

# A Visitor's Guide to the Old Testament

## The Book of Job

### I. The Character of the Book

#### A. The Main character

#### B. Form

1. What it isn't and what it is
2. An arrangement of 3's
3. A progression of thought
4. Wisdom literature/poetry – language (vocabulary)

#### C. Subject Matter

1. Again, what it isn't and what it is
  - a. Ezekiel 14:14,20: The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, if a country sins against me by being unfaithful and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its food supply and send famine upon it and kill its men and their animals, *even if these three men-Noah, Daniel and Job-were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD... Or if I send a plague into that land and pour out my wrath upon it through bloodshed, killing its men and their animals, as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD , even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness.*
  - b. James 5:11: *As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.*
3. Luther quote: *I hold that the book is a history; but therefore, I do not believe that all that is written occurred in that order. I believe that some good teacher has brought it into this order and dialog form.*

## II. The Age of Job

### A. Author

1. Any indication from the book itself?
2. The character of the book would suggest...
3. Talmudic and Syriac traditions...
4. Opinion of St. Gregory: *the important thing about the book's authorship is that we affirm that the Holy Spirit wrote it!*

### B. Date

1. Of Writing
  - a. Two possible
  - b. Two hypothetical, but not very possible
2. Of the Events – the time of the Patriarchs (Abraham, etc.)
  - a. Social and religious structure
  - c. Rarity of *Yawe*h and the preference for *Elohim/Eloah* and *Shaddai*
  - d. Currency "*qesitah*" in 42:11 (Genesis 33:19 and Joshua 24:32)
  - e. Ancient place names, language, animals

## III. Setting

- A. The Land of Uz - Lamentations 4:21: *Rejoice and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, you who live in the land of Uz.*
- B. Josephus – farther north, better supports agricultural and animal descriptions.

## IV. Structure and Purpose

- A. A Book with two Covers: Prose and Poetry
  1. Prose beginning and end
  2. Poetry in the middle – distinctive features
- B. Theme – see below

## An Outline of the Book of Job

*Theme: The Problem of Suffering*

### A Concise Outline

**I. Prologue: Job's Character and the Circumstances of His Test (1-3)**

**II. Dialogues: Job and his Three Friends (4-27)**

- A. The first cycle (4-14)
- B. The second cycle (15-21)
- C. The third cycle (22-27)

**III. Monologues: Job, Elihu, and the Lord (28-42:6)**

- A. Job: The place of wisdom and path of integrity (28-31)
- B. Elihu: Four speeches; suffering as a discipline (32-37)
- C. Divine discourse: The Lord answers Job's challenge (38-42:6)

**IV. Epilogue: Vindication, Intercession, and Restoration of Job (42:7-17)**

(Combination from multiple sources, JMK 2020 )

<h1 style="margin: 0;">JOB AT A GLANCE</h1>							
Focus	Dilemma of Job	Debates of Job					Deliverance of Job
<b>Reference</b>	1:1 ----- 3:1 ----- 15:1 ----- 22:1 ----- 27:1 ----- 32:1 ----- 38:1 ----- 42:17						
<b>Division</b>	Controversy between God & Satan	1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle of Debate	2 <sup>nd</sup> Cycle of Debate	3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle of Debate	Final Defense of Job	Solution of Elihu	Controversy between God & Job
<b>Topic</b>	Conflict	Debate					Repentance
	Prose	Poetry					Prose
<b>Location</b>	Land of Uz (North Arabia)						
<b>Time</b>	Patriarchal Period (c. 2000 B.C.)						

(Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, Third Edition)

