

Key to JOB

1. STATISTICS:

Author, actually unknown, possibly Elihu, Moses, or Job; time, Job lived during patriarchal period; time covered, about 140 years; key thought, one cause of human suffering; key verse, 1:21.

2. THEME:

Satan accused GOD as not being upright in His dealings with man and, to vindicate Himself, He allowed Satan to afflict this well-to-do man of the East to prove the point.

3. OUTLINE:

Satan twice challenged Job's prosperity (1, 2)
Three comforters discussed Job's adversity (3-31)
Elihu added new explanation (32-37)
GOD spoke (38-41)
Job's confession and double restoration (42)

4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Job is a dramatic poem with prologue, many scenes, and an epilogue. It is nonetheless completely true.

Possibly the main portion of the book was a public debate with speeches written (13:26). Job was a well known citizen and his tragedy must have occasioned much comment.

No book in Scripture reveals so much of Satan's person and character (i.e., his access to the throne of GOD).

Since reference is made to the Flood (14:11) and none to destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah or the giving of the Mosaic law, apparently Job preceded the latter two events.

Job, of all the books of the Bible, contains the greatest concentration of natural theology, works of GOD in nature.

5. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

GOD is seen to be eminently, minutely aware of the inner character as well as the outward fortunes of one man, Job. He pays priceless compliment to this man's integrity (1:8); on Job's side, his constant practice seemed to be a continual offering of sacrifices to GOD, both for himself and his family (cf. I John 1:7-9).

If GOD is "buying" the worship of men with gifts of prosperity and health, how can man be a

free moral agent? The answer which Job's victory of patience provides is an overwhelming vindication of the honor of GOD. Job worshiped even under extreme adversity.

A great problem of humanity, the cause of human sufferings, is largely left unanswered. Why? Because the answer is not always possible to give. As Job did, we must leave our case in the hands of GOD's loving faithfulness.

6. INTERESTING FEATURES:

Job is referred to in Ezekiel 14 and James 5.

Job's sickness may have been elephantiasis.

The LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before (42:10). He lived 140 years after his family and prosperity were restored to him, seeing four generations of descendants.

7. KEY TO UNDERSTANDING:

Read the book carefully but do not become lost in the morass of human argument. Keep in view Job's problem - who was to plead his case before GOD's court? The answer in chapters 31-41 satisfied Job and must satisfy us too.

~ end of Job ~

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