Job

1. *Introduction*:

Job is classified as a wisdom book because it deals with a profound issue. This book explores the issue of why good people suffer. *Wisdom* is the ability to observe life from the divine point of view. *Understanding* is the ability to react to life’s situations as God intends. The way we respond to our trials is directly based on our wisdom and understanding.

2. *Background*:

The author of the Book of Job is unknown. Ancient Jewish and Christian tradition assigns the book to Moses. The book is a the poetic, dramatic presentation of the problem of suffering faced by a real person under real circumstances. Its form as Hebrew poetry, it’s dramatic arrangement, and the depth of the problem it faces, all combine to place Job as much more than light reading. It requires thought, but the reward is worth it. Job probably lived sometime between the tower of Babel episode and the death of Abraham.

3. *Purpose*:

The immediate purpose of the book is to provide consolation to God’s people when they experience suffering in life. The ultimate purpose of the book is to show that there is a benevolent divine purpose running through the suffering of the godly; and that life’s bitterest problems could be reconciled with this benevolent divine purpose if we knew all the facts.

4. *Brief Outline*:

Chapter 1-2 Introduction to characters and Job’s affliction

3-31 The body of the drama in poetic form

32-37 Elihu concludes the friends’ arguments.

38-41 God speaks

42 Job humbles himself in worship and is restored

5. *Of Special Interest*:

--Job may be the oldest book in the Bible.

--Job 38-42 gives the most intensive survey of creation in the Bible.

--The expression *Job’s comforter* is used for a person who depresses or discourages someone while trying to help another person.

--Job depicts the earth suspended in empty space (26:7). He also implies that the earth is a sphere (42:14).

6. *January Reading Guide*

Week of Dec 26-Jan 1 Job 1-9

Week of Jan 2-8 Job 10-18

Week of Jan 9-15 Job 19-26

Week of Job 16-22 Job 27-34

Week of Job 23-29 Job 35-42