## An Outline of the Book of Job

### *Theme: The Problem of Suffering*

#### An Extended Outline

#### I. Introduction—Job's Former State of Integrity: 1:1-5

- A. Job's Piety: 1:1
- B. Job's Prosperity: 1:2-3
- C. Job's Posterity: 1:4-5

#### II. Speeches & Dialogues—The Problem and Proposed Solutions: 1:6—42:6

- A. Two Interviews of Yahweh with Satan—The Presenting Problem: 1:6—2:13
  - 1. First Interview of Yahweh with Satan, a Test and Reaction: 1:6-22
    - a. Interview with Satan: 1:6-12
    - b. The Disasters: 1:13-12
    - c. Job's Reaction: 1:20-22
  - 2. Second Interview of Yahweh with Satan, a Test and Reaction: 2:1-13
    - a. Interview with Satan: 2:1-7a
    - b. Job's Affliction: 2:7b, 8
    - c. Job's Second Reaction: 2:9-10
    - d. Transition—The Arrival of Job's Friends: 2:11-13
- B. Dialogue of Job with His Friends—The Solutions of 3 Friends and Elihu: 3:1—37:24
  - 1. **THREE CYCLES OF DEBATE WITH JOB 3:1—31:40**
    - a. Job's Opening Lamentation: Job wished that either he had not been born, died at birth, or would have died then 3:1-26
      - 1) Desire Not to Have Been Born: 3:1-10
      - 2) Desire to Have Died at Birth: 3:11-19
      - 3) Desire to Die: 3:20-26
    - b. Dialogue/Debate in Three Cycles: 4:1—27:23
      - 1) **CYCLE ONE OF SPEECHES AND JOB'S RESPONSE**—God Punishes the Wicked and Blesses the Good: 4:1—14:22
        - a) **Eliphaz & Job**—Principle Stated: 4:1—7:21
          - (1) Eliphaz: accuses Job of being inconsistent since suffering results from sin and no one is pure before God; thus he urges Job to ask

- God to help him and affirms that God would deliver him after He had disciplined him 4:1–5:27
- (2) Job: responds by affirming that his suffering was causing his rash desire to die, Eliphaz's response has disappointed him, and by asking for forgiveness if he has sinned 6:1–7:21
- b) **Bildad & Job**—Principle Illustrated: 8:1–10:22
- (1) Bildad: affirms, as confirmed in history, that if Job is righteous God will restore him, unlike the ungodly who perish 8:1-22
- (2) Job: responds by affirming God's wisdom and power, asking why He is against him, and requesting to die 9:1–10:22
- c) **Zophar & Job**—Principle Applied to Job: 11:1–14:22
- (1) Zophar: rebukes Job by affirming that God should show him true wisdom and by affirming that if he would turn to God, he would be blessed 11:1-20
- (2) Job: responds by criticizing Zophar for not telling him anything new, not helping him, and not representing God well, whereupon, he again asks God to let him die 12:1–14:22
- 2) **CYCLE TWO OF SPEECHES AND JOB'S RESPONSE**—The Wicked Suffer and Perish because They Are against God: 15:1–21:34
- a) **Eliphaz & Job II**: 15:1–17:16
- (1) Eliphaz: affirms that Job's words are meaningless, that he is guilty, and that he is like the wicked because he is in distress 15:1-35
- (2) Job: responds by rebuking his friends for being no help, desiring to plead his case with God, and affirming his despair 16:1–17:16
- b) **Bildad & Job II**: 18:1–19:29
- (1) Bildad: rebukes Job for his arrogant words about them, and affirms that the wicked, like he, are weakened, ensnared, diseased, insecure, forgotten, hated, and alone 18:1-21
- (2) Job: rebukes his friends for tormenting and insulting him, affirms that God has wronged him, urges his friends to have pity on him, and affirms that God will prove his innocence after his death and judge his friends 19:1-29
- c) **Zophar & Job II**: 20:1–21:34
- (1) Zophar: accuses Job of insulting him and reminds him that the wicked may be blessed, but they will then lose their riches 20:1-29
- (2) Job: retorts that his impatience is excusable and reminds Zophar that the wicked prosper and live (unlike he) 21:1-34
- 3) **CYCLE THREE OF SPEECHES AND JOB'S RESPONSE**—God Is Majestic, but Job is Wicked: 22:1–27:23

