

Job—Introduction

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

Internal Links

Why should we study Job? In fact, why should we spend any significant amount of time in the Old Testament. We are no longer under the Law; God no longer uses Israel directly to preserve His Word. Isn't it akin to going to the Windows 3.1 manual to understand Windows 2000? The Windows 3.1 manual is no longer valid and gives few if any insights to Windows 2000. Such examination by the computer user would be useless. Isn't this applicable to the Old Testament? I mean, certainly, we should examine some Bible stories briefly, but the manual for our Christian lives is found in the New Testament—and that specifically in the New Testament epistles?

To be quite frank with you, I don't know what it was that drew me to the Old Testament. I was brought up hearing 90% of the New Testament exegeted, and that would have been the logical material for me to exegete, seeing as I was much more comfortable with Greek than Hebrew and much more familiar with the material and theology of the New Testament. And when I first began to exegete God's Word, I jumped around a great deal, even though I did start with Genesis and worked my way through the book of Ruth, I took many detours and began several New Testament books. However, I kept on returning to the Old Testament and I kept on examining the Hebrew, despite my difficulty with it. By the end of the book of Deuteronomy, I finally felt as though I had fallen into a groove, and was getting something accomplished. And, while studying these Old Testament books, I discovered a great many doctrines of which I was previously unaware. I also discovered the answers to a handful of theological questions which had bothered me for a long time, and for which I could find no answers, even with the most excellent of theologians. I have come to the conclusion that the Word of God is the Word of God. No matter what book you pick up, and no matter what depth you dig into that book, there is divine truth there waiting to be discovered. Obviously (at least, I hope this would be obvious), one must take into consideration the historical context of each book and interpret it according to the dispensation in which this book falls (and every fundamentalism believer believes in dispensations, no matter what they say).¹

¹ I have sat down with several intelligent believers who believed in covenant theology (which is sort of the theological antithesis of dispensational thinking), and I, with no little prodding, showed them that they believed in dispensations just as I did. The difference was more one of degree than of coming from opposing systems of theological thinking.

The setup for the bulk of the book of Job is extremely important. We have four friends sitting around talking about the nature of God and what they knew about God and how they understood God to be. This conversation takes place before the Mosaic Law. This occurs in Abraham's time or earlier. It is even possible that this occurs prior to the flood, although, for some reason, I want to place it somewhere between the time of the flood and Abraham. What these men understand about God is generally true; however, their problem, and you may relate to this, is that they are having a very difficult time relating this to their actual lives, particularly when it comes to suffering. The key point, which they all seem to leave out, including Job, is the Angelic Conflict, which is the basis for this book. Take away the Angelic Conflict, and none of this book makes any sense. This is how Job and his friends approached his life and his personal suffering—as if there were no Angelic Conflict. Job's pain and suffering is impossible to understand apart from Satan and his minions.

So, what good is it to study the book of Job, if we know what they are missing and they don't? This gives us an idea as to what mankind knew from the fall to the time of Abraham. These are the things which mankind generally understood when it comes to God (quite obviously, those men who had no interest in God knew much less about Him).

It is important for the believer to grasp the significance of progressive revelation. The problem with many groups today (the charismatics and the Mormons, to name two) is that they have an incomplete understanding of progressive theology, and are therefore prone to great error. A correct approach to God's Word, in both the Old and New Testaments, reveals to us how God has revealed Himself to man, and in what order and by what means. One cannot get a full appreciation of this by studying the gospels and the epistles. In fact, the gospels can become quite confusing to the person who does not recognize that they are firmly based upon the Old Testament. Jesus did not abrogate the Old Testament; He fulfilled it. Therefore, it is important for us to examine His Word on both sides of the 400 silent years.

Job provides us an outline for the history of Israel. He is the personification of Israel. Like Israel, he at first enjoys great blessing from God; then, it appears as though he has been rejected by God, and made a derisive proverb to his friends. However, God will later bless Job with a far greater blessing than he had known before, which is exactly what God will do with true Israel.

You must realize that God's plan is rather complex, and that he did not give to us a simple five page manual to examine. He has given us a manual which is not only over a 1000 pages long, but which is also rather complex as well.

A Personal Note: Quite frankly, I struggled with the book of Job more than I struggled with any other book, even though the key to understanding this book was staring me right in the face. I started working on this book in 1997, and I would do a few chapters, get somewhat flummoxed, and then put it down. Then, a year or two later, pick it up again, do a few chapters, and become similarly stymied. The problem is, when do we understand Job and his friends to be talking sense and when do they veer away from true doctrine. Since Job is one of the earliest books in the Bible, and because revelation accumulates, bit by bit, how much does the average reader of Job, when it was first written, is able to sort out the true from the false? If there is limited revelation up to that point in time, how can that limited revelation be applied here?

The Key to the Book of Job:

Here is one of the keys to Job: we have 4 men discussing theology throughout most of the book; this is like a late-night college bull session at a seminary. They seem to have a reasonable understanding of basic theology; the character of God and His justice and righteousness. However, what has confused them is, the application of what they know—theology that most of them agree on—to life. What seems to be the missing element in their understanding is, the Angelic Conflict. Since we are reading this book from cover to cover, we understand that the basis for it is the Angelic Conflict. They does not appear to come up in these lengthy discussions. Therefore, they are confused about the application of doctrine to experience.

The NET Bible almost gets it: *The book presents many valuable ideas on the subject of the suffering of the righteous. Ultimately it teaches that one must submit to the wisdom of the Creator. But it also indicates that the shallow answers of Job's friends do not do justice to the issue. Their arguments that suffering is due to sin are true to a point, but they did not apply to Job.*² The “shallowness” of their answers was in leaving out the Angelic Conflict as an explanation for what was happening to Job.

Job Introduction

Introduction: Job is thought by some as being allegorical. Jesus Christ taught in parables and told stories and it has been said by some that Job is not a real person, but a mythical being or an allegorical being used to illustrate great truths like dedication to Y^ehowah, single-mindedness, etc. Certainly, these things are taught in the book of Job but, Job is a real person who really lived and the events which are recorded in the book of Job are real occurrences in his life.

Although we do not know when exactly this book was written or when it became a part of Scripture, Ezekiel mentions Job along with Noah and Daniel in Ezek. 14:14, 20 (actually, Ezekiel is quoting God). James also testifies on behalf of Job in James 5:11, indicating that (1) Job was a real historical figure and (2) that the book of Job belongs with Scripture.

Although some say that Moses wrote this book during the time he spent with the Midianites, I am wondering whether his father-in-law had a *copy* of the book and that Moses studied this book during that time period. As a matter of fact, books appear to be coming into vogue in the time of Moses (as God tells him to write things down on several occasions). Although historians consider this to be a part of man's evolution, I believe that it is just the opposite. That is, from Adam on down for many centuries, men had tremendous minds and the ability to memorize a great many things. For a long time, there was no reason to write anything down, because most men remembered nearly everything. So a verbal contract would stand up, as the participants and the witnesses could verify the terms of the contract.

However, because of the corruption of the mind and body, man's ability to recall was reduced, and, therefore, things had to be written down. This means man did have to come up with a written language.

We do not know exactly when this occurred, but I would suggest that it came several generations after Noah and certainly before Moses.

One of the thoughts which occurred to me in the twelfth chapter of Job was, how could anyone be interested in a 1000+ page exegesis of the book of Job? However, this book of Job has great historical import as that which was known to man prior to any real recording of Scripture (apart from portions of Genesis). Furthermore, because it is the Word of God, there are a great many principles and truths which will come out of this book that we, in a superficial reading of same, would not see. Prior to my own personal study, if I was to list the two books of the Bible which would seem to be the least interesting to me, they would be Leviticus and Job—however, after spending a great deal of time with these books, in much more of an in-depth study than I would have ever thought, they became quite pertinent to my life. There is some confusion about the Bible. There are some liberals who teach that the Bible *becomes* the Word of God to us as a subjective experience, but that it does not stand on its own as the Word of God. Although that stance is incorrect, what is correct is that God's Word has an effect on our lives. We cannot delve into it—not even into the least pertinent book to our lives—and not emerge but having been substantially enriched.

