



Job



THRUthe**BIBLE**

NOTES & OUTLINES WITH

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POETRY



Job

Poetical Books

Job is the first of the poetical books, which also include Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations. The reference is to the *form* of the content and does not imply imaginative or capricious content. Neither does the term “poetical” mean that it is rhythmic. Hebrew poetry is achieved by repeating an idea, a technique called parallelism. The dialogue in the book of Job is poetry because conversation was in poetry in that day. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer are examples in secular literature.

WRITER: Unknown. The following have been suggested: Moses, Ezra, Solomon, Job and Elihu. That Elihu is the writer seems most likely (32:16).

DATE: Unknown. Evidently it was written during the patriarchal period. Did Job know Jacob? It is possible. It was written before Exodus, it would seem, as there is no reference to the Mosaic Law nor to any of the events recorded in the book of Exodus. Here are the arguments which seem to place Job with the patriarchs:

1 - Length of Job's life span (42:16)

2 - Job acted as high priest in his family

3 - Eliphaz the Temanite was descended from Esau's eldest son (Genesis 36:10, 11)

PURPOSE: Many problems are raised and settled in this book.

1 - To determine why the righteous suffer. (This is not the primary teaching.)

2 - To refute the slander of Satan.

3 - To reveal Job to himself.

4 - To teach patience. Was Job patient?

5 - *Primary purpose: To teach repentance.*

God selected the best man who ever lived (Christ is the exception) and showed that he needed to repent. In contrast, we usually choose the worst man who repents as an illustration. Manasseh, a most ungodly king, repented; Saul of Tarsus repented; St. Francis of Assisi, a debauched nobleman, repented; and Jerry MacAuley, a drunken bum, repented. God chose the best man and showed that he repented—"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6).

ESTIMATION: Tennyson said of the book of Job, "The greatest poem, whether of ancient or modern literature." Carlyle said, "I call [Job] one of the grandest ever written with pen." Luther said, "More magnificent and sublime than any other book of Scripture." Moorehead said, "The book of Job is one of the noblest poems in existence."

OUTLINE:

I. **DRAMA**, Chapters 1, 2

(Prose)

A. **Scene I**, Chapter 1:1-5

Land of Uz; Job's prosperity and serenity

B. **Scene II**, Chapter 1:6-12

Heaven; Satan's slander of God and Job

C. **Scene III**, Chapter 1:13-22

Land of Uz; Job's loss of children and wealth

D. **Scene IV**, Chapter 2:1-6

Heaven; God and Satan

E. **Scene V**, Chapter 2:7-10

Land of Uz; Job's loss of health and wife's sympathy

II. **DIALOGUE**, Chapters 2:11–42:6

(Poetry)

A. **Scene VI**, Chapters 2:11–37:24

City Dump

1. Job's loss of understanding of friends, 2:11-13

2. Job vs. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, 3:1–32:1

3. Job vs. Elihu, 32:2–37:24

B. **Scene VII**, Chapters 38:1–42:6

Jehovah vs. Job

III. **EPILOGUE**, Chapter 42:7-17

(Prose)

Scene VIII

Land of Uz; Job's blessings doubled

COMMENT: The prose section of the book of Job is a gigantic, sweeping drama that encompasses earth and heaven. This does not mean it is fiction. Job is treated as a historical character in the Scriptures (see Ezekiel 14:14, 20; James 5:11). Paul quotes from the book of Job (1 Corinthians 3:19; cf. Job 5:13). Many writers have used Job as the basis for their plots, including H. G. Wells and more recently Archibald MacLeish in his Broadway hit, *J.B.* Job's problem is a universal one. Thomas Carlyle called the book of Job "all men's book."

The poetry section of the book of Job is a contest in dialogue between Job and his three friends. Later in the book, Bildad challenges Job. A brilliant dialogue in that day was what a baseball game or any other athletic event is in our day.

I. **DRAMA**, Chapters 1, 2

(Prose)

A. **Scene I**, Chapter 1:1-5

Land of Uz; Job's prosperity and serenity

The land of Uz was somewhere in the Middle East, but beyond that there is nothing specific. Josephus gives us a glimmer of light on the location of Uz. According to Genesis 22:21 the firstborn of Nahor, Abraham's brother, was Uz. He is the founder of the ancient city of Damascus. Job lived somewhere in the Syrian desert, where later the Lord sent Paul for post-graduate studies (see Galatians 1:17).

V. 1—"Perfect" in the sense that he had offered sacrifices for his sons (see v. 5). "Feared God" means that he has a high and holy concept of God and as a result he hates evil.

