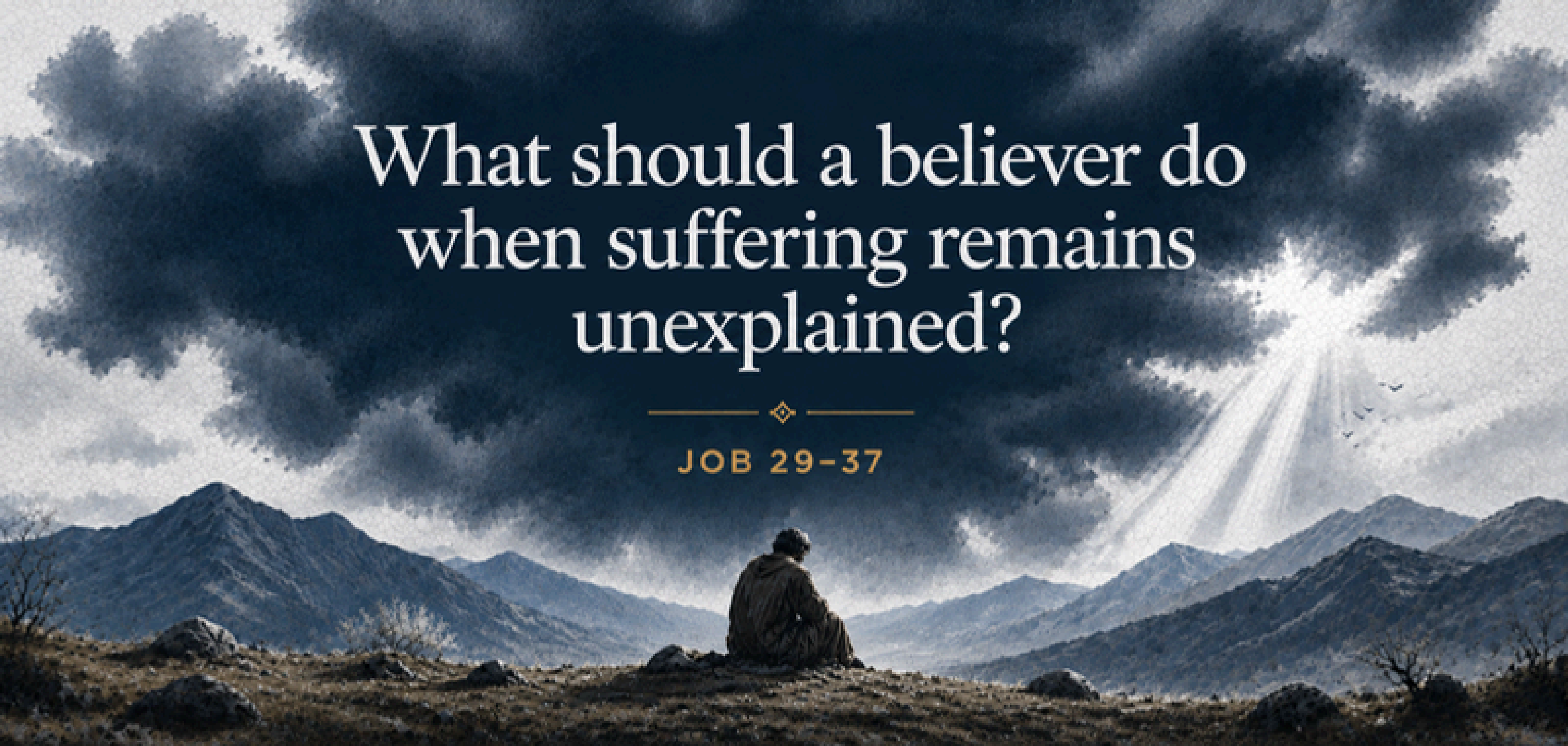


**THE BOOK OF
JOB**

SUFFERING & THE CHARACTER OF GOD



What should a believer do
when suffering remains
unexplained?

— ◆ —
JOB 29-37

When Suffering Remains Unexplained



JOSEPH IN PRISON

- Joseph was sold by his brothers, falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, and forgotten in prison.
- For years, he had no explanation for why God allowed these events.
- Only much later could he say: *"You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good"* (Genesis 50:20).
- While Joseph eventually received an explanation, he spent years suffering without one.



HANNAH'S INFERTILITY

- Hannah endured years of infertility and public humiliation.
- Scripture never tells us why God closed her womb for so long.
- Hannah prayed many times: *"Let your servant find favor in your eyes."* (1 Samuel 1:18)



JOHN THE BAPTIST EXECUTED

- John faithfully prepared the way for Jesus.
- Then he was arrested and eventually executed.
- While sitting in prison, he sent messengers to ask Jesus: *"Are you the one who is to come?"* (Matthew 11:3)
- Even John struggled to understand God's plan.

