



The Gospel According to Job

December 14: Themes and Theodicy

A Bible Study at St. John Lutheran Church

"It was a dark and stormy night..." – Snoopy

What do you want your friends to do for you when you are suffering?

What is a theodicy?

"Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Then whence cometh evil? Is he neither able nor willing? Then why call him God?" – *Epicurus 4th Century BC Greek Philosopher*

Why do we so easily turn on God when we suffer?

Does God know the future?

Isaiah 46:9-10 I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'

How would you answer Epicurus?

What do you know about the book of Job?

Big Questions in Job:

1. Why do the righteous serve God?
2. Is God just?
3. Does God run the universe on the strict principle of justice?
4. How is Job's suffering to be explained?

How does general Ancient Near East wisdom account for suffering?

When discussing the difficulties of life, what are the right questions?

Outline of Job:

Prologue: Job 1-2

Job's Crisis and Debate: Job 3-27

Celebration of Divine Wisdom: Job 28

Towards a Solution: Job 29-42

What kind of literature is Job?

Prose (1:1-2:13)

Poetry (3:1-42:6)

Prose (42:7-17)

What other books fall into this category?

Job 1:1

Who is Job?

Where does he come from?

Job 2:11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him.

Based on this information, can we propose a date for this book?

Job 42:16 And after this Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations.

How is Job described?

Genesis 6:9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.

What is the value of character and virtue when we suffer?