The Time Period of the Book of Job: It was my original hypothesis the Job predates Abraham by several generations. However, after years of study, which included, of all things, the examination of various genealogical tables (e.g., 1Chron. 1), I would place Job a few generations after Abraham. Uz has become large enough to be called *the land of Uz* and Job, as we will see, is tremendously wealthy, indicating that there is a reasonable

² *The Net Bible*®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); taken from e-Sword; also found at <http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm>, Job 1:1.

population in this land. He would, therefore, have to be at least 2–5 generations removed from Uz, who is the third generation from the flood (he was son of Aram who was son of Shem). Another reason which would indicate this time period for Job is his age, not given until the end of the book of Job. **And after this, Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons and his grandsons, four generations. And Job died, an old man and full of days** (Job 42:16–17). Now, since his sons and daughters appeared not to be married at the beginning of the book of Job, but they all have homes, putting them into their 20's and 30's. Therefore, Job was certainly between 60³ and 100 at the beginning of the book. For his time period, he was not considered an old man, as there are several references to wisdom and agedness in the book of Job (e.g., Job 12:12 15:10 32:1–7), and neither Job nor his friends claim to be among those who are aged with wisdom, although they have benefitted from that wisdom. However, divine viewpoint is first given by Elihu, who is a young man by comparison to them (Job 32:1–7). Again, an age of 60–100 (given those times) would be reasonable for Job, although I would put him closer to the age of 60. This makes him roughly two hundred years old at the end of his life and maybe a little more. When we compare this to the ages of those mentioned in Gen. 11, Job's age would place him as a contemporary of Peleg (Gen. 11:18–19), Reu (vv. 20–21) or Serug (vv. 22–23), who are 5–7 generations removed from the flood. Now Abraham lived 175 years (Gen. 25:7), and given the general downward spiral of the ages of those recorded in Scripture, it would not be unreasonable to place Job several generations past Abraham at the most.

Bullinger [That the book of Job is] Ancient it is beyond all dispute. It probably belongs to the period covered by the book of Genesis; and possibly, to the time of Abraham. Its lesson, therefore, is the oldest lesson we could have; and it takes us back to the first lesson taught in the Bible itself.⁴

Clarke, and others who share his view, place Job after the Law of Moses⁵ because of the burnt offerings, but this is incorrect, as Noah offered burnt offerings right out of the Ark.

Jewish tradition, expressed by Gemara, is *Job lived in the days of Jacob, and was born when the children of Israel went down into Egypt; and when they departed thence he died. He lived therefore 210 years, as long as they were in Egypt.*⁶ There is no mention of the Law or of the Jewish race or of Israel in the entire book of Job, implying that it took place prior to the establishment of the Jewish race. In the Chaldee translation of the Old Testament, there is a reference to the name of Job's wife—Dinah, in Job 2:9 (which is not found in the Hebrew). It is also the Hebrew tradition that Job married Jacob's daughter Dinah.

Barnes on the dating of the book of Job: There can be no doubt that Bildad here refers to the longevity of the antecedent ages compared with the age of man at the time when he lived; and the passage, therefore, is of importance in order to fix the date of the poem. It shows that human life had been reduced in the time of Job within comparatively moderate limits, and that an important change had taken place in its duration. This reduction began not long after the flood, and was probably continued gradually until it reached the present limit of seventy years. This passage proves that Job could not have lived in the time of the greatest longevity of man.⁷ When Bildad says that the life of man is but a shadow, in Job 8:11, indicating that life is transitory and fleeting, he was not referring to the lives of mankind in general but to their generation of man, as compared with generations in the past. One of the most striking parts of Gen. 11, is the list of the descendants and their rapid decline in longevity, going from about 500 years in age to around a hundred years of age in a handful of generations. This is Bildad's point—He and Job are in a generation of men who survive a mere 100-200 years and they are not in the

³ Job would have gotten married at the earliest at the age of 20; if they had children, it would have taken them 10 to 15 years to have ten children. Since the children are old enough to have homes but marriage is not mentioned for any of them, that puts us at least 20 to 30 years later. This puts Job's age at the beginning of the book of Job at a bare minimum of 50. However, on the outside, he was certainly married by age 40; they had all their children by age 60; they grew to a young adult status, putting Job at 90. Since marriage is not mentioned, this might give Job an age of 110, maybe.

⁴ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Job 1:1–5.

⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Job 1:22.

⁶ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 117.

⁷ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 199.

position to make judgments of great wisdom as those who have gone before, their lives spanning in excess of five centuries.

Eliphaz, one of Job's associates in this book, is said to be a Temanite (he came from Teman, in other words). Teman was, at one time, known for its wisdom (Jer. 49:7). Esau, the brother of Jacob, founded Edom. He had a son, Eliphaz, who had a son named Teman (Gen. 36:10–11). Since Teman became a chief in Edom (Gen. 36:15–16), we can reasonably assume that Teman, in Edom, was named after him. The Eliphaz of Job, therefore, would be likely his father or perhaps a grandson named after Teman's father. If we go much beyond that time period, the age of Job no longer fits. So, it is very possible that Eliphaz, the son of Esau, and Eliphaz, the friend of Job, are one and the same. Also, Seir, whose family occupied Edom prior to Esau, had a grandson named Uz, who is presumably the one who founded the land of Uz,⁸ which is the area where Job lives.

Also, Bildad (one of Job's friends) is called a Shuhite (Job 2:11), and Shuah was a son of Abraham through Keturah (Genesis 35:2)

Given all these ties to the lines of Seir and Esau (see Gen. 36 and 1Chron. 1), we can comfortably conclude that the book of Job takes place during the lifetimes of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or Joseph, the son of Jacob, or very early on during Israel's slavery to Egypt.

Because of this time period of Job, this provides for us, along with the first few chapters of Genesis, a look at the spiritual conduct which pre-dated the Age of Israel. This is often called the Age of the Gentiles; Scofield breaks this up into the Age of Conscience (antediluvian and post deluvian) and the Age of Human Government (post Tower of Babel). I prefer to think of it as the Age of Homo Sapiens (no credence is give here to evolution, by the way). This time period has three significant divisions, (1) antediluvian (before the flood), (2) post-deluvian, one-language (after the flood and prior to the Tower of Babel incident) and (3) post-deluvian, many-languages (after the flood and after the Tower of Babel). These are varying significant occurrences during a time period where worship was not as well-defined **to us** as in the Age of Israel or in the Church Age.

The Setting: Job is sitting out in some ashes, scraping his skin with a piece of sharp pottery. His three friends, who were probably wealthy and successful, have come to him. For seven days and seven nights, they sit together commiserating in silence, which is probably the best thing that the friends did. Then Job begins to speak. What appears to be the case is that a crowd gathered. My thinking is that these three men were wealthy and successful, and they did not travel alone—they certainly had with them some servants. Everyone in Uz certainly knew about Job—who he was and what had happened to him—and, for seven days, there was this small crowd around Job—Job, his three friends, and their servants. Others from Job's city apparently saw this and, wondering all that had occurred, sat down on the periphery. This is apparent when Elihu, a younger man, steps out of the crowd and begins to speak in Job 32. Furthermore, someone had to record what had been said (Elihu or one of the servants of the three may have done so).

The NET Bible: *And while it is a poetic drama using cycles of speeches, there is no reason to doubt that the events represented here do not go back to a real situation and preserve the various arguments,*⁹

Now, there is no reason to think that all of this was said at one sitting. It is not unreasonable to suppose that between rounds of speeches, they stopped for a meal, and then returned to the expression of their thoughts.

Authorship: As I examine this book, I am more and more struck by the limited vocabulary found herein. When Moses spoke and wrote, we saw a repetition of some words pertinent to the subject matter, but we were much more struck by his rich and varied vocabulary, one of the most extensive of the Old Testament authors. Within this book we find the same word used several times when a Hebrew synonym would have worked quite nicely.

