King by the nations      24: Christ is King of Glory
  - 18: Christ is Protector and Deliverer      47: Christ rules in His kingdom
  - 20: Christ provides salvation      110: Christ is King-Priest
  - 21: Christ is given glory by God      132: Christ is enthroned
- *Jesus Christ, the Servant* (portrayed in Mark)
  - 17: Christ is Intercessor      41: Christ is betrayed by a close friend
  - 22: Christ is the dying Savior      69: Christ is hated without a cause
  - 23: Christ is Shepherd      109: Christ loves those who reject Him
  - 40: Christ is obedient unto death
- *Jesus Christ, the Son of Man* (portrayed in Luke)
  - 8: Christ is made a little lower than angels      40: Christ's resurrection is realized
  - 16: Christ's resurrection is promised
- *Jesus Christ, the Son of God* (portrayed in John)
  - 19: Christ is Creator      118: Christ is the Chief Cornerstone
  - 102: Christ is eternal

(Talk thru the Bible, p. 154)

- I. The greatest common theme is worship:

Psalm 145:21 "My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever."

The early church used the Psalms as a part of their regular worship. See 1 Cor. 14:26, Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16

#### IV. So what?

- A. Consider the relationship between 119 and your own devotional life. We truly need to be "walking in the law of the Lord" (119:1)

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Discuss what your reaction would be like if you lost your possessions, your home, your children and your health.
2. In your own words, sum up what Job learned (consider Job 42).
3. Why do you think the Book of Psalms is so widely read? What are your favorite Psalms and why?