

Q. What key words do you associate with the story of Job?

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|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| WISDOM | WIFE | JUSTICE | BLAMELESS | UPRIGHT |
| RIGHTEOUS | INJUSTICE | COMFORTERS | ELIHU | STORM |
| JESUS | STEADFAST | ENDURE | PATIENCE | PERSEVERE |
| ELIPHAZ | BILDAD | ZOPHAR | MINING | SUFFERING |

1. AUTHOR & CONTEXT

Although he may have drawn upon Job's own record, we know that the eventual editor or author must have lived at least as late as Moses, because of the 31 uses of the LORD'S name Yahweh which was first revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:15.

Job himself seems to have been a Gentile patriarch living in the 2nd millennium BC, during the iron age¹ – see Job 19:24. Even the earliest



translators of Job seem to have struggled with the obscurity of some of its language, so it is usually thought to be one of the oldest Bible books. Job lived in Uz (Job 1:1), which may be the same place as later Edom.²

2. STRUCTURE

The book of Job itself is mainly poetry but is book-ended with prose narrative.

CHAPTERS	TYPE	SUMMARY
1-2	Narrative prose	Job introduced; Satan & God afflict him; Job is wise.
3-27	Poetic lament & debate	Job argues with his three 'comforters' (16:2).
28	Poetic	On wisdom
29-37	Poetic monologues	Job & Elihu opine.
38:1-42:6	Poetic discourse	Job and God speak.
42:7-16	Narrative prose	Job restored; comforters forgiven.

¹ Taking the iron age in the ancient near East to be from 1200 BC to 330 BC.

² See Lamentations 4:21.

3. MULTIPLE RELATED THEMES – ***‘PERSEVERING AND SUFFERING WISELY’***

Taking the wisdom books to be Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon, it tells us how to suffer wisely. Other major themes include:

- God’s justice & righteousness.
- Job’s suffering despite being blameless and upright.
- The folly of the comforters and to some extent Job.
- Job’s wise suffering & perseverance.

4. KEY VERSE

Job 28:28 And he [God, v23] said to man[kind], ‘Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.’ ESV

5. KEY GROUPS OF PEOPLE

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. The LORD God | 4. Elihu |
| 2. Job, his wife & family | 5. Satan & the angels (<i>sons of God</i> 1:6 ESV) |
| 3. The three comforters | |

6. GREAT EVENTS

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Satan & God afflict Job. | 4. Elihu clarifies matters. |
| 2. Job keeps trusting & fearing the LORD. | 5. God gives his verdict. |
| 3. The comforters ‘comfort’ Job. | 6. Job is restored & vindicated(?) |

7. JOB IN PRACTICE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

Job 1:8 And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man³, who fears God and turns away from evil?”

Job 1:22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Job 2:3 And 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, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.” ESV

Q1. How righteous is Job (texts above)?

Q2. How much did Job know about what was going on in heaven?

³ NB how this statement appears to be exegetical, i.e. *blameless and upright* is explained by what follows, *fears God and turns away from evil*.

Q3. What connection was there between Job's sin and his suffering (2:3)?

Job 1:21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Job 13:15 Though he slay me, I will hope in him.

Q4. What profound wisdom does Job teach us?

*Job 19:25-27 For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and at the last he will stand upon the earth.*

²⁶ *And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
yet in my flesh I shall see God,*

²⁷ *whom I shall see for myself,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.*

My heart faints within me! ESV

Q5. Why might the Sadducees not like Job? (Mark 12:18)

Job 3:25 What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me. NIV

Job 32:2 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. ESV

Job 40:8 Will you even put me in the wrong?

Will you condemn me that you may be in the right? ESV

*Job 42:5-6 My ears had heard of you
but now my eyes have seen you.*

⁶ *Therefore I despise myself
and repent in dust and ashes." NIV*

Q6. Was Job sinless?

1 Corinthians 3:18-19 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness", ... ESV ⁴

Q7. Can we just ignore everything that the three comforters said? ⁵

⁴ Quoting Eliphaz in Job 5:13.

⁵ What they say is in in a class of wisdom sometimes known as 'observational wisdom' in contrast with 'instructional wisdom'. See p151 of *Biblical Types and Images*, <https://covenantbooksuk.org.uk>

James 5:7-11 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰ Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance [ὑπομονή (hupomonē)] and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.
NIV

Q. How does James, the Lord's brother, apply Job?

Job 42:7-9 After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. ⁸ Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." ⁹ So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the LORD had told them, and the LORD accepted Job's prayer. ESV

Q. Where is Jesus in Job? In what ways is Job similar to Jesus? Think about:

- a) how he is described,
- b) about Satan and
- c) about how he helps the comforters in Job 42.

8. HOMEWORK

Read and greatly enjoy Job :). Turn it into a stage play and perform it.

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