W. 3, 4—He is a wealthy man, and his ten children live in the ease and luxury of the rich.

V. 5—Job's one concern is for his children.

B. **Scene II**, Chapter 1:6-12

Heaven; Satan's slander of God and Job

W. 6, 7—God's created intelligences report to God as a matter of regular routine. They are responsible creatures. The shocking fact is that Satan has access to heaven. Even *he* has to report. He reports that he had been up and down the earth, which is his domain (see 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 2:13-17; Matthew 4:8, 9). He has never been in hell (Revelation 20:10).

V. 8—Satan obviously had been trying to get at Job, but he found there was a hedge about him. Satan cannot touch God’s man without God’s permission.

V. 9-11—Slandering both God and Job, Satan infers that God is not worthy to be served and loved for Himself alone but that He has to pay Job to love Him. Satan suggests that Job is a time server.

V. 12—God grants Satan permission to get at Job’s possessions, including his children.

C. Scene III, Chapter 1:13-22

Land of Uz; Job’s loss of children and wealth

Job is stripped of all his earthly possessions, including his ten children.

W. 20-22—Job’s reaction to his tragic circumstances reveals that though his faith is shaken, it is not destroyed. Job is no time server.

D. Scene IV, Chapter 2:1-6

Heaven; God and Satan

Created intelligences make their regular report again. Satan has to admit that he has not destroyed the integrity of Job, and he asks for permission to touch his body. He is confident that Job will then curse God to His face. God gives Satan permission to touch his body, with the provision that he may not take his life.

E. Scene V, Chapter 2:7-10

Land of Uz; Job’s loss of health and wife’s sympathy

Satan smites Job with a frightful disease. Job’s wife suggests that he curse God and commit suicide—which is the reason Satan did not take Job’s wife! Job still maintains his integrity.

II. DIALOGUE, Chapters 2:11—42:6

(Poetry)

A. Scene VI, Chapters 2:11—37:24

City Dump

1. Job’s loss of understanding of friends, 2:11-13

Three friends of Job come to visit and comfort him: Eliphaz, a Temanite. Teman was a grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:10, 11). Bildad, a Shuhite. Shuah was a son of Abraham (Genesis 25:2). Zophar, a Naamathite. Naamah was in northern Arabia.

For seven days they mourn with Job without saying a word. They are real friends, but they are in no position to comfort Job because:

- 1 - They do not understand God
- 2 - They do not understand Job
- 3 - They do not understand themselves

They merely shake their heads in a knowing manner during the seven days of mourning.

2. Job vs. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, 3:1—32:1

There are three rounds of speeches:

- 1 - By Job, then Eliphaz, and Job answers him
- 2 - By Bildad, and Job answers him
- 3 - By Zophar, and Job answers him

This is repeated three times with one exception—Zophar does not give a third speech. The dialogue is in the nature of a contest. Under the critical and accusing eyes of his friends, Job finally explodes with his tale of woe and a wish that he had never been born.

	Chapter		Chapter
FIRST ROUND	Job	3	
	Eliphaz, 1 st Discourse	4, 5	6, 7
	Bildad, 1 st Discourse	8	9, 10
	Zophar, 1 st Discourse	11	12-14

	Chapter		Chapter
SECOND ROUND	Eliphaz, 2 nd Discourse	15	16, 17
	Bildad, 2 nd Discourse	18	19
	Zophar, 2 nd Discourse	20	21

	Chapter		Chapter
THIRD ROUND	Eliphaz, 3 rd Discourse	22	23, 24
	Bildad, 3 rd Discourse	25	26-31

FIRST ROUND

CHAPTER 3—Job wishes that he had never been born or that he had died at birth. Job’s tranquility in his days of prosperity were disturbed by the uncertainty of life. He had dreaded the very thing that happened to him (v. 25).

CHAPTERS 4, 5—Eliphaz’s first discourse. He is the voice of experience. He suspects that there is secret sin in Job’s life (4:8). He recounts a terrifying and hair-raising vision (4:12-16). The self-evident truth he received from the vision does not seem worthwhile for all the terror he endured (4:17). He gives some gems of wisdom as all the others do (5:6, 7). He charges that Job is being corrected for some awful secret sin and he should not complain (5:17-22).

CHAPTERS 6, 7—Job’s answer. His condition is much worse than his friends realize and he wishes God would destroy him, not correct him (6: 9). He expected pity and comfort from his friends (6:14). He looked for help when he saw them coming, but it was only a mirage on the desert (6:15). Eliphaz misses the entire problem (6:25). Job is willing to confess any sin he has committed. Why doesn’t God pardon his sin (ch. 7) and restore him?

CHAPTER 8—Bildad’s first discourse. Bildad is the voice of the past. He rests his argument on tradition (v. 8). Man can know nothing of himself. He must depend on the past (vv. 9, 10). Notice that Paul did not have this philosophy; rather he pointed to Christ and the future.