- a) **Eliphaz & Job III: 22:1–24:25**
    - (1) Eliphaz: Proclaims God's disinterest in Job for his social deviations and spiritual defiance; urges him to repent for God is great 22:1-20
    - (2) Job: longs to plead his case before God 23:1–24:25
  - b) **Bildad and Job III: 25:1–27:23**
    - (1) Bildad: affirms that because God is great and man is small and impure there is no hope for Job to be just and clean 25:1-6
    - (2) Job: affirms that his friends are of no help to him since he knows that God is great and powerful over nature 26:1-14
  - c) **Job's Conclusion (no response from Zophar):** Job concludes the discussion by continuing to proclaim his innocence and the hopelessness of the wicked 27:1-23
- c. Job's Closing Affirmations: 28:1–31:40
- 1) Transitional Discourse on God's Wisdom: Job affirms that although man is skillful in mining, wisdom is harder to find for it is God who knows where wisdom is 28:1-28
    - a) The Skill of Man in Mining: 28:1-11
    - b) Hidden Wisdom: 28:12-22
    - c) The Ability of God: 28:23-28
  - 2) Job's Desire for His Former Glory: Job wishes for his past spiritual blessing, material prosperity and social prestige which occurred because he helped the needy, exercised justice and counseled others: 29:1-25
    - a) Job's Wish: 29:1-11
    - b) Reason for Job's Former Prosperity: 29:12-25
  - 3) Job's Lament of His Present Miserable Humiliation: Job proclaims his misery as he is mocked by poor young men and vagabonds, and his humiliation as he is in pain and nobody helps him 30:1-31
    - a) Mocked by Poor Young Men and Vagabonds: 30:1-15
    - b) Helpless Pain: 30:16-31
  - 4) Job's Ultimate Challenge—An Oath of Innocence which 'Legally' Calls God to Answer 31:1-40
    - a) Job Has Not Lusted: 31:1-4
    - b) Job Has Not Lied or Deceived: 31:5-8
    - c) Job Has Not Committed Adultery: 31:9-12
    - d) Job Has Not Failed to Help His Slaves: 31:13-15
    - e) Job Has Not Failed to Help the Poor and Needy: 31:16-23
    - f) Job Has Not Trusted in His Wealth: 31:24-25

- g) Job Has Not Turned to Idolatry: 31:26-28
  - h) Job Has Not Treated His Enemies Unfairly: 31:29-30
  - i) Job Has Not Been Stingy: 31:31-32
  - j) Job Has Not Hidden His Sins: 31:33-34
  - k) Job Wishes God Would Hear Him: 31:35-37
  - l) Job Has Not Been Unfair to His Farm-workers 31:38-40
2. **FOUR SPEECHES BY ELIHU: 32:1-37:24**
- a. Introduction of Elihu: 32:1-5
  - b. Elihu's First Speech—God's Instruction to Man through Affliction: 32:6-33:33
  - c. Elihu's Second Speech to the Three Friends and Job—God's Justice and Prudence Vindicated: 34:1-37
  - d. Elihu's Third Speech to Job—The Advantages of Piety: 35:1-16
  - e. Elihu's Fourth Speech to Job (and Friends)— God's Greatness and Job's Ignorance: 36:1- 37:24
- C. Two Interviews of Yahweh with Job—Yahweh's Solution: 38:1-42:6
1. **First Interview** with Yahweh and Job—Limits in Knowledge: 38:1-40:5
- a. Yahweh: 38:1-40:5
    - 1) Yahweh Challenged Job: 38:1-3
    - 2) Yahweh Questioned Job Regarding Two Areas of Creation: 38:4-39:30
      - a) Yahweh's Questions Regarding the Physical World: 38:4-38
      - b) Yahweh's Questions Regarding the Animal World: 38:39-39:30
    - 3) Yahweh Challenged Job to Reply to His Questions: 40:1-2
  - b. Job Replied in Silent Humility: 40:3-5
2. **Second Interview** with Yahweh and Job—Limits in Power: 40:6-42:6
- a. Yahweh: 40:6-42:6
    - 1) Yahweh Challenged Job to Listen: 40:6-14
    - 2) Yahweh questioned Job Regarding Two animals of Creation: 40:15-41:34
      - a) Yahweh Questions Regarding the Behemoth: 40:15-24
      - b) Yahweh Questions Regarding the Leviathan: 41:1-34
  - b. Job Replied with Repentance: 42:1-6
- III. Conclusion—Job's Latter State: 42:7-17**
- A. Yahweh's Verdict on Job's Friends: 42:7-9
  - B. Yahweh's Restoration of Job's Fortunes: 42:10-17

(David Malick, An Argument of the Book of Job, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org))

