

A STUDY OF JOB

INTRODUCTION

JOB IN THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Job is the first of five books commonly referred to as "The Books Of Poetry." Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. (Called such because they are written in poetic style in contrast to the narrative style of most other books, they are also often referred to as "Wisdom Literature" (especially Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes). Oswald Chambers (1874-1917) offered this concise summary of the five books:
- **Job - How to suffer**
- **Psalms - How to pray**
- **Proverbs - How to act**
- **Ecclesiastes - How to enjoy**
- **Song of Solomon - How to love**

Suffering may be physical, or it may be mental.

1. Its source may be that of nature, that greatly helps humanity, and then indiscriminately inflicts inestimable suffering upon man.
2. Or, its source may be man himself as he wounds and hurts his fellow men.
3. Or, suffering may be self-inflicted, either willfully or in ignorance.

➤ The real question is not how to avoid it, but, "**How shall I meet it?**" and, "**What use shall I make of it?**" cf. Psalms 73

- "**Why did this happen to me?**"

- **Some say. "It is the Lord's will."**

- Woman whom Satan had bound.
Luke 13:16.

- Paul's thorn in the flesh was a messenger from Satan.
2 Corinthians 12:7-9

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Author: Don't know. The authorship has been attributed to many different men including Moses, Elihu, Elijah, Solomon (1000 BC), Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezra, Isaiah, and others.

Date: Don't know. Written possibly from the time of Moses to as late as 4th century BC, wide range.

Questions:

1. Is the book the product of one mind or is it of composite authorship?
2. Is it all one unit?
3. Are the speeches of Elihu a part of the original or added later?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Historical setting:

- Job was actually a historical character.
(Ezekiel 14:14; James 5:11)

- Inspired.

- Paul quotes from it on several occasions in his writings (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:19 with Job 5:13; and Romans 11:35 with Job 41:11).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**Historical setting:**

- Appears to be the Patriarchal period.
- No mention of the law, covenant, priesthood, or rituals of the Law of Moses. Yet, evidence Job is acquainted with sin. cf. Romans 1:19, 20; 2:12-16; 5:12-13, 19-20
- No mention of a covenant people. Job's friends and Elihu are all from outside Palestine. Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.
- No mention of the tabernacle, the temple, or the altar of Jerusalem.
- Some explain from this, that Job was a Gentile.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:****Historical setting:**

- Job's large flocks, herds, and great number of servants, wealth, etc. reminds us of the time of Abraham and the patriarchs. (1:3)
- The Chaldeans and the Sabeans are represented as raiders, plunderers, looters, robbers, bandits. Both of these became strong nations later.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**Historical setting:**

- Job offered sacrifices for his children (1:5), serving the priestly function as in the patriarchal age. Job later offered sacrifices for his friends and prayed for them (42:8).
 - Job repudiates the worship of either the sun or the moon (31:26-27), a practice that was common in the time of Abraham. Deuteronomy 4:19 and 17:2-5 specifically forbid the worship of the sun.
 - A unit of money (*kesitah*) of unknown value, mentioned in 42:11, occurs only here and in Genesis 43:19ff; cf. Joshua 24:32.
 - The longevity corresponds to that of the patriarchs after the flood, when the length of life began declining drastically (cf. Genesis 4:1-22; 11:10-26, 32; 25:7).
- Note: Job lived 140 years more after the events of the book (42:16-17)**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**Where is the land of Uz? (1:1)**

- Somewhere NE of Palestine, near a desert (1:19), within raiding distance of the Chaldeans and Sabeans (1:15, 17), probably between the city of Damascus and the Euphrates River.
- Later it would fall under God's judgment (Jeremiah 25:20) and was home to some of the Edomites (Lamentations 4:21).
- Other locations proposed for Uz include more southern Arabia, especially Dhofar, said to be the home of the original Arabs; Bashan in modern-day southern Syria/western Jordan; Arabia east of Petra, Jordan; and even modern-day Uzbekistan.
- The name Uz is mentioned several times in the Bible.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Who was Job? Don't know. All we do know is revealed here, books of Ezekiel and James.