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:14)

Bildad is more candid and crude than Eliphaz. He considers Job a hypocrite (v. 13). He does not know the ways of God (v. 20), nor does he take into account the final outcome (v. 21).

CHAPTERS 9, 10—Job’s answer to Bildad. Bildad has not met the problem of Job (9:2). Job makes no claim to perfection and knows that he cannot defend himself before God. He needs someone on his side to present his case (9:19, 20). Notice Job’s heart-cry for Christ (9:32, 33). He recognizes his need for a mediator to stand between himself and God. (See 1 Samuel 2:25.)

God knows that Job is not perfect, but He also knows that Job is not wicked (10:6, 7). Again Job resorts to his wish that he had not been born or had died at birth (10:19).

CHAPTER 11—Zophar’s first discourse. Zophar is the voice of legalism. He holds that God is bound by laws and never operates beyond the circumference of His own laws. He is probably the senior member of the group, and he speaks with a dogmatic finality that is even more candid and crude than that of Bildad.

He accuses Job of covering his sin with words (v. 2). He even accuses Job of lying (v. 3). He assumes the pious position of being on the inside with God while Job is on the outside, unable to know what He does (vv. 4-11). He urges Job to come clean, that he is hiding his sin (v. 14). He predicts the complete judgment of Job unless he confesses his secret sin (v. 20).

CHAPTERS 12, 13—Job’s answer. Job becomes bitter and sarcastic. He resents the superior claims of his friends and their accusations (12:1-3).

Job would bypass his friends and appeal to God directly (13:3). He now accuses them of lying about his case and states that they are offering him no help—they are “physicians of no value” (13:4). The faith of Job stands inviolate in spite of the onslaught of his friends (13:15).

CHAPTER 14—A great elegy on death. Trouble is the common denominator of mankind (v. 1). Job knows that death is inevitable and beyond death and the grave (vv. 14, 15).

SECOND ROUND

CHAPTER 15—Eliphaz’s second discourse. Eliphaz accuses Job of being his own accuser, for his words are foolish (v. 6). He defends himself and two other friends by reminding Job of their advantage of maturity over him. He states a great truth, but it is no more applicable to Job than to any other human being.

CHAPTERS 16, 17—Job’s answer. Job labels his friends “miserable comforters” and accuses them of uttering self-evident truths that are not applicable to him. If their situations were reversed, Job could argue as they have (16:4). Instead of helping Job, they fill him with wrinkles (16:8). He goes too far in defending himself (16:17). Job will stand by his record (16:19). He recognizes the problem of pleading his case before God (16:21). His physical condition is tragic.

CHAPTER 18—Bildad’s second discourse. Bildad suggests that Job stop speaking and start listening (v. 2). His second argument follows the same pattern as his first—since the past teaches that

God judges sin and since Job is being judged, he has committed some gross and secret sin. He digs up a few hoary epigrams from the past as proof.

CHAPTER 19—Job’s answer. Job recognizes that his friends are becoming strangers to him and that they are growing apart (v. 3). Job is willing for his words to be made into a permanent record and he is prepared to stand by them (vv. 23, 24).

Job expresses his great faith. He is maintaining his integrity. He believes the Redeemer is coming and that he himself is numbered with the redeemed.

CHAPTER 20—Zophar’s second discourse. He introduces nothing new. He rests upon his seniority and resorts to the same legalism. He still holds to the theory that Job is a very wicked person because of the law that the wicked must be punished (vv. 3-5).

CHAPTER 21—Job’s answer. Job is growing weary of their false charges. He appeals to a higher court (vv. 1-4). He agrees that the wicked will be punished but insists that this does not apply to his case.

THIRD ROUND

CHAPTER 22—Eliphaz’s third discourse. He accuses Job of being self-righteous (v. 3). His final word to Job is a great gospel invitation, but it does not fit Job’s case (v. 21). He admonishes Job to return to God (vv. 22-30).

CHAPTERS 23, 24—Job’s answer. Job claims that his condition is worse than his friends think it to be (23:2). He would like to present his case before God (23:3-9). Job begins to sense that he is in the sieve of God’s testing and that God will bring him through his trials (23:10). Job still maintains his integrity (23:12).

CHAPTER 25—Bildad’s third discourse. His answer is brief. He becomes rather thoughtful and begins to wonder why Job has not broken if he is guilty.

CHAPTERS 26–31—Job’s answer. This is Job’s longest speech. His friends have not helped him, but he expresses his faith in God, the Creator.

CHAPTER 27—Job does not break under the attack of his miserable comforters.

CHAPTER 28—This is a beautiful poem about God as Creator.