## Questions for the Book of Job

### **I. Prologue: Job's Character and the Circumstances of His Test (1-3)**

1. What two characteristics of Job are emphasized? (ch.1)
2. What information does the prologue provide about the purpose of Job's suffering?
3. How is Satan described? (ch.1 and confer Romans 12:10 and 1 Peter 5:8)
4. What tragedies did Job suffer on a single day? (ch.1)
5. What astounding reaction does Job have to his tragedies? (ch.1)
6. What new factors enter Job's suffering the second test? (ch.2)
7. Evaluate the friends' first meeting with Job. (ch.2:11-13)
8. What wish does Job express in 3:1-10? ... in 3:11-19?
9. What charge does Job make in 3:20-26?

### **II. Dialogues: Job and his Three Friends (4-27)**

1. What do you detect in the introduction to Eliphaz's speech? (4:1-6)
2. How does Eliphaz explain the suffering Job is going through? (4:7-11)
3. What examples does Eliphaz cite from his experience? (5:1-7)
4. Why do some consider 5:17-26 some of the most beautiful of the friends' speeches? Nonetheless, why do they ring hollow in Job's ears?
5. Summarize Eliphaz's message to Job.
6. In response to Eliphaz, what does Job admit about his own words? (ch.6:3)
7. What is the metaphor in 6:15-21?
8. What does Job challenge his friends to do? (6:24ff)
9. Trace Job's line of thought in 7:1-11.
10. What was it that provoked Job's outburst in 7:12-19?
11. On the basis of 7:11-21, evaluate Job's spiritual condition.
12. How does Bildad's speech compare to Eliphaz's? (ch.8)
13. What is the picture Bildad paints of God? (ch.8)

14. Explain the metaphors of... the papyrus (11) ... spider's web (14ff) ... the plant (16-19)
15. How does Bildad's evaluation of Job (8:20) differ from God's (1:1)?
16. Summarize Bildad's message.
17. What reasons does Job offer for not expecting to receive justice from God...  
... in 9:1-12?                      ... in 9:13-24?                      ... in 9:32-35?
18. What charges does Job raise against God...  
... in 10:5-7?                      ... in 10:8-13?  
... in 10:14-17?                      ... in 10:20-21?
19. How would you characterize the tone of Zophar's opening remarks? (11:2ff)
20. What is the picture that Zophar paints of God in 11:7-11?
21. What do you think of the advice Zophar gives to Job? (11:13-20)
22. What do Job's opening words in chapter 12 tell you about his attitude toward his friends? ... toward himself?
23. Chapter 12 is the first half of Job's response to Zophar. What is the main emphasis of this first part of his answer?
24. Both Zophar (ch.11) and Job (ch.12:13-25) emphasize God's absolute control over the destiny of people... but what opposite conclusions do they draw?
25. What progression in the line of thought do you perceive between chs. 12 and 13?
26. What two requests does Job make of God? (13:20ff)
27. Explain the metaphor of the tree as Job applies it to himself. (ch.14:7ff)
28. What do 14:18,19 tell you about Job's disposition?
29. How would you characterize Eliphaz's second speech? (ch.15)
30. Eliphaz's second speech omits any encouragement to repent so that good will follow. What does this omission say about the nature of these speeches?
31. How would you characterize Job's state of mind in his response to Eliphaz? (ch.16)
32. What amazing confession of faith does Job make? (16:18-21)
33. To what point has Job's suffering brought him? (ch.17:11-16)
34. What does Bildad describe in 18:5-21?
35. Bildad clearly sees God's justice. What, however, does he not see concerning God?

