

# THE BOOK OF JOB

## Class Notes

The Book of Job tells the story of a righteous man and his search for understanding his suffering. This search puts him at odds with his wife, his friends, and even his God. Job learns that suffering often defies simplistic cause and effect explanations and careless applications of retributive theology. Ultimately, the key to understanding suffering is to understand God and that His grace and sovereignty are the ultimate explanation.

### Introductory Issues

#### *Title*

The English title, like the Hebrew title, derives from the name of the book's main character "Job" (אִיּוֹב). If the name is related to the Arabic *āba*, then "it probably comes from a root meaning "come back," or "repent," and hence may signify "one who turns back" (to God)."<sup>1</sup> The Septuagint title is transliteration of the Hebrew consonants IWB. Job is placed among the Writings in the Hebrew canon.

#### *Authorship*

The Book of Job is silent regarding the identity of its author. Jewish rabbinic tradition attributes the book to Moses (*B. Bat* 14b). Nonetheless, interpreters have not been reticent to put forward other candidates including Job himself (Barnes, Fausset, Lowth), Elihu (Lightfoot), Solomon (Luther, Delitzsch, Grotius), Hezekiah (Zoeckler), and Ezra (Warburton). But the fact of the matter is we do not know.

#### *Date*

The dating of Job concerns at least two related issues: (1) the date of the events covered in the book, and (2) the date of the writing of the book. The date of the events in Job appears to be sometime in the patriarchal era. Roy Zuck has identified twelve "factors" that suggest that the events in Job correspond to the time of the patriarchs: (1) "The length of Job's life corresponds roughly to the length of the patriarchs," (2) Job's wealth was reckoned in livestock (1:3; 42:12), which was also true of Abraham (Gen. 12:16; 13:2), and Jacob (Gen. 30:43; 32:5)," (3) "The Sabeans and Chaldeans (1:5, 17) were nomads, but they were not nomads in later years," (4) "That Job was the priest of his family (1:5) would suggest that an official national priesthood was not yet in existence in Job's area," (5) "The Hebrew word translated "piece of money" (42:11-*kesitah*) is used elsewhere only twice (Gen. 33:19; Josh. 24:32), both times in reference to Jacob," (6) "The musical instruments referred to (21:12; 30:31), the timbrel, harp (or lyre), and flute (or pipe), are also mentioned in Genesis (4:21; 31:27)," (7) "Job's daughters were heirs of his estate along with their brothers (42:15). This, however, was not possible later under the

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<sup>1</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, Updated and Revised ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 503.

Mosaic law (Num. 27:8),” (8) “Literary works similar in some ways to the book of Job were written in Mesopotamia about the same time,” (9) “The book of Job includes no references to the Mosaic institutions (priesthood, laws, tabernacle, special religious days and events, etc.),” (10) “The name *Shaddai* is used of God 31 times in Job (compared with only seventeen elsewhere in the OT) and is a name familiar to the patriarchs (Gen. 17:1, marg.; Exod. 6:3, marg.),” (11) “A number of personal and place names in the book were also associated with the patriarchal period,” (12) “Stylistic parallels to Ugaritic literature lead Sarna to conclude that ‘the patriarchal setting must be regarded as genuine.’”<sup>2</sup>

The date of writing is related to authorship. Since there is uncertainty at this point, suggestions have varied widely, ranging from the patriarchal period to the Hellenistic period. Post-exilic dates can be rejected since fragments of Job written in a paleo-Hebrew script have been discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>3</sup> If the book was written at the same time as the events (patriarchal period) then Job may be one of, if not the oldest book in the Canon.

### *Recipients*

The original recipients of Job are not explicitly identified. Presumably the book was written for or incorporated by the people of Israel. Nonetheless, interpreters have noted that the book is not particularly Jewish in that explicit references to the covenant, law, and the like are absent, but this is understandable if Job was written early. Furthermore, Dyer and Merrill suggest that as wisdom literature, Job is “trans-Israelite or universal in scope.”<sup>4</sup>

### *Historical Setting*

As we have already noted, the Book of Job likely takes place during the patriarchal period. That being said, there are few specific details to provide additional background. It seems clear that the setting is in the ancient Near East, but even the location of Uz (Job 1:1) is disputed.<sup>5</sup>

### *Purpose*

The Book of Job was written for at least three reasons. First, Job was written to challenge common conceptions concerning suffering. The basic misconception involved in Job is that suffering is about righteousness and retribution rather than about God’s sovereignty and grace.

