

## Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 109.2)

### LESSON 32 (STUDY NOTES)

#### “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth”

Hook	The book of Job wrestles with one of the most poignant questions in life: Why do we suffer, and where is God in it all?
Goal	
Overview	
Conclusion	

**Manual Goal:** To help class members develop strength to face adversity by trusting the Lord, building their testimonies of him, and maintaining personal integrity.

**EGD Goal:** Class members should take the opportunity Job offers to wrestle with very difficult topics in a mature, even sophisticated way. They should reflect on how a personal relationship with God has helped them in trials, and most importantly, internalize the importance of being with those who mourn rather than trying to explain (away) tragedy.

#### I. Sunday School

- a. Initial reflections/comments on Job (Bring up in class/conversation ““Has anyone noticed that the beginning and end on one hand and the middle on the other are strikingly different?” Specifically, in the narrative he doesn’t question or complain, and in the middle dialogues he does little else!)
- b. Review the reading
- c. Dealing with suffering, loss, and death
- d. Meaning and blame (Job’s friends)
- e. Theodicy within a Mormon context (Give a caveat that this theodicy works well as far as such things go, but in moments of grief they will likely do nothing, and aren’t even the right response)
- f. How we help and support each other (they sat with him)
- g. Calling God to court/personal relationship with God
- h. Conclusion I (Stress the paradox that often the best answer is no answer, and the discovery of meaning MUST be personal)

#### II. Scholarship

- a. The integrity of Job (the book, not the man) (Use Jewish Study Bible notes about composition)
- b. Job and historicity (does it matter for D&C 121?)
- c. Satan, a history (or, what the hell is the devil doing in heaven?)
- d. Unpacking Job 19:25 (know my redeemer lives, in my flesh I shall see God; the Hebrew is a mess and redeemer isn’t what we think)

#### III. Study Notes

- a. Whence suffering? (Theodicy II) (← Make sure that I go over this, explain why I didn't include it in part 1)
- b. What if we don't get everything back?
- c. The power and roles of God and Satan
- d. Conclusion II (how we deal with suffering, help each other through it)

<http://radiowest.kuer.org/post/why-book-job>

Quotes from Rabbi Harold Kushner:

Two words for "why" in Hebrew:

Mahdua: Why did it happen?

Lemah: To what purpose did this happen?

Theology is like reading the menu while religion is like enjoying the meal. [Theology represents our musings about God, but religion and spirituality represent our experiences with God]

It is blasphemy to seek to explain why tragedy happens; what we must do is \*respond\*. God gives us gifts to respond

We find qualities we didn't know we possessed

The key message of Job is that God is there and cares, even if we still don't know why

Key theme: "people who behave as badly as Job's friends need to apologize both to Job and to the Lord and to be retrained by an expert in the field, Job himself" (Jewish Study Bible, 1505)

Look at Job's responses and discuss:

"the speeches of the Lord raise the argument to a new level entirely, and then close off all further conversation without directly answering any of the deep and painful questions that have been raised along the way" (Job, Jewish Study Bible)

Study Notes

Book of Job is hands down the most difficult book to interpret. Even the translation is tentative.

Jewish Study Bible on the date: "there is hardly a period of biblical literature to which the book of Job does not have affinities" but allusions to Isaiah 40-66 and use of "ha Satan", usually assigned to 500s-300s, though written in a way that feels like it was written "long ago"

Misplaced sections:

Eliphaz's speech (22)

Job's reply (23-24)

Bildad's reply (25.1 + 26.2-14)

Job's reply (26.1 + 25.2-6)

Possibly Zophar's speech and Job's reply (both missing)

Job's soliloquy (29.2-31:40)

Sections (composed at different times, using different sources, different themes. Distinct elements but also interwoven/overlapping)

1:1-3:1: Job's beginning

1:1-2:13; chapters 27-28; 42:7-17 "Book of Job the Patient" (Job loses everything, urged by wife and friends to blaspheme God but doesn't)

1-31; 38-42 "Book of Job the Impatient" (Bet between God and Satan serves as framing for debates about whether justice prevails in the world)

Book of Job the Impatient + additions of three speeches by Elihu

Resources

<http://radiowest.kuer.org/post/why-book-job>

<http://radiowest.kuer.org/topic/why-god-and-tragedy> (addressing the topic of suffering from multiple perspectives)

On Being, Approaching Prayer <http://www.onbeing.org/program/approaching-prayer/67>