36. Of what crime does Job accuse God in 19:13-20?
37. What clear Easter doctrines does Job express in 19:25-27?
38. What is the tone of Zophar's second speech? (ch.20)
39. What has been the logic of Job's three friends?  
... major premise: God \_\_\_\_\_ the evil with \_\_\_\_\_.  
... minor premise: Job, you are \_\_\_\_\_.  
... conclusion: Job, since you are \_\_\_\_\_, you must be \_\_\_\_\_.
40. With what element of his friends' logic does Job argue? (21:7-15)
41. What does Job claim about the wicked? (21:30ff)
42. Of what specific "sins" does Eliphaz accuse Job? (22:5-11)
43. What does Eliphaz infer about the origin of Job's wealth? (22:23-25)
44. How do you understand Eliphaz's words in the last verse? (22:30)
45. How does Job respond to Eliphaz's accusation that he is guilty of unconfessed sin? (23:11,12)
46. What concerns Job? (23:8ff)
47. According to 23:10, what victory can a Christian enjoy during suffering/trials? ... after suffering/trials?
48. In chapter 23, Job is concerned that God is unknowable in his dealings with Job individually. What is the progression of thought in chapter 24?
49. What does Job list? (24:2-17)
50. What does Job surmise eventually happens to the wicked? (24:18-25)
51. What contrast does Bildad paint in his third speech? (ch.25)
52. How would you describe Job's words in response to Bildad? (26:1-4)
53. Trace Job's line of thought. (26:7-13) What does Job conclude? (26:14)
54. What does Job plead in his final response to his friends? (27:2-6)
55. What truth does Job emphasize in the second half of the chapter? (27:13-23)
56. Note: Job repeats some of the very expressions Zophar use (confer v. 13 with 20:29; v. 20 with 20:25). Some consider vv. 13-23 Zophar's final speech

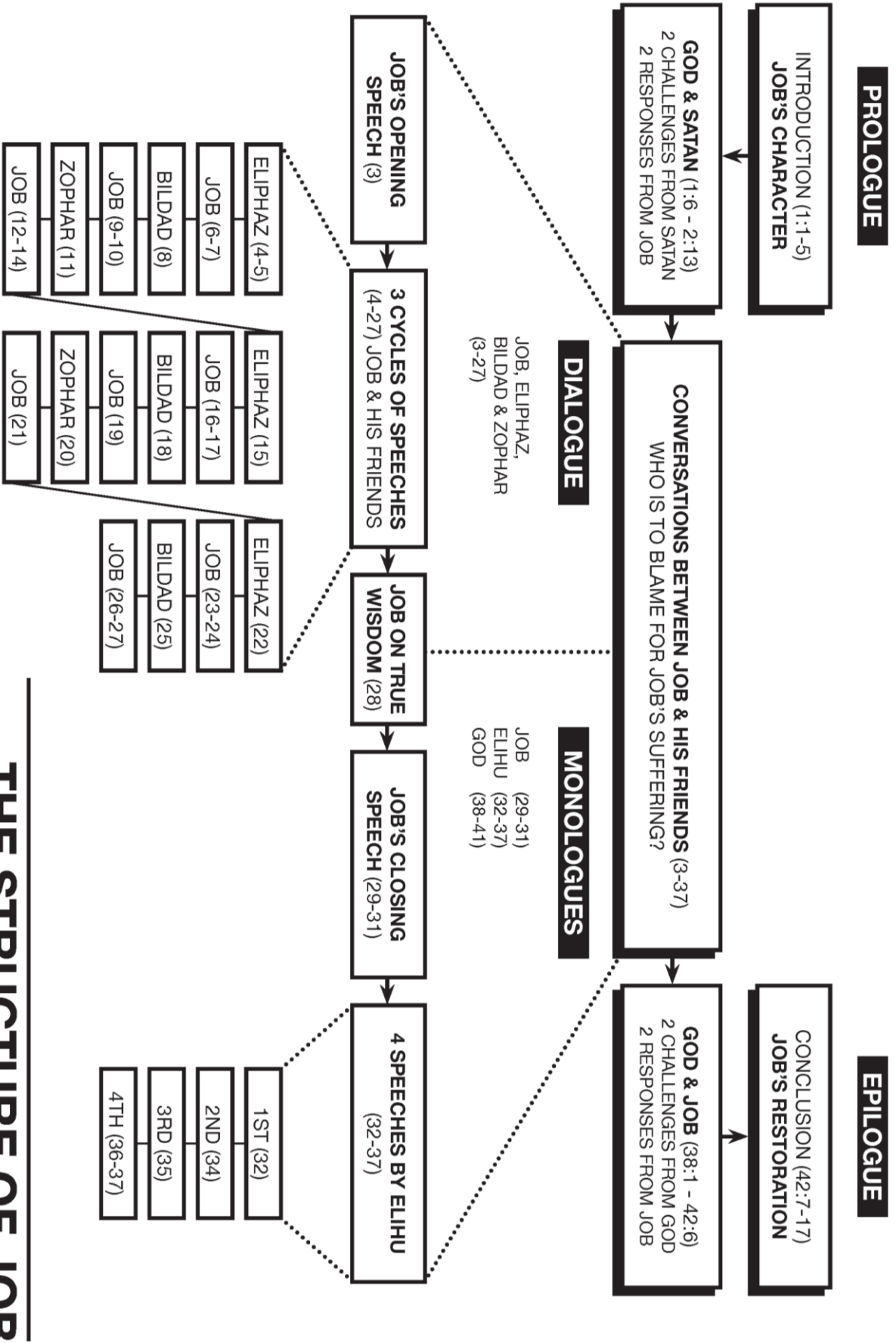
### III. Monologues: Job, Elihu, and the Lord (28-42:6)

