

Day 50 - SUNDAY: December 18th

Job 1

Job 1:1-22 NKJV

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East. And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You

have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, when the Sabeans raided them and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Daily Deep Dive:

Introduction to the book of Job: There are a lot of various ideas about who wrote Job, when it was written, where it took place, etc... I thought the UCG reading program did a tremendous job with the introduction to the book of Job.

Their introduction will help you understand why we are reading Job after the book of Genesis and before the book of Exodus from a Chronological standpoint.

“Contained within the Writings section of the Old Testament are what are often referred to as the Poetical or Wisdom books: Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes and Job. Chronologically, the first among these is evidently the book of Job—or at least the story contained within the book appears to precede most of the material in the other Writings.

We did not read the book of Job in harmony with earlier sections because its chronological placement is not completely clear and its contents are not crucial to the story flow of the Law and Prophets.

Nevertheless, Job is directly mentioned in the Prophets as an illustrious example, along with Noah and Daniel, of righteousness (see Ezekiel 14:14, Ezekiel 14:20). And it is possible that he is mentioned in the Law as well, as we will see.

Job is widely considered to be one of the great, epic works of literature. The famed 19th-century French author and playwright Victor Hugo said, “The book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind.” Of course, as part of Scripture, it is not ultimately a product of the human mind—though God did inspire a human being to write it down. The 19th-century Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle said: “I call this book, apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written. Our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem: man’s destiny, and God’s ways with him in the earth. There is nothing written, I think, of equal literary merit.” Religious encyclopedist Philip Schaff

said, “The book of Job rises like a pyramid in the history of literature, without predecessor and without a rival” (all quoted in *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, introductory notes on Job).

Yet who it was who penned the book of Job is not named. Jewish tradition credits Moses, and that is certainly possible as the book’s story seems to have preceded him. Others maintain that Job himself may be the author—or perhaps the author of a record that was used by another author, again possibly Moses, as the foundation on which to create a dramatic narrative and series of lofty orations. Yet even many who accept the great antiquity of the story believe it was initially passed down through oral tradition and then written down much later. Some see it as the work of Solomon, as he compiled the wisdom of the East. Because the work is poetic in structure, some today try to paint Job as an allegorical, fictional character. Yet the literary genius of the work should not lead to the conclusion that the events and dialogue recorded in it are not genuine. The reference in Ezekiel 14 clearly portrays Job as a historical figure. He is also mentioned in the New Testament: “You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (James 5:11). So who was Job? When and where did he live? The answers to these questions are not known with certainty. Indeed, it is not necessary to know them to appreciate and benefit from the story, themes and lessons of the book. There is a palpably timeless quality about the book of Job. He represents all believers in our struggle to cope with the hardships of life and maintain our trust and confidence in God come what may. Still, there are a number of clues to the historical setting of the book of Job. The evidence points to Job living in patriarchal times. For instance, he offered sacrifices. Yet in the period after Israel became a nation, sacrifices were to be performed by the Levitical priests. This would indicate that Job lived before this period.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary states in its introductory notes on the book of Job: "It seems likely that Job himself lived in the second millennium B.C. (2000 to 1000 B.C.) and shared a tradition not far removed from that of the Hebrew patriarchs. Job's longevity of 140 years, his position as a man whose wealth was measured in cattle and who acted as priest for his family, and the picture of roving Sabeian and Chaldean tribesmen fit the second millennium better than the first.... The book shows considerable Aramaic flavor that may mean Job and his friends lived near centers of Aramaic influence. Aram-Naharaim [the area in which the family of Abraham's brother Nahor lived] was such a center in northern Mesopotamia. At the end of the millennium, some Aramean tribes moved south and settled on the borders of Babylonia and Palestine; but Arameans continued to control the caravan route through the Khabur River area. This was the time when Aleppo and Damascus became Aramean centers and when the Chaldean tribes invaded Babylonia.... If Job 1:17 means that Chaldean tribes were still roving, the event could reflect a time before they settled at about 1000 B.C." The same commentary further explains Job's name in its historical setting: "The English name 'Job' comes from the Greek *Iob*, which derives from the Hebrew form *Iyob*. Earlier attempts to determine an etymology of the name have given way to evidence from a well-attested west Semitic name in the second millennium found in the Amarna Letters, Egyptian Execration texts, Mari, Alalakh, and Ugaritic documents. The original form of the name was *Ayyabum*"—related to the biblical name Jobab.

Gleason Archer's *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* gives more information on this, noting that renowned archaeologist William F. Albright "suggested that Job may have been a contemporary of the patriarchs of the pre-Mosaic age. He supports the credibility of Job by the authentic second-millennium employment of the

name 'Iyyob. (It should be noted that in the Berlin Execration texts, 'Iyyob appears as the name of a Syrian prince living near Damascus; in the Mari documents of the eighteenth-century B.C., *Ayyabum* is mentioned; and in the Tell el-Amarna correspondence from about 1400 B.C., *Ayab* is referred to as a prince of Pella [in what is today northwestern Jordan].) Albright also certifies the credibility of the name of Bildad (one of Job's three "comforters") as a shortened form of *Yabil-Dadum*, a name found in the cuneiform sources of the early second millennium" (1982, p. 236).

