

Why is Job so difficult? Because the book has two different, distinctive parts, and how you believe that they relate to each other determines how you read the book.

Theodicy is the philosophy of dealing with the issue of evil in light of the existence of God. It answers the question: If God is just and holy and good, then how do evil and suffering exist?

Problems in the old story:

a) The character of Job is an archetype.

b) The representation of God is problematic.

c) The reaction of Job to his calamities is too stoic.

The purpose of the critique in Job: To affirm the general wisdom of the old story while confronting the problems in the old story.

How does the critique answer the problems in the old story of Job:

a) The archetype of Job in the old story, who dares not question God, is exposed by the character of Job in the critique who continually questions the actions of God.

b) The God pictured in the old story who has to answer to the accuser is countered by a truer picture of God who answers to no one.

c) The stoic Job is replaced by a Job that is much more human.

What does all of this mean for you and I today as we begin our journey into this book?

1) When we are suffering, we are to be like the Job in the middle of the story: honest, raw, willing to grieve loudly and be angry with God.

2) We should reject our tendency to have simple answers in the face of suffering, for our simple answers about suffering dangerously paint a wrong picture of God.

3) Faith in God is not about perfect knowledge, rather it is about mature trust.