

Week 2:

Job:

Testing the Theory

A Review

- **Job craved the praise of man.** Job 29



Job said he had
done nothing
wrong. He made
at least **two dozen**
claims of ways in
which he was
righteousness



Job said he
counseled the
widows *since*
he was born . . .

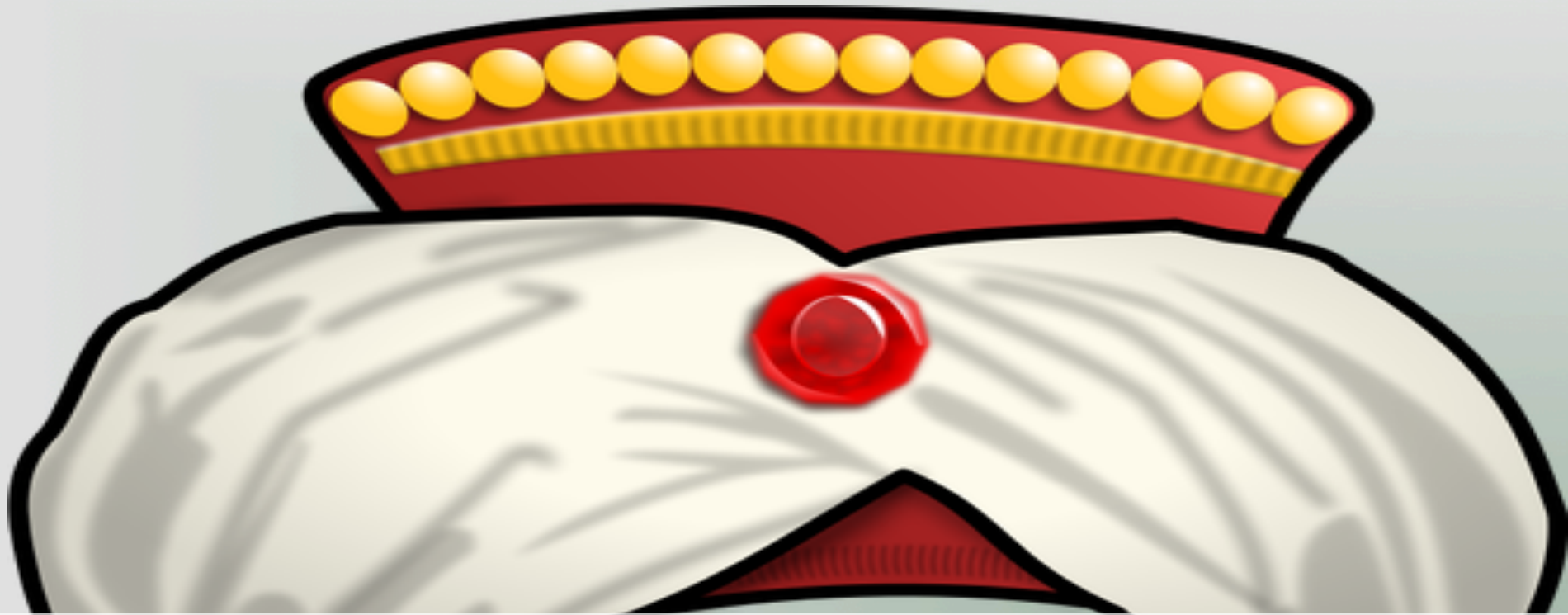
Job 31:18





Job said he reared
the fatherless from
his youth.

Job 31:18



**“I put on righteousness as my clothing;
justice was my robe and my turban.”** Job 29:14.

Pop Quiz

**What populations did Job claim
to have helped?**



1. The Fatherless
2. Orphans
3. Widows
4. Hungry
5. Strangers
6. Lame
7. Blind
8. Travelers
9. Servants
10. Family
11. All of the above

We also learned that . . .

**Not one person agreed with his
self-assessment.**

We also learned that . . .

- The townspeople—the very people he claimed to have helped—ridiculed and abandoned him.
- His servants—the very people he claimed to have helped—abandoned him.
- His family—the very people he claimed to have helped—abandoned him.