⁸ There is another Uz in Gen. 22:21 who came on the scene much earlier. However, Uz (the person), in the line of Seir, is more in keeping with the general area that we would expect Uz (the area) to be in.

⁹ *The Net Bible*®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); taken from e-Sword; also found at <http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm>, Job 1:1 (footnote).

I mention this as Moses is often cited as the writer of this book, primarily because we apparently do not know when this book became a part of the canon, because it is old and because if anyone could write something like this, it would be Moses. Whereas I do not deny that Moses may have been a scribe for this book, as he was for Genesis, I don't see this as being his vocabulary. His vocabulary, expressed to its fullest in Deuteronomy, seems to considerably exceed the vocabulary employed by the writer of this book. Also, just because Moses was a man of genius, this does not mean that he wrote every book of antiquity. Since this book includes a private conversation between God and Job, and since Job was present for all that was said and done from Job 3 on, it is most reasonable to assume that Job himself recorded the events which are found herein.

The NET Bible notes: *There is no indication of who the author was. It is even possible that the work may have been refined over the years; but there is no evidence for this either. The book uses a variety of genres (laments, hymns, proverbs, and oracles) in the various speeches of the participants. This all adds to the richness of the material.*¹⁰

Dating the Book of Job:

The NET Bible comments: *Several indications in the book would place Job's dates in the time of the patriarchs. But the composition of the book, or at least its final form, may very well come from the first millennium, maybe in the time of the flowering of wisdom literature with Solomon. We have no way of knowing when the book was written, or when its revision was completed. But dating it late in the intertestamental period is ruled out by the appearance of translations and copies of it, notably bits of a Targum of Job in the Dead Sea Scrolls.*¹¹

From the Life Application Study Bible Notes: *It is not known for sure, but Job probably lived during the days of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) before God gave his written law or appointed priests to be religious leaders. During Job's day, the father was the family's religious leader. Because there were no priests to instruct him in God's laws, Job acted as the priest and offered sacrifices to God to ask for forgiveness for sins he and his family had committed. This demonstrated that Job did not consider himself sinless. Job did this out of conviction and love for God, not just because it was his role as head of the house.*¹²

Job as a Primer: There is a great deal of repetition of phrases in the first chapter of Job. Since these events and this book probably occurred at a time when there was no writing (if man remembers everything that occurs, then there is no need for him to write anything down). I believe that this book was handed down orally for many generations, a child learning this book chapter by chapter, and thereby developing the Hebrew language for himself, along with a vocabulary. Since the book had to be memorized, many phrases were repeated in the first chapter to facilitate this memorization. Furthermore, many basic grammatical concepts are found in the first chapter, so it is the ancient world's "See Dick and Jane."

Now, I realize that most of you have been taught that man has evolved and that man used to wander about in caves with a large hunk of wood that they would use to bop animals and women with (and their enemies of course); and that they had this Tarzan-like vocabulary, but that was not the way early man was. Early man was much more intelligent than we are today. Early man was capable of learning much more than we can learn today. Now, if you doubt this, simply find a basic math book from the 1920's to the 1940's and see if you can figure it out. Don't pick up a calculus book from that era, but a simple math book. Your mouth will drop open. "They were supposed to learn all this in basic math?" you will say to yourself. As a math teacher, I observe the dumbing down of the math textbooks over a period of 25 years, and how logical development of a discipline was turned into a disorganized set of things to be simply memorized and done.

¹⁰ *The Net Bible*®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); taken from e-Sword; also found at <http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm>, Job 1:1 (footnote).

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¹² From <http://newsyoucanbelieve.com/bible/2010/01/19/day-019-chronological-reading/> accessed April 28, 2013.

Job would have been the perfect primer. When a child is very young, perhaps ages 2 and 3, the book of Job is read to him. Then, later, at perhaps age 3 or 4, that same child begins to learn and memorize the book of Job (at least the first chapter or two). This allows him to learn theology and grammar and the Hebrew language all at the same time (as school children in the United States learned from a study of the Bible at one time).

However, as one gets further and further into the book of Job, it becomes increasingly difficult. The NET Bible notes: *While the book has fascinated readers for ages, it is a difficult book, difficult to translate and difficult to study. Most of it is written in poetic parallelism. But it is often very cryptic, it is written with unusual grammatical constructions, and it makes use of a large number of very rare words. All this has led some scholars to question if it was originally written in Hebrew or some other related Semitic dialect or language first.*¹³

Translation: The book of Job, from the outset, should prove to be one of the most difficult books to translate. Even just a fourth of the way through this book I have found a very large number of words which are found in this book only and just one time. We have four or five men speaking, all of whom come from various countries, all of whom may use words and make statements unlike any other in the Bible, which would tend to make the vocabulary found in Job at least partially unique. Another problem in the translation and interpretation is that there appear to be more variant readings in Job than in any other book. Due to its age, that would be expected. Therefore, there will even be some verses which I will hesitate to interpret, just because they vary in their reading. Job 14:6 is a prime example of this. We have variant readings on the verbs and on the person. Only the book of Genesis should be more difficult to render, as other than portions of Genesis, this is the oldest writing found in the Bible.

The NET Bible: *While the book has fascinated readers for ages, it is a difficult book, difficult to translate and difficult to study. Most of it is written in poetic parallelism. But it is often very cryptic, it is written with unusual grammatical constructions, and it makes use of a large number of very rare words. All this has led some scholars to question if it was originally written in Hebrew or some other related Semitic dialect or language first...The book uses a variety of genres (laments, hymns, proverbs, and oracles) in the various speeches of the participants. This all adds to the richness of the material. And while it is a poetic drama using cycles of speeches, there is no reason to doubt that the events represented here do not go back to a real situation and preserve the various arguments.*¹⁴

The Authority and Canonicity of the Book of Job: We do not know when this book became a part of the Hebrew canon. The fact that it did is a testimony to its divine origin. There are several reasons why one would not expect this book to be included in the Jewish canon of Scripture. (1) First of all, there are no Jews in this book—there is no mention of Israel, no mention of the Israelites, no mention of any lineage of the Jewish race, no mention of the Aaronic priesthood or of the specific sacrifices as recorded in the Torah. Even though this book is old, it has no particular significance to the Jewish people, who were chosen by God in Abraham.¹⁵ (2) There are many, including myself at one time, who desire that the book of Job not be a part of the canon of Scripture. After all, it is just a few guys sitting around talking, one complaining about God and three complaining about him. It is often uncertain when divine viewpoint is being spoken and when human viewpoint is expressed. (3) Furthermore, the picture of God, when this book is viewed superficially, is of a rather capricious Being. Satan goes to God and God asks Satan if he has observed His servant Job. Satan claims that Job just realizes Who pays his salary and responds appropriately. So God gives Job to Satan to torment. This is not a picture that we like to have of God. So, the immediate theological reaction is that this is not a book that we might want to have in the canon of Scripture. (4) Finally, because this book is difficult to interpret, it is greatly misunderstood. In fact, often the only people who seem to cling to this book are those who are in a mess, which they put themselves into; that is, they see themselves as Job, unjustly crushed and tormented when, in fact, they are the main cause of their

¹³ *The Net Bible*®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); taken from e-Sword; also found at <http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm>, Job 1:1 (footnote).

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¹⁵ As we have been chosen by God in Christ.

own torment. So, to sum up, we have a book where it is difficult to determine when divine viewpoint is expressed and one which paints a portrait of God that we would rather not view; a book without any direct significance to the Jewish religion; a book not authored by an acknowledged prophet (no one knows for certain who wrote this book); and those who often like this book tend to incorrectly misapply it to themselves.

Now, we certainly theoretically understand why this book was placed into the Jewish canon of Scripture—it was God-breathed and God placed it there. However, from human viewpoint, there is little reason to take this ancient book which deals with God and His dealings with man, and to include it in with the rest of the canon of Scripture.

