

The Structure of the Book of Job

- I. God tests Job, who continues to be faithful (*chapters 1-2*).
- II. Job laments all the things that are happening to him (*chapter 3*)
- III. A series of dialogues between Job and three friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) over the meaning of divine justice and Job's suffering. They are convinced that he must have committed some great sin which he is not admitting. At the end Job demands that God defend himself, if he's a just God (*chapters 4-28*).
 - A) First cycle of dialogues (*chapters 4-14*)
 1. Eliphaz and Job (*chapters 4-7*)
 2. Bildad and Job (*chapters 8-10*)
 3. Zophar and Job (*chapters 11-14*)
 - B) Second cycle of dialogues (*chapters 15-21*)
 1. Eliphaz and Job (*chapters 15-17*)
 2. Bildad and Job (*chapters 18-19*)
 3. Zophar and Job (*chapters 20-21*)
 - C) Third cycle of dialogues (*chapters 22-28*)
 1. Eliphaz and Job (*chapters 22:1-24:17*)
 2. Bildad and Job (*chapters 25:1—6, 26:1-27:12*)
 3. Zophar and Job (*chapters 24:18-25, 27:13-23, 28:1-28*)
- IV. Job's final discourse (*chapters 29-31*).
- V. A new character, Elihu, challenges both the three friends and Job to submit to the idea of divine majesty and control of human events and accuses Job of pride and suggests that it's this rather than Job's sin that is the cause of his troubles (*chapters 32-37*).
- VI. God appears and declaims power and marvels beyond human understanding to show that Job has misunderstood the nature of divine justice; Job submits to God twice (*chapters 38-41*).
- VII. God restores Job to his former greatness and prosperity and attacks the friends for accusing him (*chapter 42*).