1. What is the metaphor in 28:1-11?
2. What is the value of Job's description of wisdom in 28:12-28?
3. What is the theme of Job's discourse in chapter 29?
4. What evidence of God's mercy does Job recall... in vv.4ff? ... vv.7ff? ...vv.8-20?
5. What is the connection between chapters 29 and 30?
6. What striking expressions does Job use in chapter 30 to describe how unpleasant his life is?
7. Which different areas of his life does Job probe for any possible offense? (ch.31)
8. What conclusion does he reach in his last word to his friends? (31:35-40)
9. Which new character enters the scene? (32:2)
10. With whom is Elihu angry and why? (32:2,3)
11. What word/pronoun dominates the early parts of Elihu's discourse?
12. What charge had Job made against God in 13:24 and 30:30? How does Elihu respond to Job's charge? (33)
13. How does Elihu view Job's suffering? (33)
14. What specific purposes does God have in his dealing with man? (33:12ff, 33:26, 33:29)
15. What might a theme for Elihu's first discourse? (33)
16. With which of Job's charges against God does Elihu deal with in his 2<sup>nd</sup> speech? (34)
17. How does Elihu defend God... vs. 10? ... vs. 12? ... vs. 17? ... vs. 19?
18. What might a theme for Elihu's second discourse? (34)
19. For what does Elihu criticize Job? (35:2)
20. What might be a theme for Elihu's third discourse? (35)
21. If God does permit affliction to enter the lives of the poor and needy, why does he do it? (36:1, 9ff, 11, 16)
22. What is Elihu trying to tell Job? (37:5,13)
23. What application does he make? (37:14-18)
24. What might be a theme for Elihu's fourth discourse? (36,27)

25. How does Elihu's message refute the three friends? ... Job?
26. Though Elihu may have the best grasp to the situation, what is Elihu's great fault?
27. What does God mean by accusing Job of darkening his counsel? (38:2)
28. In vs. 38:3ff, would you say God gives Job what he asked for?
29. What purpose do you see in God's asking Job all these questions?
30. Summarize vs. 4-7:  
vs. 8-11:  
vs. 12-15:
31. What does the Creator's knowledge of and attentiveness toward the animal world say to you? ... what did it say to Job? (39)
32. You're Job... how are you feeling about now?
33. The theme of the Lord's first discourse is:
34. What irony do you see in Job's answer? (40:3-5)
35. How does God describe Job's sin? (40)
36. What shift in emphasis do you see from the first discourse to the second?
37. What is the point of introducing behemoth? (40:15)
38. What embarrassing questions does the Lord ask Job about leviathan? (41)
39. What application does God make in 41:10?
40. The theme of the Lord's second discourse is:
41. Compare the proceedings described in chs 38-41 with Job's original request in 23:3-7.
42. Why did God refuse to offer Job an answer or an explanation?
43. What change do you notice between Job's first reply (40:4f) and his second (42:2-6)

#### **IV. Epilogue: Vindication, Intercession, and Restoration of Job (42:7-17)**

1. Explain God's criticism of the friends.
2. Is there a conflict between 42:10b and 42:13?
3. Is Job ever made aware of what we are given a glimpse of at the beginning? Why or why not?
4. In the end, what does the Lord prove to Satan?



# THE STRUCTURE OF JOB