So why do we find this book in the canon of Scripture? (1) It is a part of the canon of Scripture—that is God's divine decree, so we don't have a choice here. (2) The book of Job, for a long time, was the gospel to some groups of people. I do not know the historicity of the distribution of the book of Job itself, however it is my educated opinion that this was the gospel for many non-Jewish peoples. We have in this book the utter depravity of Satan and an example of his works in this world. We have the unjust suffering of the innocent before the guilty (Job before his friends). We have a desperate cry by Job for a Mediator. And we have the sudden arrival of such a Mediator to stand in the gap, after which Job is restored to his former prosperity. God used this book perhaps millions of times with ancient man to present to them the gospel of Jesus Christ. What we need is a less than superficial view of this book.

On the other hand, there are two important ties between this book and the rest of Scripture. This book speaks of the God Y^ehowah; it is not just any god or any national deity. Secondly, this book deals with God's direct dealings with man, also characteristic of the majority of the Old Testament canon. We often do not fully recognize the importance of that second reason. People without discernment live expecting miracles from the hand of God; they expect direct contact from God because that how God is. God, throughout the Bible, as they see it, contacted man directly and produced an abundance of miracles. From a human standpoint, the reason men wrote down the books of Scripture in the first place is because they did represent rare instances where God directly contacted man; Scripture recorded the rare incidents when God performed miracles before the eyes of man. If God contact me directly, the first thing I am going to do is write down exactly what happened and exactly, word for word, what God said. However, lest you become confused at this point, God has said everything He has to say in His Word. There isn't one tiny detail that he has forgotten to tell me. God did not forget to give me some guidance on Thursday next, so He will suddenly need to manifest Himself to me in a great miraculous vision and then fill me in on the details. This is how great His plan is. The *miracle* people limit God tremendously—they don't think that it is possible that He (1) saw to their every need in eternity past; and, (2) provided them with every bit of guidance that they will ever need through His Word. They don't believe that the God of the Universe is quite that organized. They believe that He needs to step in periodically and give us some additional revelation because His Word just doesn't quite have enough information in it; and they believe that He did not foresee some of the difficulties and trials and tribulations that we would go through and sometimes needs to snap His fingers and perform a miracle to take care of the problem. The argument which I often hear is that the god of the charismatics is the God Who created the universe; if He is as great and marvelous to create the universe, then He is certainly capable of miraculously curing us of any illness that we have. What God can do and what He chooses to do are two different things. If your hand is severed in an accident, God is not only capable of regenerating a new hand, He can do it instantly. Does this mean that after such an accident, those with faith head on over to the church, have the church members pray over his stump, so that all could witness this great miracle? Hell, no—very few people, even charismatics, are that stupid. They head straight for the hospital. Now, does the pastor head on over to the hospital prior to the operation, pray, and then they watch the stump miraculously regenerate a new hand? Hell, no—it's not going to happen. It is not a matter of ability; God can certainly perform a miracle like that. In fact, that is the easy solution for God. That is the brainless solution for God. If something *breaks*, God snaps His fingers and it is fixed. The point here is that God doesn't work that way. Now, I realize that I have gone out on quite the tangent here, but this is my point. The direct contact between God and Job is a phenomenal event; it was recorded (and I believe by Job), because it was a phenomenal experience. The Israelites recognized this and they recognized the name of their God, Y^ehowah, the God of the Universe, the God Who took Israel as His own. From a human standpoint, they recognized their God in this book.

Job is quoted only one time incontrovertibly in the New Testament; in 1Cor. 3:19, Paul quotes Eliphaz as authoritative: **Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it stands written, “He—the One Who catches the wise in their craftiness.” And, again [from Scripture]: The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless. So, then, let no one boast in men** (1Cor. 3:18–21a Job 5:13 Psalm 94:11). It is fascinating that, although the book of Job is taken as Scripture, that this is the only time that a New Testament writer quotes from it, and quotes Eliphaz of all people. At least one Old Testament writer took from Job. Psalm 107:40 is Job 12:21a, 24b verbatim: **Pouring contempt upon noble ones and He causes them to wander in a desolate [empty] area, no path [or, direction] [or, in a pathless waste].**

Refer also to Ezek. 14:14, 20 James 5:11

The Characters of the Book of Job: For such a long book, we have a relatively small cast of characters.

The Characters of the Book of Job

Chapters 1–2

Job	Job is first introduced as a very wealthy family man.
God	In scene two, we find ourselves in the majestic throne room of God, although no descriptions are really given. God points to his faithful servant Job as an example.
Satan	Satan presents himself to God, along with all of the other angels, speaking directly to God. His problem with Job is that Job is blessed greatly by God—therefore, he serves God.
Job’s family	We really do not meet much of Job’s family. His sons and daughters apparently have a marvelous rapport and meet regularly for family dinners. The only surviving member of Job’s family is his wife, who goes into a nagging bitch fit when everything is taken from Job (and, therefore, from her).

Chapters 3–31

Job	In the second portion of Job, Job is suddenly put on the defensive. It is taken for granted that he is being punished for his sins, and therefore is suffering as he is.
Eliphaz	Eliphaz appears to be Job’s longest and closest friend. He approaches Job at first gingerly, recognizing that Job’s problem is his sin, but not castigating Job for it at first. However, as time progressed, Eliphaz became more and more impatient with Job, and therefore, finally becomes more intense than the other two friends.
Bildad	Bildad appears to be the youngest, the quickest to judge and the least patient of the three. By comparison, his speeches are brief and to the point (as I said, <i>by comparison</i>).
Zophar	

Chapters 32–3

Is God capricious? One of the aspects of the book of Job which many theologians find difficult is that a superficial reading makes God appear capricious. Satan goes to God and God points out to Satan a man of righteousness, Job. Satan objects, saying the Job serves God only because God blesses him. So God delivers Job into the hand of Satan. “Do what you want with him,” seems to be God’s capricious attitude. We are, by nature, anthropocentric—we are man-centered. We see everything in terms of us. There are two important theological thoughts brought out by the book of Job. God’s creatures do not serve, obey and love God out of self-serving interests (although we might avoid sin, at times, for those reasons); we serve, obey and love God as a response to His grace, love and righteousness. The alternate master for us to serve, other than ourselves, is Satan. This book shows us how utterly vicious and depraved that Satan is. To give an analogy: once we become adults, we often look with great disdain upon vicious, purposeless vandalism of youngsters, recognizing that it is painful, expensive and work-intensive to undo the damage which has been done—an experience that the errant youngster does not even begin to grasp. Satan, when given this opportunity, does not pass by believers, those outside his realm, under the principal of live and let live. He attacks Job with malicious glee. If given the opportunity, Satan will viciously attack and destroy our lives. He lies in wait for another believer to be turned over to him to administer the sin unto death. He takes great, perverse pleasure, inasmuch as he can feel pleasure, in the destruction of a believer. When human history is done, we will be able to see that God is righteous in His every decision and that Satan absolutely deserves to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Nowhere else in God’s Word are we exposed to the level of viciousness which Satan is capable of. No where else do we see how evil and degenerate he can be and how deserving that he is of spending eternity in pain and suffering. There is no indication that Satan had second thoughts, that he felt sorry for Job, that he thought perhaps he pushed this too far. In fact, in the second phase of his standing before God, Satan asked for more leeway in the area of causing Job pain and suffering. Now, that God would allow such a thing is more difficult, but the pain and suffering that Job endured vindicated God’s righteousness, revealed Satan’s absolute depravity and gave us the tiniest idea as to the unjust suffering endured by our Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf. How about Job? Was it worth it to him? That is, if he had a choice between not being the example, just living a full life in the prosperity that he had enjoyed and having to endure all of the pain the degradation that he endured, what would he choose in retrospect? We can ask him in heaven; however, I can guarantee that, given the options, Job would have gone with God’s plan. We all have problems in our relationship with God and our thinking of Him. Couldn’t He create a universe where there would have been no suffering, no pain, no fallen creatures? Although on earth, we may never be completely satisfied by the answers that the allowing of free will is necessary in order for there to be real love; we may never, in our lifetimes, fully appreciate the actual extent of the pain which God’s Son endured on our behalf; however, in eternity, we will fully understand, we will be in full possession of our free will, and we will trust entirely and unequivocally in God’s perfect righteousness and love. The book of Job helps us to see these things as best as we are capable of seeing them during our short time here on earth.