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<sup>2</sup> Roy B. Zuck, *Job*, Everyman's Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1978), 9-11.

<sup>3</sup> John Gray, "The Masoretic Text-of the Book of Job, the Targum and the Septuagint Version in the Light of the Qumran Targum (I I QtargJob)," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* (1974): 331–50.

<sup>4</sup> Charles H. Dyer and Eugene H. Merrill, *Old Testament Explorer: Discovering the Essence, Background, and Meaning of Every Book in the Old Testament*, ed. general Charles R. Swindoll and managing ed. Roy B. Zuck, Swindoll Leadership Library (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2001), 376.

<sup>5</sup> Three primary suggestions have been put forth concerning the location of “the land of Uz”: (1) near Haran north of Damascus, (2) in Edom, and (3) near Edom but more specifically in northern Arabia. The most convincing case in our view is the northern Arabia view.

Second, Job was written to affirm the absolute sovereignty of God. Third, Job was written to show the ultimate need for a Mediator between God and man and the coming of a Redeemer.

### *Genre/Structure*

#### **The Genre of Job**

Job falls into the category of wisdom literature with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. At a broad level, “Wisdom literature consists of those documents preoccupied with human responses to God and the world.”<sup>6</sup> As wisdom literature, issues of historical detail need not be pressed with scientific precision. However, this is not to say that Job is ahistorical. Indeed, the book would lose some of its affective power if Job is a fictional character. But, we recognize that the genre and the nature of poetry entail some poetic license on the part of the author. The actual forms utilized in Job are manifold. As Francis Anderson notes, “The book of Job is an astonishing mixture of almost every kind of literature to be found in the Old Testament. Many individual pieces can be isolated and identified as proverbs, riddles, hymns, laments, curses, lyrical nature poems.”<sup>7</sup> At its most basic level, the prologue and epilogue are narrative whereas the remainder of the book is poetic.

#### **The Structure of Job**

The basic structure of Job is fairly evident. It consists of a narrative framework (prologue [1–2], epilogue [42:7–17]) surrounding a poetic body (3:1–42:6). However, the poetic center is variously divided. We divide this central section into four parts: (1) A dialogue dispute between Job and his three friends reveals the inadequacy of graceless and simple cause and effect explanations for suffering (3:1–27:23), (2) In an interlude Job reflects on the importance of wisdom in the midst of suffering which defies simple cause and effect explanations (28:1–28), (3) The monologues of Job and Elihu highlight Job’s failure to trust in God’s grace and sovereignty in his suffering (29:1–37:24), and (4) The dialogue dispute between God and Job reveals the inadequacy of simplistic cause and effect explanations when God’s grace and sovereignty are the ultimate explanation (38:1–42:6).

### **Message**

“Suffering often defies simplistic cause and effect explanations therefore, trusting in God’s grace and sovereignty is the ultimate explanation.”

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<sup>6</sup> Donald K. Berry, *An Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), 6.

<sup>7</sup> Francis I. Anderson, *Job: An Introduction and Commentary*, ed. D. J. Wiseman, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1976), 33.

### Basic Outline

- I. The prologue of the book sets up a test to God's grace and sovereignty through the suffering of Job and his comforters (1:1–2:13).
- II. A dialogue dispute between Job and his three friends reveals the inadequacy of graceless and simple cause and effect explanations for suffering (3:1–27:23).
- III. In an interlude Job reflects on the importance of wisdom in the midst of suffering which defies simple cause and effect explanations (28:1–28).
- IV. The monologues of Job and Elihu highlight Job's failure to trust in God's grace and sovereignty in his suffering (29:1–37:24).
- V. The dialogue dispute between God and Job reveals the inadequacy of simple cause and effect explanations when God's grace and sovereignty are the ultimate explanation (38:1–42:6).
- VI. The epilogue of the book resolves the test of God's grace and sovereignty through the restoration of Job and his comforters (42:7–17).

### Exposition

- I. The prologue of the book sets up a test to God's grace and sovereignty through the suffering of Job and his comforters (1:1–2:13).
  - A. Job's righteous character is described (1:1–5).
  - B. Job's righteous character is tested (1:6–2:10).
    1. Job is tested regarding his possessions (1:6–22).
    2. Job's is tested regarding his health (2:1–10).
  - C. Job's comforters (Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite) arrive (2:11–13).

