

OT647: Job (English Text)

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## Essay 6

### **What did you learn that will be beneficial for ministry?**

This week's reading in Job marked a key transition. The book shifted from the question "Is Job's righteousness disinterested?" to "Can there be coherence when righteous people suffer" (Walton, 294). Chapter 28 serves as the bridge, with a poetic exposition on wisdom. Then in chapters 29-31, we get more of Job's perspective as he attempts to reconcile his current circumstances with his beliefs about who God is. Regarding Job's analysis, Walton makes a profound connection, "Job mirrors the behavior of many Christians today, who make costly theological sacrifices in order to attain a measure of coherence in their world" (Walton, 333).

Walton is spot on. There is a temptation for believers, and especially those who are involved in teaching ministry, to find theological coherence. God becomes a hostage to our traditions and theological frameworks. Or to phrase it more simply, we put God in a box. Job, as a character in this wisdom book, is exemplary for his *disinterested righteousness*. However, his critical mistake—as I understand it—is assuming he can play the judge for God.

Another phenomenal line by Walton, "The adjectives themselves find their definition in God" (Walton, 295). Any time we try to reduce God to theological platitudes, we risk over-defining the divine. For teachers in the church, Job presents great challenge. It is a strong reminder to proceed

with caution and humility in our work, and to allow for tension and mystery in our presentation of God.