The Historicity of Job: One of the most common questions concerning Job is: *was he a real person?* First of all, I should probably list the reasons why this is thought to be a symbolic treatment of a fictitious event: (1) 39 of the 42 chapters are in poetry. (2) There are certain events which occur that man could not have witness; the discussions between God and Satan in heaven before all the angels. (3) There is a direct, supernatural involvement of Satan in the life of Job. (4) The book of Job is filled with Aramaic loan words. Obviously, none of these reasons, other than #4, are sufficient to write Job off as some sort of elaborate fable. There are quite a number of reasons to accept Job as historically accurate. (1) The book of Job begins with the very matter of fact [There was a man in the land of Uz named Job](#) (Job 1:1). This begins just like 1Sam. 1:1 and Luke 1:5. In other words, the style suggests that this is a real historical person who lived in a real place. (2) The book opens up by giving him a name (which could be arguably given for convenience sake). (3) However, he lives in a specific place, the naming of which does not further the poetical nature of the book. (4) Job is beset by real people—the Sabeans and the Chaldeans. (5) In Ezek. 14:14, 20, God names Job and Daniel and Noah as men who are righteous. That means, if we question the reality of Job, we are questioning the reality of Daniel and Noah. This also calls into question the veracity of God, who refers to these men as real historical figures. (6) James holds Job forth as an example of patience while under terrific adversity—this would seem silly if Job is not a real person. (7) We know that the Aramaic language has been around for a long time. We have many first-millennium Aramaic inscriptions for the North Arabian Nabateans. (8) Commercial relations between the ancestors of Israel and the Aramaic-speaking peoples date back prior to 2000 BC, requiring a knowledge of the Aramaic language for those involved in trade with them. (9) Laban certainly was involved in trade relations with those who spoke Aramaic and

spoke it himself (Gen. 31:47). (10) The location of Uz would demand that there be some mixture of Arabic and Aramaic words, whether the original book of Job was written in the Hebrew (unlikely) or not. (11) Finally, in dealing with the Aramaic language *problem*, it appears as though the assertion that the book of Job is peppered with the Aramaic language has been overstated. A Guillaume has argued convincingly that in Job 32–37 in the speeches of Elihu, who is supposed to have the greatest incidence of Aramaic words in his vocabulary, uses words which are clearly Arabic which just happen to have cognates in the Aramaic.¹⁶ (12) Archeology has turned up a Syrian prince who lived near Damascus during the second millennium BC with the name 'īyyōb in the Berlin Excretion texts. This does not mean that this was our man Job; it just gives credence to that particular name during that time. (13) Theologically speaking, if we cannot trust the Bible to give us a factual reporting of the conflict between God and Satan, here, as well as in Matt. 4, then at what point can the Bible be trusted? If this narrative portion is inaccurate, this nullifies the thought that this is the Word of God.

Interpretation: Interpreting Job is also one of the most difficult things to do. In most books, it is clear who is speaking what the context is, and whether or not the information is divine viewpoint or not. In the book of Job, we are looking at a theological discussion between five moderately intelligent to brilliant men which has philosophical implications. When the speaker is speaking divine viewpoint and when he is speaking human viewpoint is much tougher to determine. Because of the guarantee of the inspiration of Scripture, we know that the epistles of Paul and Peter are absolutely accurate and doctrinal, even though the recorded words of Peter in the gospels may not be. For instance, when Peter tells us that a wife must obey her husband, he is not speaking as a chauvinist but as a man of God writing as moved by the Holy Spirit. However, when Peter is on the Mount of Transfiguration, and suggests that they all ought to pitch some tents and hang there for awhile, Jesus, Moses and Elijah, he is speaking his own mind and not relaying divine viewpoint. It is not that easy to call in Job.

What is key in the book of Job is, it is preceded by Satan and the convocation of angels with God; and these things happen to Job because Satan asks God for permission to harm him. Therefore, we should realize that, the Angelic Conflict is why Job suffers as he does. So Job and his friends generally speak the truth, but they ignore the unseen conflict in their discussions.

Commentary on the Book of Job:

*The NET Bible: The Book of Job is one of the major books of wisdom literature in the Bible. But it is a different kind of wisdom. Whereas the Book of Proverbs is a collection of the short wisdom sayings, Job is a thorough analysis of the relationship between suffering and divine justice put in a dramatic poetic form.*¹⁷

Mediatorship: One of the great themes of Job is the cry of Job for a mediator. He feels crushed and hurt by God; he feels as though he has not done anything to warrant the horrible treatment that God has given him. "For God is not a man as I am that I may answer Him or that we may go to court together. There is no Mediator between us Who may lay His hand upon us both." And a most important fact: once Job and his friends have finished speaking, God does not then speak directly to Job to straighten things out. The first person who speaks to Job as from God is Elihu, who is a mediator between God and Job. Job **must** go through this mediator first before he can speak to God. Elihu will speak for several chapters and then god will speak to Job. The analogy between our Savior's mediatorship between us and God is found as far back as this, probably the oldest complete book of the Bible.

Commentaries about Job: One of the things which I found to be rather disturbing were great commentators who, in one way or another, referred to Job's failure throughout. Job had a few flaws in his theology, and his friends much more so. Job had some imperfections, as he carried with him the old sin nature. When evaluating Job, we must realize that Job did not have the filling of the Holy Spirit and he did not have access to the Scriptures that we do. At best, he could turn to perhaps to a few chapters of Genesis, but the bulk of his spiritual knowledge he

¹⁶ *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason L. Archer, p. 236.

¹⁷ *The Net Bible*®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); taken from e-Sword; also found at <http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm>, Job 1:1 (footnote).

likely received from the teaching of his father who received it from the teaching of his father. We have no clue as to how often God fellowshiped directly with him, if at all. The fact that God did speak to him directly in the end indicates that there had likely been some direct contact between God and Job in the past. However, my point is that Job had far less than we as believers have today, and his tenacity in this crisis is admirable and awe-inspiring. If I could do a tenth as well under a tenth of the pressure, I would feel as though my spiritual life was in tact.

My Personal Prejudices: I had avoided personally exegeting the book of Job until I had finished the Pentateuch and most of the related Psalms even though, time-wise, I should have done it immediately after Genesis, if not during. Personally, to me, this was one of the least interesting books of the Bible. As I write this, I am in Job 6, and the general gist of the book is that God has given Satan to power to make Job suffer, Job is suffering, and he and his friends discuss this. As David Spade would have said, *okay, I get it!* But why forty chapters? So far, in the first six, it all belongs there; is there enough in this book to warrant the length of time given to it? Obviously, yes, from a divine perspective, but from human viewpoint, is this reasonable?

Fundamental Philosophical Questions: Most men, when given time to think about the existence of evil in the world, ask: *if God is so good and so powerful, why is there so much evil in the world?* Or, those who believe in the historicity of Job ask: *if Satan can only do what God allows him to, why does he have so much power over mankind?* I am hoping that our leisurely stroll through the book of Job will answer these questions.

The Purpose of the Book of Job: In reading all of the commentaries which I own, I was struck by the lack of one of the most important themes of the book of Job, namely Satan's absolute and utter selfishness and evil. Few people grasp how completely depraved and vicious that Satan is. Throughout Scripture, Satan is presented as a real entity, with great intelligence, who, because he sinned once against God, has spent the rest of his life not just in opposition to God, but inflicting pain and suffering on mankind. When given the opportunity to deal with Job, Satan did not ease into this attack—he hit Job with everything that he was allowed. God did not tell Satan to hurt Job—God allowed Satan to do whatever was in his heart; and Satan responded with a cruelty and viciousness unmatched in the universe. Most of us would not inflict upon our worst enemies what Satan inflicted upon Job. And Job has done no harm to Satan—Job has caused Satan no pain, no heartache, no suffering. Satan has sealed his own fate and Job had nothing to do with that. The only relationship between Job and Satan is that Job will be one of the many supergrace heroes who, in their short lives on this earth, vindicate the justice and judgments of God. Job's only offense to Satan was his personal dedication to God. In response to that, Satan will inflict pain and suffering upon Job of an intensity unmatched to that time.