#### Job 1–2<sup>8</sup>

1. Establishes Undeserved Suffering as a fact of life.
2. Establishes Job's integrity.
3. Introduces us to the main characters of the book.
4. Reveals and introduces Satan and his nature.
5. Reveals God's power and protection and sovereignty.

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<sup>8</sup> From the class notes of Larry J. Waters

- II. A dialogue dispute between Job and his three friends reveals the inadequacy of graceless and simple cause and effect explanations for suffering (3:1–27:23).
- A. Job laments<sup>9</sup> over his circumstances ignoring God’s grace and sovereignty (3:1–26).<sup>10</sup>
1. Job wishes that he had never been born (3:1–10).
  2. Job wishes that he had died at birth (3:11–19).
  3. Job wishes he could die (3:20–26).
- B. The first cycle of speeches reveals the inadequacy of graceless and simple cause and effect explanations for suffering (4:1–14:22).

Three Speech Cycles in Job (chs 4–26)					
First Cycle (4:1–14:22)		Second Cycle (15:1–21:34)		Third Cycle (22:1–26:14)	
Eliphaz (4:1–5:27)	Job (6:1–7:21)	Eliphaz (15:1–35)	Job (16:1–17:16)	Eliphaz (22:1–30)	Job (23:1–24:25)
Bildad (8:1–22)	Job (9:1–10:22)	Bildad (18:1–21)	Job (19:1–29)	Bildad (25:1–6)	Job (26:1–14)
Zophar (11:1–20)	Job (12:1–14:22)	Zophar (20:1–29)	Job (21:1–34)		

1. Eliphaz makes his first speech (4:1–5:27).
  - a. Eliphaz rebukes Job (4:1–6).
  - b. Eliphaz’s rationale for his rebuke (4:7–11).
  - c. Eliphaz reports a revelation that he has seen (4:12–21).
  - d. Eliphaz’s recommendation to Job to appeal to God (5:1–16).
  - e. Eliphaz reminds Job of God’s blessings (5:17–27).
2. Job responds to Eliphaz’s speech (6:1–7:21).
  - a. Job defends his complaint (6:1–7).
  - b. Job describes his suffering, (6:8–13).

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<sup>9</sup> Job’s laments in chapter 3 are the first of a number of laments sprinkled throughout the book. Zuck has noted that these laments can be categorized into three groups: (1) “self laments,” (2) “laments against God,” and (3) “Laments against ‘enemies’” Roy B. Zuck, “Job,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Scripture Press Publications, Victor Books, 1985), 716.

<sup>10</sup> Job 1:1–5, especially vv. 1–3 clearly parallel 42:12–17. Clines moves on an even broader scale suggesting that 1:1–2:13 and 42:7–17 form a prose and narrative framework around the core section of 3:1–42:6. David J. A. Clines, *Job 1–20*, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word Books, 1989), xxxv.

- c. Job expresses disappointment in his friends (6:14–23).
    - d. Job makes a plea/challenges his friends to point out his error (6:24–30).
    - e. Job again describes his suffering (7:1–6).
    - f. Job prays a lament to God (7:7–21).
  3. Bildad makes his first speech (8:1–22).
    - a. Bildad defends God’s justice and righteous character before Job (8:1–7).
    - b. Bildad appeals to former generations as proof of his assertions about God’s dealings with men (8:8–10).
    - c. Bildad illustrates and supports his assertions from nature (8:11–19).
    - d. Bildad indirectly condemns Job but also offers hope of restoration [through repentance?] (8:20–22).
  4. Job responds to Bildad’s speech (9:1–10:22).
    - a. Job affirms Bildad’s basic affirmations about God (9:1–12).
    - b. However, Job laments that God appears to be inaccessible and arbitrary in his dealings with men (9:13–24).
    - c. Job laments that he is unable to demonstrate his innocence before God (9:25–35).
    - d. Job laments his unfair mistreatment at the hands of God (10:1–22).
  5. Zophar makes his first speech (11:1–20).
    - a. Zophar rebukes Job for his apparent self-righteousness (11:1–6).
    - b. Zophar reminds Job that God is not to be questioned (11:7–12).
    - c. Zophar urges Job to repent (11:13–20).
  6. Job responds to Zophar’s speech (12:1–14:22).
    - a. Job expresses disdain for his three “friends” (12:1–13:19).
    - b. Job expresses his desire for resolution of his complaint (13:20–28).
    - c. Job expresses despair in light of the difficulties of life and the certainties of death (14:1–22).
- C. The second cycle of speeches reveals the inadequacy of graceless and simple cause and effect explanations for suffering (15:1–21:34).
  1. Eliphaz makes his second speech (15:1–35).
    - a. Eliphaz rhetorically rejects Job’s claims of wisdom and righteousness (15:1–16).
    - b. Eliphaz reminds Job of the woes of the wicked (15:17–35).

