

## WEEK FOUR INTRODUCTION

Week four brings us into the book of Job. Job stands with the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. The book begins and ends with historical narrative preserved in prose. Chapters 3-42:6, however, exclusively contain dense Hebrew poetry. The tools for understanding historical narrative, such as Genesis, and those required to engage in poetic wisdom literature are distinct. English poetry uses the rhyming of words and sounds, but Hebrew poetry rhymes thoughts and ideas. This is called *parallelism* and it is a key to understanding the poetry of the Old Testament. As an example, consider the very first words of poetry in Job, Job 3:3, *Let the day perish on which I was to be born, and the night which said, 'A boy is conceived.'* The two phrases parallel one another and in so doing magnify the meaning of each other. It is in the interplay between the two that the meaning comes to light.

## KEY SCRIPTURE

*As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God; whom I myself shall behold, and whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!*

– Job 19:25-27

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**From what you observe in Job 1:1-5, how would you describe Job before calamity hits? How would you describe Job's wealth and uprightness in today's terms?**

**What do Job 1-24 teach about God? Specifically, what do you see in chapters 1-2 about God compared to other beings? How does God relate to the events in the book of Job? How do you think, then, He relates to the events in the world and your life, both past and present?**

**What is the nature of Satan's accusation against Job? Against God? How might that accusation sound today? What assumption do you believe is at the core of that accusation?**

**What is Job's immediate reaction to the suffering he is undergoing (see 1:20-22)? How is worship possible in such profound loss?**

Look at 4:17, 9:2, and 15:14, why do you think the question of rightness or righteousness repeats throughout the book (it appears again in next week's reading, 25:4)? Meditate on your assumptions about the relationship between suffering and righteousness, how would you describe that relationship?

Job is surrounded by his "friends." How do the friends engage Job? Do they console him or accuse him? Why do you think that is? If you could, how would you change their counsel?

Job 24:1 articulates Job's confusion. "Why are not times of judgment kept by the Almighty?" Why does God seem apathetic to evil? Why don't the wicked experience swift retribution? Here is Job's deepest unresolved question. Why has he, a righteous and devout man, experienced "deep darkness" (16:16), and the wicked lived without trouble? Have you ever wrestled with similar issues? Write down your thoughts and then meditate on Galatians 4:4 and 2 Peter 3:8-9.

### BE A DOER OF THE WORD

"But He knows the way I take; when He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold." -**Job 23:10**

**In difficulty and suffering, will you look to your desire or God's design? What is God's design for you?**