



# JOB

MAKING SENSE OF  
SUFFERING

Elihu's Charge  
Job 32-37

We need a theology of suffering *before* we experience suffering, because when the storms of life come it is often too late.

**God is  
good.**

**Life is  
good.**

**the principle of retribution:**

the righteous are blessed and  
prosper while the wicked are  
cursed and suffer

# Job 1:21

He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."



the principle of  
retribution



Job's  
suffering

Job's  
righteousness

God's  
character

the principle of  
retribution

Job's  
suffering

Job's  
righteousness

God's  
character



## Job 3:24-26

For sighing has become my daily food; my groans pour out like water. What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me. I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil.”

the principle of  
retribution



Job's  
suffering

Job's  
righteousness

God's  
character

## Job 7:19-20

“Will You never turn Your gaze away from me, Nor let me alone until I swallow my spittle? “Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, So that I am a burden to myself?

## Job 9:21-22

“Although I am blameless, I have no concern for myself; I despise my own life. It is all the same; that is why I say, ‘He destroys both the blameless and the wicked.’ ”

the principle of  
retribution



Job's  
suffering

Job's  
righteousness

God's  
character

## Job 21:7-9, 13-15

Why do the wicked live on, growing old and increasing in power? They see their children established around them, their offspring before their eyes. Their homes are safe and free from fear; the rod of God is not on them. ... They spend their years in

## Job 21:7-9, 13-15

prosperity and go down to the grave in peace. Yet they say to God, 'Leave us alone! We have no desire to know your ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? What would we gain by praying to him?'

## Job 24:9-10

The fatherless child is snatched from the breast; the infant of the poor is seized for a debt. Lacking clothes, they go about naked; they carry the sheaves, but still go hungry.



## Job 27:2

As surely as God lives, who has  
denied me justice, the Almighty,  
who has made my life bitter

**God is  
good.**

**God is  
good  
to me.**

## Job 31:35-40

("Oh, that I had someone to hear me! I sign now my defense—let the Almighty answer me; let my accuser put his indictment in writing. Surely I would wear it on my shoulder, I would put it on like a crown. I would give him an account of my every step; I would present it to

## Job 31:35-40

him as to a ruler.)—“if my land cries out against me and all its furrows are wet with tears, if I have devoured its yield without payment or broken the spirit of its tenants, then let briars come up instead of wheat and stinkweed instead of barley.” The words of Job are ended.

## Job 32:6-12

So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite said: "I am young in years, and you are old; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know. I thought, 'Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom.' But it is the spirit in a person, the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding. It is not only the old who are

## Job 32:6-12

wise, not only the aged who understand what is right. "Therefore I say: Listen to me; I too will tell you what I know. I waited while you spoke, I listened to your reasoning; while you were searching for words, I gave you my full attention. But not one of you has proved Job wrong; none of you has answered his arguments.

## Job 33:8-12

“But you have said in my hearing— I heard the very words— ‘I am pure, I have done no wrong; I am clean and free from sin. Yet God has found fault with me; he considers me his enemy. He fastens my feet in shackles; he keeps close watch on all my paths.’ “But I tell you, in this you are not right, for God is greater than any mortal.

## Job 34:12-17

It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice. Who appointed him over the earth? Who put him in charge of the whole world? If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all humanity would perish together and mankind would return to the dust. "If you have understanding, hear this; listen to what I say. Can someone who hates justice govern? Will you condemn the just and mighty One?"



# Job 40:8

Would you discredit my justice?  
Would you condemn me to  
justify yourself?

# Job 10:13

But this is what you concealed  
in your heart, and I know that  
this was in your mind:



John  
Walton

*Job, NIV Application  
Commentary*

No one can “out-God” God. This is one of Elihu’s strongest and most important points. Its message should ring in our souls. One of the most persistent human errors is the belief that God is not doing a very good job, which implies that given the chance, we could do it better. This is precisely the mentality evident in Job’s responses throughout the book, and this is what Elihu attacks most vigorously.



John  
Walton

*Job, NIV Application  
Commentary*

When the world doesn't work the way that we think it should, we are inclined to manufacture solutions in our minds that will address either our situation or the situation that concerns us (famine in Africa, child prostitution in the Far East, oppressive tyranny in this country or that). We are inclined to make it seem like a simple fix. We are rarely able to imagine the complications or collateral damage—a problem portrayed in modern application by the movie *Bruce Almighty*.

# Bruce **ALMIGHTY**







## Job 34:29-30

But if he remains silent, who can condemn him? If he hides his face, who can see him? Yet he is over individual and nation alike, to keep the godless from ruling, from laying snares for the people.



## Luke 12:24-28

Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

## Luke 12:24-28

“Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

## Job 35:9-11

“People cry out under a load of oppression; they plead for relief from the arm of the powerful. But no one says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, who teaches us more than he teaches the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds in the sky?’