It is also very important to recognize, is that the innocent suffer, a point which the book of Job drives home. Now, mankind is not innocent—also a point of this book—but some men, despite their inherent weakness, are drawn toward God, and, ideally speaking, toward His righteousness. This does not mean that such a one will live a life detached from suffering. Even though Job is often criticized by exegetes millenniums later, it was Job who God held up as an example of righteousness before Satan. Personally, I would have caved with one-tenth the trouble of Job, so, even though I offer an occasional criticism, it is from a purely academic and theological stance, and certainly not from the point of view, *I would have done better*, because I wouldn't have. But I have strayed. Clearly, in this life, there are those who suffer whose suffering seems to be disproportionate to their life and failings. Some of us have no problem when a promiscuous person contracts a sexually transmitted disease, or if a practicing homosexual contracts a debilitating illness; but there are thousands of people far removed from these sins who also contract the disease, many of them children, contracting these painful and debilitating diseases long before they can even distinguish from good and evil. The point is that you cannot judge a person based upon the amount of suffering they have endured. Job is superior to his three companions in every way; still, his suffering is far greater than they would ever know.

Another important purpose of the book of Job is the demand of Job for a mediator, someone to stand between he and God—someone equal to he and God—someone to mediate between them. This was covered as a previous point.

One of the most important purposes of this book is that, as one of the earliest books of the Bible, this (like Genesis, like the Psalms and like Isaiah) contains a very explicit look at the cross, the events leading up to the

cross, and the theology of the cross. First of all, if you step back from this book and look at the middle chapters from a distance, you have Job, the innocent, enduring the accusations of his friends, who become quite hostile towards him. Such a scene calls to mind Jesus before the high priest and the chief priest after He had been seized in the garden of Gethsemane. **Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death; and they were finding none. For many were giving false testimony against Him** (Mark 14:55–56a).

When we get to Job 16–17, we have a marvelous parallel between what Job says and the Suffering Servant of Jehovah, Who is found in Isa. 53 as well as in the psalms. However, this has been hidden somewhat due to a traditional translation of some specific words. The bulk of Job 16–17 is a thinly veiled examination of the cross of our Lord. However, there are one or two verses that would throw you off the track. For instance, in most translations, Job 16:13 has something to do with arrows or soldier-archers—and there is no mention of arrows or soldier-archers at the crucifixion. In fact, it is this particular verse which seems to spoil the shadow of the cross. Well, the fact of the matter is, there are no archers and no arrows in v. 13—I don’t care if 20 different translations have archers and arrows in them—it is a mistranslation, which throws us off the track. However, we will clear that up in Job 16. In any case, Job’s description of his sufferings in these two chapters parallel our Lord’s sufferings on and prior to the cross. In fact, these parallels are quite remarkable. Just to give you a taste of some of the specific passages:

Job and the Crucifixion			
Job	Psalms	Isaiah	Gospels
They have gaped at me with their mouth (Job 16:10a).	They open wide their mouth at me...they look, they stare at me (Psalm 22:13a, 17b).	Just as many were astonished by you, so His appearance was marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of me (Isa. 52:14).	And those passing hurled abuse at Him, wagging their heads (Mark 15:29a).
They have slapped me on the cheek with contempt (Job 16:10b).	Because of Your sake, I bore reproach (Psalm 69:7). My enemies have reproached me all day long; those who deride me have used me as a curse (Psalm 102:8).	I gave my back to those who strike Me and My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard (Isa. 50:6a).	Then they spit in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him (Matt. 26:67).
They have amassed themselves against me (Job 16:10c).	For they have opened the wicked and deceitful mouth against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They have surrounded me also with words of hatred (Psalm 109:2–3a). All nations surround Me (Psalm 118:10a).	He was despised and forsaken of men...He was oppressed and He was afflicted (Isa. 53:3a, 7a).	In the same way the chief priests along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him (Matt. 27:1).

Job	Psalms	Isaiah	Gospels
<p>God hands me over to ruffians and He tosses me into the hands of the wicked (Job 16:11).</p>	<p>For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men have encompassed me (Psalm 22:16).</p>	<p>By oppression and judgment, He was led away (Isa. 53:8a).</p>	<p>Then the chief priests and the elders of the people, accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs...came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him (Matt. 26:47b, 50b).</p>
<p>He has made me a byword of the people (Job 17:6a)</p>	<p>My enemies speak evil of me...all who hate me whisper together against me (Psalm 41:5a, 7a). When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword to them. Those who sit in the gate and talk about me, and I am the song of drunkards (Psalm 69:11–12)</p>	<p>He was despised and forsaken of men (Isa. 53:3a).</p>	<p>And the soldiers mocked Him...And one of the criminals who were hanged hurled abuse at Him (Luke 23:36a, 39a).</p>
<p>And I am one at whom men spit (Job 17:6b).</p>	<p>But I am a worm, and not a man. A reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me (Psalm 22:6–7a).</p>	<p>I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting (Isa. 50:6b).</p>	<p>Then they spit in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him...And they spit on Him and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head (Matt. 26:67 27:30). And some began to spit at Him and to blindfold Him and to beat Him with their fists (Mark 14:65a).</p>

Job	Psalms	Isaiah	Gospels
<p>Although there is no violence in my hands and my prayer is pure (Job 16:1).</p>	<p>The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against His Anointed One (Psalm 2:2).</p>	<p>I was not disobedient and I did not turn back (Isa. 50:4b). Although He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth (Isa. 53:9b). Who has a case against Me? (Isa. 50:8b).</p>	<p>Then Pilate said, "What evil has He done?" (Matt. 27:23a). But the other criminal...said, "We are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." (Luke 23:40a, 41b). And Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and observe, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him." (Luke 23:13-14; see also John 18:38b 19:4, 6).</p>
<p>You are sorry comforters...my friends are my scoffers (Job 16:2b, 20a).</p>	<p>Even my close friend, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, raised up his heel against me (Psalm 41:9). I have become estranged from my brothers, and I am an alien to my mother's sons...reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick; and I have looked for sympathy, but there is none. And I looked for comforters, but I found none (Psalm 69:8, 20). In return for my love, they are my accusers (Psalm 109:4a).</p>	<p>He was despised and we did not hold Him in high regard...we ourselves saw Him as stricken (Isa. 53:3b, 4b).</p>	<p>While He was still speaking, observe, a multitude came with the one called Judas, one of the twelve disciples, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:47-48).</p>

Job	Psalms	Isaiah	Gospels
<p>I was at ease [in prosperity] and then He shattered me. Then He grabbed my neck and broke me [into pieces]. For himself, he has set me up as a target; his many [soldiers] surround me. He pierces my kidneys and he does not have compassion [for me]; he pours out my bile upon the earth (Job 16:12–13).</p>	<p>Against me, they devise my hurt, saying, “A wicked thing is poured upon him.” (Psalm 41:7b–8a). I am afflicted and in pain. May Your deliverance, O God, set me on high (Psalm 69:29). Because of Your indignation and Your wrath, You have lifted me up and cast me away (Psalm 102:10). Jehovah has disciplined Me severely, but He has not given Me over to death (Psalm 118:18).</p>	<p>Surely our sickness, He Himself took away and our pains, He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken and afflicted. And He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our peace was upon Him...He was oppressed and He was afflicted...the Lord was pleased to crush Him (Isa. 53:4–5, 7a, 10a).</p>	

Another and great reason for the book of Job is that it introduced the bodily resurrection. Prior to the time of Abraham (Gen. 1–11), and even during the time of Abraham (Gen. 12–23), the little Scripture that there was did not include a promise of resurrection.¹⁸ However, by the time of Joseph, the concept of a bodily resurrection was understood by both he and those who exited out of Israel. What happened during that time? The book of Job. Job happened. Job took the life that he had been forced to and reasoned that there must be some sort of resurrection, something after death—otherwise the great suffering that he faced would make no sense. He, although he did not realize it, was the spiritual giant of his generation, and he suffered more than any one man had ever suffered up until that time—the only way that this could make sense is if there was a resurrection. Now Job, as he speaks with his three companions, toys with this idea (Job 14:13–14 16:18–22), but by Job 19, he straight out says that outside of his flesh, or apart from his flesh, he would see God (Job 19:26). Whereas, such a concept for most believers is understood early on, this was a tremendous revelation for Job’s time and place, and helps us to better grasp the idea of progressive revelation.

