

Job

MEANING: Job has two possible meanings:

1. Hebrew: "The persecuted one."
2. Arabic: "Repentant one."

AUTHOR: The author is unknown and there are no textual hints as to his identity.

TIME WRITTEN: The time of Job was in the Patriarchal Age, perhaps between Genesis 11 and 12. Although several theories have been advanced about the time of its writing, we just simply do not know when it was written.

POSITION IN THE BIBLE:

- 18th Book in the Bible
- 18th book in the Old Testament
- 1st of 5 Poetical books
- 17 have preceded it. 48 to follow it.

CHAPTERS: 42

VERSES: 1070

WORDS: 10,102

KEY WORD: Sovereignty

TWO KEY PASSAGES:

1. **Job 13:15** - "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.
2. **Job 37:23-24** - for the Almighty, we cannot find Him; He is excellent in power, In judgment and abundant justice; He does not oppress.
Therefore men fear Him; He shows no partiality to any who are wise of heart."

KEY CHAPTER: Job 42

1. The last chapter of the book records the climax of the long and difficult struggle Job has with:
 - a. Himself.
 - b. His wife.
 - c. His friends.
 - d. And even his God.
2. Upon Job's full recognition of the utter majesty and sovereignty of the Lord, he repents and no longer demands an answer as to the "why" of his plight.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT JOB

1. Job is perhaps the earliest book of the Bible.
2. Set in the time of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph).
3. The book of Job tells the story of a man who loses everything
 - His wealth
 - His family
 - His health
 and wrestles with the question, WHY?
4. The land of Uz (1:1) is adjacent to Midian, where Moses lived for forty Years.
 - a. Lamentations 4:21 locates Uz in the area of Edom, southeast of the Dead Sea.
 - b. This is also in the region of northern Arabia.
 - c. Job's friends come from nearby countries.
5. A number of facts indicate a patriarchal date for Job.

- a. Job lived 140 years after the events of this book (42:16), his life span must have been close to 200 years.
 1. This fits the patriarchal period.
 2. Abraham lived 175 years (Genesis 25:7).
- b. Job's wealth is measured in terms of livestock (1:3; 42:12) rather than gold and silver.
- c. Like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Job is the priest of his family and offers sacrifices.
- d. There are no references to:
 1. Israel
 2. The exodus
 3. The Mosaic law
 4. The tabernacle
- e. Fitting Abraham's time, the social unit in Job is the patriarchal family clan.
- f. The Chaldeans who murder Job's servants (1:17) are nomads and have not yet become city-dwellers.
- g. Job uses the characteristic patriarchal name for God, "Shaddai" ("the Almighty").
 1. Shaddai is used 31 times on Job.
 2. Shaddai is used only 17 times in the rest of the Old Testament.
6. The basic question of the book is, "Why do the righteous suffer if God is loving and all-powerful?"
 - a. Suffering itself is not the central theme; rather, the focus is on what Job learns from his suffering—the sovereignty of God over creation.
 - b. The debate in chapters 3-37 regards whether God would allow the suffering to happen to a person who is innocent.
 - c. The oversimplified solutions offered by Job's three friends are simply inadequate.
 - d. Elihu's claim that God can use suffering to purify the righteous is closer to the mark.
 - e. The conclusion at the whirlwind is that God is sovereign and worthy of worship in whatever He chooses to do.
 - f. Job must learn to trust in the goodness and power of God in adversity by enlarging his concept of God.
 - g. Even this "blameless" man (1:1) needs to repent when he becomes proud and self-righteous.
7. Suffering is not always associated with sin. God can sovereignly use it to test or teach.

SUMMARY OF JOB

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The Book of Job concerns the transforming crisis in the life of a great man who lived perhaps four thousand years ago.
 1. Job's trust in God (1-2) changes to complaining and growing self-righteousness (3-31).
Two examples:
 - a. **Job 32:1** - "So these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes."
 - b. **Job 40:8** - God said: "Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?"
 2. His repentance leads to his restoration (42:7-17).
- B. The trials bring about an important transformation. The man after the process is different from the man before the process.

C. There are three major divisions in the book:

1. The Dilemma of Job. (1-2)
2. The Debates of Job. (3-27)
2. The Deliverance of Job. (38-42)

THE DILEMMA OF JOB. (1-2)

A. Job is not a logical candidate for disaster.

1. **Job 1:1** - "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil."
2. **Job 1:8** - "Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"
3. His moral integrity and his selfless service to God heighten the dilemma.

B. Satan ("Accuser") charges that no one loves God from pure motives, but only for material blessings.

Job 1:9-11 - "So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? "Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face

C. To refute Satan's accusations, God allows him to strike Job with two series of assaults.

D. In his sorrow Job laments the day of his birth but does not deny God. (1:21; 2:10)

THE DEBATES OF JOB. (3-7)

A. Although Job's "comforters" reach wrong conclusions, they are his friends.

1. They care enough to come to Job.
2. They are the only ones of Job's friends who do come.
3. They mourn with him for seven days of silent sympathy.
4. They comfort Job without talking behind his back.

B. After Job breaks the silent, a three-round debate ensues in which his friends say Job must be suffering because of his sin.

1. Job responses to their simplistic assumptions make the debate cycles increase in emotional fervor.
2. He first accuses his friends of judging him.
3. He later appeals to the Lord as his judge and refuge.

C. Job makes three basic complaints:

1. God does not hear me. (13:3, 24; 19:7; 23:3-5; 30:20)
2. God is punishing me. (6:4; 7:20; 9:17)
3. God allows the wicked to prosper. (21:7)

D. Job's defenses are much longer than his friend's accusations.

E. In the process of defending his innocence, he becomes guilty of self-righteousness.

F. After Job's five-chapter closing monologue (27-31), Elihu freshens the air with a more perceptive and accurate view than those offered by Eliphaz, Bildad, or Zophar (32-37). He tells Job that he needs to humble himself before God and submit to God's process of purifying his life through trials.

THE DELIVERANCE OF JOB. (38-42)

- A. After Elihu's preparatory discourse, God ends the debate by speaking to Job from the whirlwind.
 - 1. In His first speech, God reveals His power and wisdom as Creator and Preserver of the physical and animal world. **JOB'S RESPONSE:** Job responds by acknowledging his own ignorance and insignificance. He can offer no rebuttal. (40:3-5)
 - 2. In His second speech God reveals His sovereign authority and challenges Job with two illustrations of his power to control the uncontrollable.
JOB'S RESPONSE: This time Job responds by acknowledging his error with a repentant heart. 42:1-6)
- B. If Job cannot understand God's ways in the realm of nature, how can he understand God's ways in the spiritual realm?
- C. God makes no reference to Job's personal sufferings and hardly touches on the real issues of the debate.
- D. However, Job catches a glimpse of the divine perspective; and when he acknowledged God's sovereignty over his life, his worldly goods are restored twofold.
- E. Job prays for his three friends who have cut him so deeply, but Elihu's speech is never rebuked.
- F. Thus, Satan's challenge becomes God's opportunity to build up Job's life.
 - 1. **James 5:11** - "Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful."
 - 2. **James 5:12** - "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."