- A man described as "perfect and upright; and one that feared God, and turned away from evil" (1:1)
- Greatly blessed, "that this man was the greatest of all the children of the east" (1:3).
- Offered sacrifices for his children. "... rose up early in the morning and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all" (1:5).
- His goodness was habitual, "thus did Job continually" (1:5).
- "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and turneth away from evil" (1:8).

**THE ISSUE:
“DOTH JOB FEAR GOD FOR
NOUGHT?” JOB 1:9**

- First, Jehovah said to Satan, “Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thy hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah.” (Job 1:12)
- Secondly, Jehovah said to Satan, “Behold, he is in thy hand: only spare his life.” (verse 6)

**THE ISSUE:
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NOUGHT?” JOB 1:9**

- Satan allowed to act within certain limitations. Job 1:12; Job 42:10-11
- Instrumentality of men. Job 1:13-17
- Force of nature. Job 1:18-19
- Limited to Job's person. Job 2:6
- Job's body was struck with boils. Job 2:7-8
- Job's Wife. Job 2:9; 2:11ff
- Job's friends
 - Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad.
- Society rejected him. Job 17:6; 19:13-22
- Evil of disbelief and disloyalty. Job 2:11-13

**THE ISSUE:
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Questions:

- Why do the righteous suffer?
- Can God trust man to serve Him simply for the love of God?
- Can man trust God, when his suffering is inexpressible in its intensity, and unexplainable as to its cause?

PHILOSOPHY OF JOB'S FRIENDS

Eliphaz – first speech (Job 4).

1. Suffering is the result of sin.
2. Although apparently Job, you have been a good man, yet you suffer.
3. Therefore, since you suffer, you have sinned.

PHILOSOPHY OF JOB'S FRIENDS

Eliphaz – second speech (Job 15).

1. Only the wicked are cut off speedily.
2. You, Job, have been cut off speedily.
3. Therefore, you are a wicked man.

PHILOSOPHY OF JOB'S FRIENDS

Eliphaz – third speech of (Job 22).

- Charges Job with great wickedness, and appealing to him to confess his sin and return to God.
- There is much truth in what he says, but his premise and application are wrong.
- His premise is that all suffering is punitive, the result of the individual's sin.
- Therefore, his application is that Job suffers because of sin; therefore Job is a sinner.

PHILOSOPHY OF JOB'S FRIENDS

Bildad –

- First speech he accuses Job's children of sinning (Job 8:1-4).
- Second speech (Job 18) he depicts the awful lot of sinners.
- His premise and conclusions are the same as of Eliphaz:
 1. The lot of sinners is terrible.
 2. Your lot, Job, is terrible.
 3. Therefore, you must be a terrible sinner.

PHILOSOPHY OF JOB'S FRIENDS

Zophar – is the most direct, harsh, and blunt of all the friends. (Job 11)

- He charges that Job's suffering is not even so great as it should be: *"Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth"* (11:6b).
- His concession. (Job 20)
"the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless but for a moment?" (20:5)

THE CONTENTION AND PERPLEXITY OF JOB

Three points stand out most prominently:

1. Job always affirms his integrity: "I am innocent."
2. He is undergoing terrible suffering; suffering beyond all description.
3. He continues to go back to God as the cause.

THE CONTENTION AND PERPLEXITY OF JOB

Why should his suffering be so intense?

1. He blames God with being unmerciful to him, of being unduly and unjustly hard on him (chapter 6).
2. He then charges that there is no moral standard in the universe, that God makes no distinction between right and wrong (9:22-24).
3. All power belongs to God, but it appears as if God uses it to further the cause of the bad as well as the good (chapter 12). In this Job accuses God unjustly, and without knowing some of the things he later came to realize he did not know.