2. Job responds to Eliphaz's speech (16:1–17:16).
    - a. Job again expresses disdain for his three "friends" (16:1–5).
    - b. Job expresses his feelings of disappointment concerning God's treatment of him (16:6–17).
    - c. Job expresses his desire for future vindication (16:18–17:2).
    - d. Job expresses his lack of faith in his "friends" to vindicate him (17:3–5).
    - e. Job expresses his hopelessness concerning his imminent vindication (17:6–16).
  3. Bildad makes his second speech (18:1–21).
    - a. Bildad rebukes Job about his words (18:1–4).
    - b. Bildad recounts the fate of the wicked (18:5–21).
  4. Job responds to Bildad's speech (19:1–29).
    - a. Job complains about the treatment by his "friends" (19:1–6).
    - b. Job complains about the treatment by his God (19:7–20).
    - c. Job pleads with his friends and expresses a measure of hope (19:21–29).
  5. Zophar makes his second speech (20:1–29).
    - a. Zophar expresses outrage at Job (20:1–13).
    - b. Zophar explains the fate of the wicked (20:14–29).
  6. Job responds to Zophar's speech (21:1–34).
    - a. Job cries for his complaint to be heard (21:1–6).
    - b. Job claims that the wicked seem to prosper (21:7–34).
- D. The third cycle of speeches reveals the inadequacy of graceless and simple cause and effect explanations for suffering (22:1–26:14).
1. Eliphaz makes his third speech (22:1–30).
    - a. Eliphaz asserts that God was not interested in Job's self-righteousness (22:1–5).
    - b. Eliphaz accuses Job of misconduct (22:6–20).
    - c. Eliphaz appeals for Job to repent (22:21–30).
  2. Job responds to Eliphaz's speech (23:1–24:25).
    - a. Job asserts his willingness to make his case before God (23:1–17).

- b. Job asserts his frustration over God's apparent unwillingness to judge sin (24:1–17).
        - c. Nonetheless, Job asserts his confidence that God will ultimately judge sin (24:18–25).
    3. Bildad makes his third speech, a hymn of praise (25:1–6).
    4. Job responds to Bildad's speech (26:1–14).
      - a. Job rejects Bildad's assertion about man's inability to be righteous (26:1–4).
      - b. Job affirms God's power and glory (26:5–14).
  - E. Job continues his complaint (27:1–23).
    1. Job claims his innocence (27:1–6).
    2. Job condemns his enemies (27:7–10).
    3. Job counsels his friends (27:11–23).
- III. In an interlude Job reflects on the importance of wisdom in the midst of suffering which defies simple cause and effect explanations (28:1–28).<sup>11</sup>
  - A. Job relates the difficult process of mining riches (28:1–11).
  - B. Job draws an analogy between mining riches and mining wisdom (28:12–22).
  - C. True wisdom cannot be mined from below but is to be found above in a location known only by God (28:23–28).
- IV. The monologues of Job and Elihu highlight Job's failure to trust in God's grace and sovereignty in his suffering (29:1–37:24).
  - A. Job's peroration highlights his misunderstanding of God's grace (29:1–31:40).<sup>12</sup>
    1. Job's relates his past honor and blessing (29:1–25).

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<sup>11</sup> The interruption of the speech cycles by chapter 28 and the content in the chapter suggest a break. Anderson notes that, "It stands complete in itself, and is not joined smoothly with the preceding and following material. Yet it does not interrupt the flow, as it would be better out of the way, for there is a natural break at this point." Anderson, *Job*, 222. Chapter 28 also has hymnic qualities (John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, ed. R. K. Harrison, New International Commentary on the Old Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988], 373).

<sup>12</sup> This section owes much to the work of Larry J. Waters.