J. Vernon McGee gives a minor reason for reading and studying the book of Job: *Great writers of the past, novelists, poets, and essayists, have read and reread the Book of Job. Its language is superb. Its descriptions are magnificent. I would recommend it to you for your reading so that it becomes a part of you. The beauty of the language here is wonderful.*¹⁹

Let me give you another reason to study the book of Job—it allows you to hone your interpretive and exegetical skills. Too many people approach the Word of God from this namby pamby, superficial devotional approach, and gain little or nothing from the study, other than the ability to pretty much misinterpret 90% of what they read. If you are able to understand the book of Job, and correctly interpret it, then little if anything will stand between you and understanding the rest of God’s Word.

The Book of Job and Progressive Revelation: The book of Job is the epitome of progressive revelation. Most believers have no appreciation or even understanding of what *progressive revelation* is. For starters, only a small percentage of believers have any interest whatsoever in the Word of God. Those who do, concentrate (if that is the right word for it) on the New Testament, and act as though the Old Testament does not exist. One of the most

¹⁸ When Abraham was about to offer Isaac (Gen. 22), he assumed that God would raise Isaac up again, but as a necessitation and not as a resurrection. Actually, we don’t know exactly what Abraham was expecting to occur, but that is the most reasonable explanation, given what he tells his slaves in Gen. 22:5.

¹⁹ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 96.

important reasons for Job’s pain and suffering is that it forced him to logically follow out his various beliefs and limited spiritual knowledge and, essentially, crank it up a notch.

Progressive Revelation in the Book of Job			
Job 14:10, 14a	But man dies and lies prostrate; man expires—where is he? If a man dies, will he live again?	Job 19:26	Even after my skin has been recycled back to the dust, yet out from my flesh, I will see God

The Vocabulary: One is struck immediately by the limited vocabulary found in the book of Job. We find certain words repeated again and again. This is also very likely a translation out of another language. This may account for the limited vocabulary which we find here.

One of the remarkable things about the language of the book of Job is that, not only in the first two chapters, which take place in the courtroom of God, but throughout, we have language which appears to be from a courtroom. What I would desire are transcripts and other court documents in Hebrew from the era as a matter of interest, to compare the vocabulary.

The Debate: I was struck by the way that Job and his friends debated. It was not as you would expect men to argue and disagree. Job does not state points one, two and three; then Eliphaz does not step in, rebut points one, two and three, and then make assertions of his own. The points made by Job are not necessarily dealt with directly and in order by his three associates, or vice versa. What we often have is the words used by one man will be used by the next speaker in the rebuttal, although, strictly speaking, there is no rebuttal. The structure of the debate is more along the lines of:

- Job:** I feel like crap.
- Eliphaz:** Here’s what I think.
- Job:** Here’s what I think and I still feel like crap.
- Bildad:** Here’s what I think.
- Job:** Here’s what I think, and I feel like crap.
- Etc.

Job’s Disease (s): What you may wonder is what sort of disease or diseases did Job suffer from? Keil and Delitzsch suggest that he suffered from *dâ'u el-gudhâm*, which generally includes Arabian leprosy, cancer and syphilis, called, by Bildad, *the firstborn of death*, in Job 18:13. *It is still in Arabia the most dreaded disease, in the face of which all human sympathy ceases...the greatest personage who is seized with this disease is removed at least a mile or two from the encampment where a...small black-hair tent is put up for him, and an old woman, who has no relations living, is given him as an attendant until he dies. No one visits him, nor even his nearest relations. He is cast off [treated as] one who is smitten by the wrath of God.*²⁰

²⁰ Quoted from Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 433, but the description appears to belong to Wetzst (some old Bible dude).

Parallels Between Job and our Lord Jesus Christ	
Job	Jesus Christ
Job had all his earthly things taken from him without a cause. And Y ^e howah said to Satan, "Have you considered Job, My servant? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, revering God and turning away from evil." (Job 1:8).	And Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and he said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and, observe, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him...nothing deserving death has been done by Him." (Luke 23:13–14, 15b). [And one of the criminals hanging with Him said], "And we indeed [are being punished] justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." (Luke 23:41).
And when they lifted up their eyes at a distance and did not recognize him, they raised their voices and wept (Job 2:12).	Just as many were astonished at you, so His appearance was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men (Isa. 52:13). He was despised and forsaken of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their faces. He was despised and we did not esteem Him (Isa. 53:3).
"They [referring to his friends] have gaped at me with their mouth, they have slapped me on the cheek with contempt. They have gathered themselves against me. God hands me over to ruffians and tosses me into the hands of the wicked." (Job 16:10–11)	Judas, having received the detachment and the officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons (John 18:3). And the soldiers took Him away into...the Praetorium...and they dressed Him up in purple, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they placed it on Him, and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting at Him and kneeling and bowing before Him (Mark 15:16–19).
Satan was allowed to inflict great punishment upon Job, but he was not allowed to take Job's life (Job 2:3–8).	And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve. And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how him might betray Him to them (Luke 22:3–4). Then our Lord endured hours of beatings and punishment prior to being crucified (Luke 22:63–65). However, Satan was not allowed to take our Lord's life, which He willing gave on our behalf. "This is My body which is given for you." (Luke 22:19b).
Job was reprimanded by his wife and she gave him no comfort (Job 2:9).	Our Lord was reprimanded by his wife Israel. Israel cried for his punishment by crucifixion (Matt. 27:22).

Parallels Between Job and our Lord Jesus Christ	
Job	Jesus Christ
The suffering experienced by Job could not be explained by any personal sin or sins which he had committed. His suffering illustrated the suffering that our Lord would endure on our behalf (Job 1 2). "Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me; though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty. I am guiltless." (Job 9:20–21a).	The suffering experience by our Lord could not be explained by His personal sins, as He had not sinned. Pilate said to the rabble, "You have brought me this man as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him. No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us, and observe, nothing deserving death has been done by Him." (Luke 23:14b–15).
Job's friends were of no real comfort to him. Then Job answered and said, "Sorry comforters are you all." (Job 16:1, 2b).	Our Lord's friends were of no comfort to Him. He called the disciples His friends (John 15:14–15). His disciples were unable to remain awake with Jesus to pray the night prior to the cross (Mark 14:32–42). Peter denied Him (Matt. 26:69–75). Eleven of His twelve disciples all deserted Him when He went to the cross (Mark 14:50).
Job's friends had assumed that what he did was wrong, and based their arguments upon the incorrect notion that Job had sinned against God .	For many were giving false testimony against Him, and their testimony was not consistent (Mark 14:56).
After all was said and done, Job received not only that which he had lost, but an abundance of material possessions. And Y ^e howah blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning, and he had 14,000 sheep, and 6000 camels, and 1000 yoke of oxen, and 1000 female donkeys. And he had seven sons and three daughters (Job 42:12–13).	Our Lord, at the cross, had all removed from Him; and God restored Him to great power and glory and with possessions superior and in great excess to material possessions. "You have made Him for a little while lower than the angels; You have crowned Him with glory and honor. You have put all things in subjection under His feet. But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God, He might taste death for every one. For it was fitting for Him, for Whom are all things, and through Whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the Author of their salvation through sufferings." (Heb. 2:7–10 Psalm 8:5–6).