THE THREE FRIENDS OF

JOB



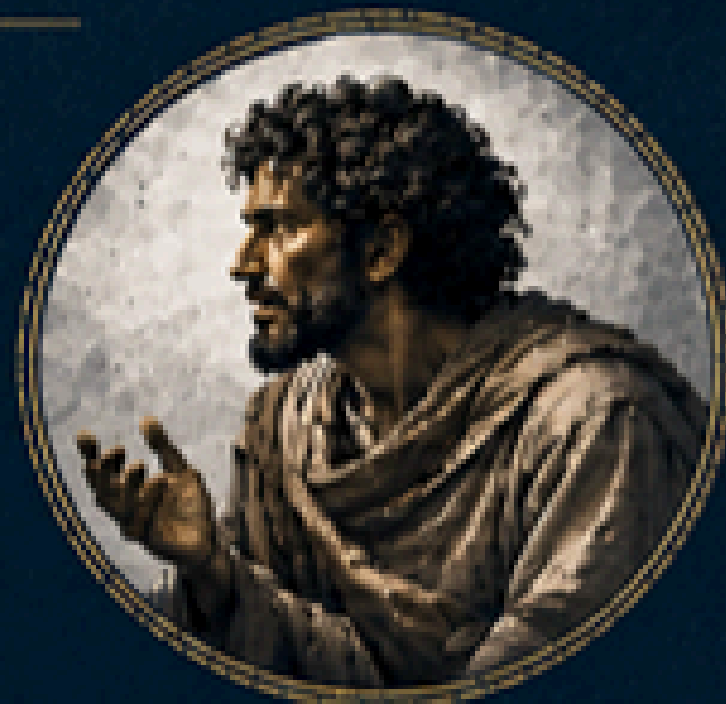
ELIPHAZ

— THE TEMANITE —



BILDAD


— THE SHUHITE —



ZOPHAR

— THE NAAMATHITE —





Unexplained suffering
tempts us to trust our own
assessment of reality.

— ◆ —
JOB 29-31

JOB'S THREE CONCLUSIONS

JOB REMEMBERS THE PAST

(JOB 29)



GOD'S FAVOR



HIS INFLUENCE



HIS USEFULNESS



HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS

JOB EVALUATES THE PRESENT

(JOB 30)



BODY BROKEN



REPUTATION SHATTERED



FUTURE HOPELESS

JOB DEFENDS HIS INTEGRITY

(JOB 31)



“I have not done
anything deserving
this suffering.”



JOB IS RIGHT ABOUT HIS INNOCENCE, *BUT WRONG ABOUT ALL THE POSSIBLE REASONS FOR SUFFERING.*

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. ² **Then Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, burned with anger.** He burned with anger at Job because he justified himself rather than God. ³ He burned with anger also at Job's three friends because they had found no answer, although they had declared Job to be in the wrong. ⁴ Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were older than he. ⁵ And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, he burned with anger.

JOB 32:1-5

ELIHU

◆ THE BRIDGE BETWEEN JOB AND GOD ◆

JOB

DEMANDING AN
EXPLANATION

ELIHU

CORRECTING
BOTH SIDES

GOD

ABOUT TO
SPEAK



Elihu shifts the focus from
“What did Job do wrong?”
to
*“Can God be trusted when
His purposes are hidden?”*



1. JOB
SUFFERS



2. JOB &
FRIENDS
DEBATE



3. ELIHU
SPEAKS
(32–37)



4. GOD
SPEAKS
(38–41)



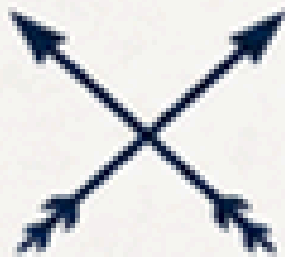
5. JOB
REPENTS &
IS RESTORED
(42)

³⁴ Men of understanding will say to me,
and the wise man who hears me will say:
³⁵ ‘Job speaks without knowledge;
his words are without insight.’
³⁶ Would that Job were tried to the end,
because he answers like wicked men.
³⁷ **For he adds rebellion to his sin;**
he claps his hands among us
and multiplies his words against God.”

JOB 34:34-37

THE JOURNEY OF JOB

1



Job rejected the friends' conclusions.

2



Yet he began moving toward another error.

3



He increasingly questioned God's fairness.

4



Job has started demanding that God justify Himself.

5



Elihu reminds Job that finite people are not qualified to sit in judgment over an infinite God.



“Elihu does not solve Job’s suffering.

He reorients Job’s perspective. He reminds Job that God may be speaking through suffering, that God owes no explanation to man, and that the deepest need of the sufferer is ultimately an encounter with God Himself.”



DAVID J. ATKINSON



LIVE

THE

TEXT

APPLYING JOB TO THE GOSPEL



Jesus Christ experienced
REJECTION,
injustice, and death.



He was treated
UNJUSTLY
by the world.



At the cross,
GOD'S PURPOSES
seemed hidden.



At the resurrection,
GOD'S WISDOM
became clear.

At the cross, God's purposes seemed hidden.
At the resurrection, God's wisdom became clear.

HOW SHOULD BELIEVERS RESPOND WHEN SUFFERING REMAINS UNEXPLAINED?



1

BRING YOUR
QUESTIONS TO GOD



2

REFUSE TO FILL
IN THE BLANKS



3

ANCHOR YOURSELF TO
GOD'S CHARACTER



4

STAY CONNECTED TO
GOD'S PEOPLE



5

REMAIN FAITHFUL
WHILE YOU WAIT



6

LOOK TO CHRIST