2. Job's relates his present dishonor and suffering (30:1–31).
  3. Job's relates a negative confession and final oath (31:1–40).
    - a. Job denies lusting after women in general (31:1–4).
    - b. Job denies falsehood and covetousness (31:5–8).
    - c. Job denies sexual sins, perhaps adultery (31:9–12).
    - d. Job denies mistreating servants and the disadvantaged (31:13–23).
    - e. Job denies committing idolatry (31:24–28).
    - f. Job denies rejoicing over his enemies (31:29–30).
    - g. Job denies being inhospitable to strangers (31:31–34).
    - h. Job affirms the truthfulness of the aforementioned statements before God and desires to make his case before God (31:35–40).
- B. Elihu's speeches challenge Job and defend God (32:1–37:24).
1. The introduction and background to Elihu's speeches (32:1–5).
  2. Elihu's first speech challenges the simple cause and effect explanations of both Job and his friends (32:6–33:33).
    - a. Elihu both affirms and questions Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar (32:6–22).
    - b. Elihu addresses Job (33:1–7).
    - c. Elihu restates Job's complaint (33:8–12).
    - d. Elihu refutes Job (33:13–28).
    - e. Elihu issues an invitation to Job to listen (33:29–33).
  3. Elihu's second speech vindicates God's justice and sovereignty (34:1–37).
    - a. Elihu rejects Job's claims about himself (34:1–9).
    - b. Elihu refutes Job's claims about God (34:10–33)
      - (1). God is just and sovereign (34:10–15).
      - (2). God's justice and sovereignty demonstrated (34:16–33).
    - c. Elihu calls upon the wise to reject Job's claims (34:34–37).
  4. Elihu's third speech continues to recite and refute Job's claims (35:1–16).
  5. Elihu's fourth speech calls for Job to trust God (36:1–37:24).
    - a. Elihu explains the discipline of suffering (36:1–25).
    - b. Elihu exalts the work and wisdom of God (36:26–37:24).

- V. The dialogue dispute between God and Job reveals the inadequacy of simple cause and effect explanations when God's grace and sovereignty are the ultimate explanation (38:1–42:6).<sup>13</sup>
- A. God's first speech challenges Job to reconsider his view of God (38:1–40:2).
    - 1. Introduction: God answers and challenges Job (38:1–3).
    - 2. Interrogation: God challenges Job regarding the creation of the cosmos (38:4–38).
    - 3. Interrogation: God queries Job using the animal kingdom (38:39–39:30).
    - 4. Invitation: God invites Job to respond (40:1–2).
  - B. Job's response to God's first speech is remorseful silence (40:3–5).
  - C. God's second speech challenges Job again to reconsider his view of God (40:6–41:34).
    - 1. Introduction: God challenges Job to listen (40:6–7).
    - 2. Interrogation: God challenges Job to reconsider his claim (40:8–14).
    - 3. Interrogation: God challenges Job to consider the behemoth and leviathan (40:15–41:34).
  - D. Job responds to God's second speech with a confession of trust and repentance (42:1–6).
- VI. The epilogue of the book resolves the test of God's grace and sovereignty through the restoration of Job and his comforters (42:7–17).
- A. God's condemnation and restoration of Job's "friends" (42:7–9).
  - B. God's blessing and restoration of Job (42:10–17).

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<sup>13</sup> Although both the beginning and end of the book contain words of God, this section is considered by many to be the high point of the book. Robert L. Alden, *Job*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, New American Commentary (N.c.: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 367.

**APPENDIX A****Themes in Job<sup>14</sup>****1 Themes relating directly to God**

- a Job's demands that God give him a hearing, or vindicate him  
[9.1-4, 9.13-20, 9.32-5, 13.1-28, 14.13-17, 16.18-21, 19.23-9, 23.3-7, 30.20-3, 31.35-7]
- b Job's charge against God, of the vindictive use of divine power  
[6.2-7, 7.11-16, 9.21-31, 10.1-17, 12.4-6, 12.17-25, 14.18-22, 16.6-17, 17.6-7, 19.6-22, 23.2, 30.1-19]
- c Recognition of God as creator  
[5.8-10, 9.5-10, 22.12-14, 26.5-14]
- d What is humankind?  
[4.17-21, 7.17-21, 15.7-16, 22.12-14, 26.5-14]
- e Mysterious presence  
[4.12-16, 9.11-12, 20.2-3, 23.8-17?]