“Am I Job?” asks a believer now and again, when under great pressure. Job was a great man in his generation. When Satan came to God, God pointed out Job specifically and described him in glowing terms. Do you think God is telling Satan the same thing about you right now? I doubt it. In most cases, the believer who asks this question is such a screw-up in the Christian life that Satan and his demon staff ignore him.

Personal Acknowledgment and Source Materials: I drew heavily from *Barnes Notes* while composing this commentary. Whereas *Barnes Notes* is by far one of the very best verse-by-verse commentaries to which I have ever been exposed; he certainly seems to have shined in the book of Job. He made a great many points which

I did not even think of; he often took a slant on a verse and explained his stance to where I was forced to agree with him; and his language and vocabulary throughout his commentary on Job was magnificent to behold and enjoyable to read. Therefore, throughout this book, you will see innumerable quotations from Barnes.

As in all the commentary which I have written, I do not propose to continually unearth great meanings which have eluded theologians for years. I have, as of this writing, in early 1998, after several years of writing, have come up with perhaps two minor revelations which I have not seen before, and there have been perhaps several dozen verses which I have explained better than the commentaries which I have read; however, the bulk of what I am doing has been done before. I have drawn heavily upon the theological framework which I received at Berachah Church, apart from which I don't know that I could have done all of this; and I have used perhaps 100 resources, a third of these extensively. Without the nearly 20 translations to which I have referred, without Keil and Delitzsch, McGee, Rotherham, Zodhiates, Barnes, Bullinger, Scofield, Thieme, Gesenius, Brown, Driver and Briggs, Owens, Strong, Wigram and Green, there is no way that this could have ever been written. My intention is to impart spiritual knowledge to those who are interested, not to write something which I misrepresent as wholly original. Every great theologian stands upon the shoulders of twenty or thirty other men whom he can name, and additional hundreds whom he cannot.

So should you put this down and read Barnes or McGee instead, or send for the tapes from Berachah of Thieme's 1964 exegesis of this book? That is entirely up to you. You should go with whatever sources are available to you which allow you to learn God's Word. Barnes covers this book in great eloquent depth, and McGee more quickly, sounding deceptively simple (McGee had the knack for making the complex sound simple). And, I doubt that I will come anywhere near covering the entirety of the Bible in the short life that remains before me and I refer you gratefully to my predecessors for the work that they have done. Even though I have never formally met any of these people, and most of them I wouldn't recognize, we function as a team, with the intent of edifying the body of Christ and evangelizing the lost.

Famous Verses: Although I should have been doing this all along, in chapter 5, I began to collect verses:

Literal translation:		A Freer translation:
<p style="text-align: center;"> “Is not your reverential fear your dogmatism [or, blind side]? Your hope and integrity of your ways? Recall, please, who, one [who was] innocent, perished: And where are upright ones cut off? Like [those] whom I have seen, plowers of iniquity and sowers of misery— they reap it. </p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Job 4:6–8 [Eliphaz] </p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> “Is not your reverential fear your dogmatism [or, blind side]? And is not your hope the integrity of your ways? Call to mind, if you will, who of the innocent has wrongly perished? And where are upright ones cut down? For instance, those whom I have observed, plowers of iniquity and sowers of misery— they reap iniquity and trouble. </p>

<p>“ ‘Can mortal man apart from [or, more than] God be righteous? If apart from [or, more than] his Maker, is a man cleaner?</p>	<p>Job 4:17 [Eliphaz]</p>	<p>“ ‘Can mortal man be righteous apart from [or, more than] God? Is a man more pure than his Maker? [or, Is a man pure apart from his Maker?]</p>
<p>“For misfortune [as the result of iniquity] does not come from dust nor does trouble sprout out from the ground. For man is born to misery and sons of sparks fly upward.</p>	<p>Job 5:6–7 [Eliphaz]</p>	<p>“For misfortune which is the result of iniquity does not come up from dust nor does trouble just sprout up out of the ground. Still man is born to human misery just as surely as sparks fly upward.</p>
<p>“Observe, happinesses of a man—God reproves him; therefore, do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.</p>	<p>Job 5:17 [Eliphaz]</p>	<p>“Observe the happiness of a man whom God has reproved; therefore, do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.</p>
<p>“What is man that you magnify him; and that you would turn your heart unto him?</p>	<p>Job 7:17</p>	<p>“What is man that you magnify him; and who is man that you would give him any thought?</p>
<p>“For not a man like I—I would answer Him; we would come together into the judgment.</p>	<p>Job 9:32</p>	<p>“For He is not a man like I am—that I could respond to Him in court; nor could we come even together to trial.</p>
<p>“If only a man like I—I could answer Him; we could come together into the judgment.</p>	<p>Job 9:32 alternate</p>	<p>“For if only He were a man like I am, I could respond to Him in court; and we could face each other at trial.</p>
<p>“There is no mediator between us who might lay his hand upon us both.</p>	<p>Job 9:33</p>	<p>“There is no mediator between us; One Who might find an impartial resolution to our conflict.</p>
<p>“Would that there were a mediator between us who might lay his hand upon us both.</p>	<p>Job 9:33 alternate</p>	<p>“If only there were a mediator between us; One Who could render an impartial decision to resolve our conflict.</p>
<p>“Behold, He is slaying me; for Him I will wait; only, my ways to His face(s) I will make clear (or, prove).</p>	<p>Job 13:15</p>	<p>“You have observed that God is slaying me; yet for Him I will wait for my death; only this time, I will state my case to His face.</p>
<p>“Man, being born of a woman; short of days and full of great agitation.</p>	<p>Job 14:1</p>	<p>“A man, who is born of a woman, has a limited number of days which are filled with stress and strife.</p>
<p>“If a man dies, will he live? All of [the] days of my warfare I will wait until [the] coming of my changing.</p>	<p>Job 14:14</p>	<p>“After a man dies, will he live again? After all the days of my warfare and service, I await the coming of my changing.</p>
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<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

Miscellaneous: Don't forget to check out Barthel's book pp. 248–251

Outline of the Book of Job:

- I. Prologue (Job 1–2)
- II. Job and his three friends (Job 3–31)
 - A. First round of speeches (Job 3–14)
 1. Job's lament (Job 3)
 2. Eliphaz answers that God is just and that the innocent do not suffer (Job 4–5)
 3. Job is saddened by his friend's response and is willing to learn, if Eliphaz has anything to say. Then he despairs of his own life (Job 6–7)
 4. Bildad tells Job to turn to God and to trust in God (Job 8)
 5. Job complains that there is no mediator between himself and God (Job 9) and that God has beat him unmercifully and without reason (Job 10)
 6. Zophar is tired of listening to Job and asks that God could give witness here. If Job made his heart right, everything would be fine (Job 11)
 7. Job answers with sarcasm and says that these proverbs are worthless in his case (Job 12–13). Then he complains of what God has done to him (Job 14)
 - B. Second round of speeches (Job 15–21)
 1. Eliphaz tells Job that he presumes to know too much and it is time to share with Job what he knows to be fact (Job 15)
 2. Job's response is tremendous. We view the cross, thousands of years before it takes place, in Job's answer to Eliphaz (Job 16–17)
 3. Bildad speaks up, complaining of Job's long-windedness and then giving a few proverbs concerning the wicked man and his fate (Job 18)
 4. Job
 5. Zophar
 6. Job
 - C. Third round of speeches (Job 22–31)
 1. Eliphaz
 2. Job
 3. Bildad
 4. Job
- III. Elihu (Job 32–37)
- IV. God (Job 38–42:6)
 - A. God speaks (Job 38–40:2)
 - B. Job responds (Job 40:3–5)
 - C. God speaks (Job 40:6–41)
 - D. Job responds (Job 42)
- V. Epilogue (Job 42:7–17)