We looked at 14
investigative tools
that can be useful in
Biblical exegesis.



Investigative Tools

1. Run a Movie in the Mind
2. Apply Logic
3. Document the Obvious
4. Assess Character and Motive
5. Identify the Standard
6. Listen for Throwaway Lines
7. Pay Attention to Mythical Third Parties
8. Set Aside the Metaview
9. Set Aside Preconceptions
10. Understand Delusion
11. Identify Types of Evidence
12. Understand Projection
13. Examine Level of Specificity
14. Test the Theory

Discussion Question

When confused about
Biblical truth,
what is your primary source of
interpretation?

The First Source for Finding Truth . . .

“I keep asking that the God of
our Lord Jesus Christ,
the glorious Father,
may give you the
Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation,
so that you may
know Him better.”

Ephesians 1:17

Job's Relationships

A Deeper Dive

Job's Family

Job's Wife

- Urged him to curse God
- Urged him to die
- Willing to see her husband face eternal consequences for blasphemy
- Found Job's breath offensive

Discussion Question

Even amidst deep depression,
why would Job's wife
urge him to die? What does that say
about their relationship?

Job's Wife

“Here is the fate God allots to the wicked . . . and their widows will not weep for them.”

Job 27:13, 15

Job's Children (First Set)

- No indication they participated in his charitable operations.



They partied heartily.

Job's Children

When they partied, Job made sacrifices on their behalf.

“This was Job’s regular custom.”

Job 1:5

Job's Children (First Set)

- Were on the verge of cursing God – why else would Job pray that they wouldn't curse God in their hearts?

Praying regularly that a children doesn't curse God in his heart is like praying that your child doesn't rob a bank. You wouldn't pray that way UNLESS your child had a proclivity for robbing banks.



Bildad to Job

“When your children sinned against Him, He gave them over to the penalty of their sin.”

Job 8:4



Two Choices

1. Bildad was cruel—even sociopathic—and making up things that weren't true.

OR

2. His statement about Job's children was grounded in truth.

Insight into Bildad's *Character*

In humility, Bildad said,
“For we were born only
yesterday and know nothing.”

Job 8:9

Insight into Bildad's Motives

“But if you will seek God earnestly and plead with the Almighty, if you are pure and upright, even now he will rouse himself on your behalf and restore you to your prosperous state.”

Job 8:5-6

Job's Children

Job made sacrifices on their behalf—His was a ceremonial response.

“Who wants your sacrifices when you have no sorrow for your sins?”

Isaiah 1:12-13 (TLB)

Job's Children

There is no evidence that Job attempted to intervene or discipline his children, even though they likely benefited from his wealth, giving him authority over them.

Job's Children

“Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them.”

Proverbs 13:24

Job's Children (First Set)

- Never mentions them by name after they died.
- Makes two passing references to them.
- Instead, loss of reputation and God's injustice dominate his grieving.

Job's Children

Job states about those without hope . . .

“If their children are honored, they do not know it; if their offspring are brought low, they do not see it. They feel but the pain of their own bodies and *mourn only for themselves.*”

Job 14:21-22

Job's Other Relatives

- Job claimed to share his meat with his relatives. (Job 31:31)
- But Eliphaz said Job wrongly took security from them.
- His relatives abandoned Job in his greatest time of need.
- They re-united with Job months after the tragedies, but only after he repented. (Job 42:11)

Chief Men and Countrymen

Chief Men and Countrymen

“Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me”



Apply Logic

Is it logical to think that the leader of a great land would be universally commended?

Hint: A Throwaway Line

Job, about the Wicked . . .

“No one criticizes them
openly”

Job 21:31 (NLT)

Apply Logic

Under what circumstances might a leader *believe himself* to be universally commended?

What is a Sycophant?

A person who tries to win favor from wealthy or influential people by flattering them.