CHAPTER 29—The secret sin of Job is now revealed. He is suffering from a bad case of perpendicular “I-it-is.” He is filled with pride. Even a good man needs to repent. The first person pronoun, in one of its forms, occurs 52 times in this chapter. (Mark them in your Bible and be amazed.) What Job says is probably true, but he is self-righteous.

CHAPTER 30—He compares his past with his present condition. His voice is no longer a song of praise but a sigh of pain (v. 31).

CHAPTER 31—He is not guilty of the common sensual sins.

3. Job vs. Elihu, 32:2—37:24

CHAPTER 32—Elihu’s discourse. He is a Buzite—Buz was evidently an Arab tribe (Genesis 22:21). Elihu has been one of the auditors to this contest. He has kept silent because of his youth, though he wanted to speak. When the three friends have nothing more to say and have lost the contest, Elihu is angry because:

1 - He feels that Job justified himself and condemned God (v. 2).

2 - He feels that the three friends of Job have failed to answer him adequately.

When Elihu finally speaks, he speaks longer than any of the three friends or Job (chapters 32—37).

CHAPTER 33—Elihu maintains that:

1 - God is right in all that He does

2 - God created man (v. 4)

3 - God is responsible to no one (v. 13)

4 - God speaks to man by dreams and visions [before He gave a written revelation] (vv. 14, 15)

5 - God instructs men through discipline (vv. 29, 30). Notice that he suggests the reason for the Incarnation (vv. 6, 7)

CHAPTER 34—Elihu declares that God never acts wickedly nor commits wrong acts (v. 12).

CHAPTER 35—Elihu reproves Job for inferring that he is more righteous than God (v. 2). God is teaching Job a lesson, and both Job and his friends missed this truth (vv. 10-12).

CHAPTER 36—God is the great Teacher (v. 22). (It was said of Jesus, “Never man spoke like this man” [John 7:46].)

CHAPTER 37—Elihu infers that God is too far removed for man to communicate with Him (vv. 22, 23). However, it is not the greatness and majesty of God that has separated man from Him; it is man’s sin that has caused the disruption (see Isaiah 59:1, 2).

B. Scene VII, Chapters 38:1–42:6
Jehovah vs. Job

CHAPTER 38—Answer of the Almighty. God breaks through and speaks to Job. During the entire dialogue a storm has been gathering on the horizon. At this point, it breaks with fury. The crowd scatters and scurries for cover, leaving Job alone with God (v. 1). Both Job and Elihu had obscured truth with their theories and ideas (v. 2). God’s appeal to Job is on the basis of His role as Creator. Remember that this was before there was any written revelation (v. 4). Compare Romans 1:19, 20. This is a good introduction for every book on geology and origins.

This response (v. 7) predates the creation of man. Actually, man is a “Johnny-come-lately” in God’s universe. What did the writer of Job or Job himself know about the beauty of a snowflake (vv. 22, 23)? Hail is for judgment—see Revelation 8:7.

CHAPTER 39—God’s wisdom, person, and power are revealed in creation.

CHAPTER 40—God now demands Job to answer Him (vv. 1, 2). Job begins to see himself in the light of God’s presence—he is vile. Job becomes suddenly silent (vv. 3-5). The storm breaks in all of its fury and God speaks out of the whirlwind. He continues His appeal through creation (v. 6).

CHAPTER 41—God continues to quiz Job relative to His acts of creation.

CHAPTER 42—Job answers God. He recognizes the sovereignty of God (v. 2); he confesses his sin (v. 3); he repents (vv. 4-6). God accomplishes His purpose in the life of Job. Job evidently realizes that the reason God has permitted him to suffer is to bring him to repentance. He sees himself in the light of the presence of God (see 1 John 1:6, 7).

III. EPILOGUE, Chapter 42:7-17

(Prose)

Scene VIII

Land of Uz; Job's blessings doubled

This section is the final scene in the drama. It is poetic justice.

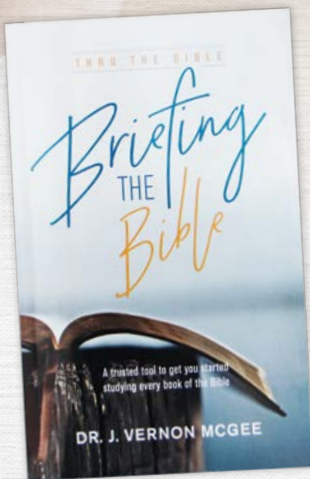
God rebukes the three friends of Job. Job becomes their priest to offer a sacrifice for them (vv. 7-9). God gives Job twice as much of everything as he had at the beginning. Did God also double the number of his children? When his cattle were destroyed, he lost them forever. When his sons and daughters died, he did not lose them:

He has ten children in Paradise

+ He has ten children on earth

God doubled the number of his children

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