**2 Themes relating to general questions**

- f Suffering, the innocent, and the wicked (in both personal and general terms)  
[4.7-11, 5.1-7, 5.11-27, 8.3-22, 11.10-20, 15.17-35, 18.5-21, 20.4-29, 21.1-34, 22.5-11, 22.15-30, 24.1-25, 27.1-23, 29.1-25, 31.1-34, 38-40]
- g where is wisdom to be found?  
[11.5-9, 12.7-16, 28.1-28]

**3 Themes reflecting feelings of despair**

- h Life is short and brutal  
[7.1-10, 14.1-12, 16.22-17.1, 30.24-31]
- i Wish for death  
[3.1-26, 3.8-13, 10.19-22, 17.11-16]

**4 Mutual responses**

- j Adversaries' attitudes to Job  
[4.1-6, 8.1-2, 11.1-4, 15.1-6, 18.1-4]
- k Job's attitudes to his adversaries  
[6.14-30, 12.2-3, 13.1-12, 16.1-5, 17.2-5, 17.8-10, 19.1-5, 26.1-4]

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<sup>14</sup> Alastair Hunter, *Wisdom Literature*, Scm Core Text (London: SCM Press, 2006), 119.

**APPENDIX B****Scriptures on God's Purpose in Our Sufferings<sup>15</sup>**

1. Suffering is used to increase our awareness of the sustaining power of God to whom we owe our sustenance (Psalm 68:19).
2. God uses suffering to refine, perfect, strengthen, and keep us from falling (Psalm 66:8–9; Hebrews 2:10).
3. Suffering allows the life of Christ to be manifested in our mortal flesh (2 Corinthians 4:7–11).
4. Suffering bankrupts us, making us dependent on God (2 Corinthians 12:9).
5. Suffering teaches us humility (2 Corinthians 12:7).
6. Suffering imparts the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:1–11).
7. Suffering teaches us that God is more concerned with character than comfort (Romans 5:3–4; Hebrews 12:10–11).
8. Suffering teaches us that the greatest good of the Christian life is not absence of pain but Christ-likeness (2 Corinthians 4:8–10; Romans 8:28–29).
9. Suffering can be a chastisement from God for sin and rebellion (Psalm 107:17).
10. Obedience and self-control is learned from suffering (Hebrews 5:8; Psalm 119:67; Romans 5:1–5; James 1:2–8; Philippians 3:10).
11. Voluntary suffering is one way to demonstrate love (2 Corinthians 8:1–2,9).
12. Suffering is part of the struggle against sin (Hebrews 12:4–13).
13. Suffering is part of the struggle against evil men (Psalms 27:12; 37:14–15).
14. Suffering is part of the struggle for the kingdom of God (2 Thessalonians 1:5).
15. Suffering is part of the struggle for the Gospel (2 Timothy 2:8–9).
16. Suffering is part of the struggle against injustice (1 Peter 2:19).
17. Suffering is part of the struggle for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41; 1 Peter 4:14).
18. Suffering indicates how the righteous become sharers in Christ's suffering (2 Corinthians 1:5; 1 Peter 4:12–13).
19. Endurance of suffering is given as a cause for reward (2 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 2:12).
20. Suffering forces community and the administration of our gifts for the common good (Philippians 4:12–15).
21. Suffering binds Christians together into a common or joint purpose (Revelation 1:9).
22. Suffering produces discernment, knowledge, and teaches us God's statutes (Psalm 119:66–67, 71).
23. Through suffering, God is able to obtain our broken and contrite spirit, which he desires (Psalm 51:16–17).
24. Suffering causes us to discipline our minds by making us focus our hope on the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:6, 13).
25. God uses suffering to humble us so he can exalt us at the proper time (1 Peter 5:6–7).
26. Suffering teaches us to number our days so we can present to God a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:7–12).
27. Suffering is sometimes necessary to win the lost (2 Timothy 2:8–10; 4:5–6).
28. Suffering strengthens and allows us to comfort others who are weak (2 Corinthians 1:3–11).
29. Suffering is small compared to the surpassing value of knowing Christ (Philippians 3:8).

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<sup>15</sup> Modified from Joni Eareckson Tada and Steven Estes, *When God Weeps: Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty* (Grand rapids: Zoncervan, 1997), 232–40.

30. God desires truth in our innermost being, and one way he does it is through suffering (Psalm 51:6; 119:17).
31. The equity for suffering will be found in the next life (Psalm 58:10–11).
32. Suffering is always coupled with a greater source of grace (2 Timothy 1:7–8; 4:16–18).
33. Suffering teaches us to give thanks in times of sorrow (1 Thessalonians 5:18; 2 Corinthians 1:11).
34. Suffering increases faith (Jeremiah 29:11).
35. Suffering allows God to manifest his care (Psalm 56:8).
36. Suffering stretches our hope (Job 13:14–15).