From T.V. Series “Silicon Valley”

**What key attribute
does a leader who
surrounds himself
with sycophants
demand?**

Answer:

Extreme Loyalty

Job to Friends: **Extreme Loyalty**

“A despairing man should receive loyalty from his friends, even if he abandons the fear of the Almighty”

Job 6:14-15 (CSB)

“Will you speak wickedly on God’s behalf? Will you speak deceitfully for Him? Will you show Him partiality? Will you argue the case for God?”

Job 13:7-8

Elihu *(the man not reprimanded by God)*

“Oh, that Job might be tested to the utmost for answering like a wicked man!”

Job 34:36

What happens
to sycophants
when they can
no longer gain
advantage?

Answer:
They abandon
their leader.

Job's Servants

Job's Servants

- Job claimed to be benevolent to them.
- In delivering news of destruction, the servants' deaths were mentioned *after* the loss of his herds.
- Servants—at least some of them—presumably worked with Job closely in his home for years.
- Nevertheless, they universally abandoned him in his greatest time of need.

Boys Among the Rocks

Boys Among the Rocks

- Starving
- Homeless: Lived in the broom bush
- Weak
- Despised Job
- Mocked Job
- Job despised them
- Shouted at as if they were thieves



Boys Among the Rocks

“But now they mock me, men younger than I, whose fathers I would have disdained to put with my sheep dogs.”

Job, of the boys among the rocks

Job 30:1

Boys Among the Rocks

“Of what use was the strength of their hands to me, since their vigor had gone from them?”

Job 30:2

Discussion Question

- Why do you think Job was evaluating the strength of these boys?
- Is this consistent with the character of a man who feeds all the hungry?

Job's Friends

Directly or indirectly, Job's friends accused him of unethical business practices, taking advantage of the vulnerable, and taking bribes.

Eliphaz to Job

“You demanded security from
your relatives for no reason.”

Job 22:6

Eliphaz to Job

“You stripped people of their clothing, leaving them naked.”

Job 22:6

Eliphaz to Job

“You gave no water to the weary and you withheld food from the hungry, though you were a powerful man, owning land — an honored man, living on it.”

Job 22:7-8

Eliphaz to Job

And you sent widows away empty-handed and broke the strength of the fatherless.”

Job 22:9

Elihu to Job

“But now you are laden with the judgment due the wicked; judgment and justice have taken hold of you. Be careful that no one entices you by riches; do not let a large bribe turn you aside

Elihu to Job

... Do not long for the night,
*to drag people away from their
homes.”* Job 36:17-20

Elihu

Why would Elihu warn Job against taking bribes or dragging people away from their homes in the middle of the night unless Job was prone to do so?

*Testing the
Traditional Interpretation*

So who was right?

Testing the Theory

1. God angrily accused Job of talking with “words without knowledge” and commended him only *after* he repented.

Job 38:2

Testing the Theory

2. Job repented and humbled himself.

“I take back everything I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.”

Job 42:6 (NLT)



Testing the Theory

3. The reprimand issued to the friends by the Lord was for speaking wrongly about God, not Job.

Right after Job Repented

“After the Lord had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth *about me*, as my servant Job has.”

Job 42:7

Testing the Theory

4. Elihu wholeheartedly agreed with the others' character assessment, but God did not rebuke him.

Testing the Theory



5. Not one person agreed with Job's character assessment and four witnesses agreed in challenging it.

Testing the Theory

6. The friends' allegations were not cloaked in caveats or generalized speculation. All four charged him with the same specific sins.

Testing the Theory

7. There is no evidence that Job's friends possessed such evil character or that they had a motive to lie. They spent weeks away from their homes and they wished for him to be restored.

Eliphaz

“Submit to God and be at peace with him;
in this way prosperity will come to you.
Accept instruction from his mouth and lay
up his words in your heart. If you return to
the Almighty, you will be restored . . .”

Job 22:21-23

Meaning of
name “Eliphaz”

Pure Gold



Testing the Theory

7. If Job's four friends were evil-hearted, so was every other person in his life. The others either abandoned him or mocked him.

Discussion Question

After last week's discussion,
did anyone read part or all of the book of Job?

Does the re-interpretation ring true to you?
Why or Why Not?