What of Job's nationality? Exceedingly wealthy, he was referred to as "the greatest of all the people of the East" (Job 1:3)—"East" most likely from the perspective of the land of Israel. More specifically, Job lived in the land of Uz (verse 1). Genesis 10:22-23 lists Uz as a son of Shem's son Aram, father of the ancient Aramaeans or Syrians. Genesis 22:20-22 lists a Huz, essentially the same as Uz, as the firstborn of Abraham's brother Nahor. So there could be some relation to the people dwelling near the Euphrates. Then again, according to Lamentations 4:21, Edom was in the land of Uz. *Expositor's* states: "It seems then that Uz might have been the name of a region east of Palestine including the Edomites and adjacent tribes."

Uz is also listed in the Bible as a son of one of the Horite chiefs, Dishan son of Seir, who lived in the land of Edom (Genesis 36:20-21, Genesis 36:28). Recall that Edom was another name for Jacob's brother Esau. So related were the Edomites and Horites by proximity that Mount Seir was the geographical name for the Edomites' territory. Note that the sons of Seir are listed in the same chapter as the genealogy of Esau's family (Genesis 36). Job's friend Eliphaz the Temanite was clearly an Edomite. Another Eliphaz was the firstborn of Esau, and Teman was *his* firstborn son, being the first listed chief of Edom (verses 4, 11, 15). Teman is often reckoned to have been a city or district in Edom (see Jeremiah

49:7; Ezekiel 25:13; Amos 1:12; Obadiah 8-9). As *Expositor's* notes, "The site may be the same as the Arabian town of Tema mentioned in Babylonian sources" (and in Jeremiah 25:23). Eliphaz's identity as a Temanite dates the story of Job to at least a few generations after Jacob and Esau—most likely to when the Israelites were in Egypt (since, as we've seen, it appears to have been written prior to Israel becoming a nation).

Another of Job's friends, Bildad (mentioned above), is referred to as a Shuhite. The Shuhites were apparently descendants of Shuah, a son of Abraham by his last wife Keturah (see Genesis 25:1-2). Thus the Shuhites were closely related to the Midianites (see verses 2, 4) and to the Arabian peoples of Sheba and Dedan (verse 3). Indeed, Jeremiah 25:23 seems to place Dedan in proximity to Tema. Yet "there is a land of Suhu on the Middle Euphrates mentioned in Assyrian records" (*Expositor's*). So it is quite possible that the Shuhites stretched from northern Arabia up to the Euphrates. Indeed, as noted in the *Beyond Today Bible Commentary* on Obadiah, the Edomites appear to have stretched over this whole region. And Uz could have been anywhere in this expanse.

The land and people of Job's third friend, Zophar the Naamathite, are not known, except that Naamah was a fairly common name. But another major character in the book, the young man Elihu, is described as being the son of Barachel the Buzite. Buz was the brother of Huz, both sons of Abraham's brother Nahor (Genesis 22:20-21). Furthermore, in Jeremiah 25:23, Buz is mentioned in conjunction with Tema and Dedan. All of this helps to substantiate the conclusion that the book of Job was set among Abraham's non-Israelite descendants and related family a few generations after Jacob and Esau—again, probably while the Israelites were in Egypt. And it helps us to locate, at least generally, where the story took place.

Building on what we have already seen, *Halley's Bible Handbook* says regarding the setting of the book: "The land of Uz (Job 1:1) is thought to have been along the border between Palestine and Arabia, extending from Edom northerly and easterly toward the Euphrates river, skirting the caravan route between Babylon and Egypt. The particular section of the land of Uz which tradition has called the home of Job was Hauran, a region east of the Sea of Galilee, noted for its fertility of soil and its grain, once thickly populated, now dotted with the ruins of three hundred cities....

"The Septuagint, in a postscript, following ancient tradition, identified Job with Jobab, the second king of Edom (Genesis 36:33). Names and places mentioned in the book seem to give it a setting among the descendants of Esau.... If this is correct, and if Hauran was Job's home, it would indicate that the early kings of Edom may, at times, have migrated from the rock cliffs of Edom northward to the more fertile plains of Hauran. At any rate the book has the atmosphere of very primitive times, and seems to have its setting among the early tribes descended from Abraham, along the northern border of Arabia, about contemporary with Israel's sojourn in Egypt."

King Jobab, whose name relates to the aforementioned second-millennium-B.C. name *Ayyabum* (as an m sound is a nasal b), was the son of Zerah of the Edomite city of Bozrah—this Zerah likely being the same as Chief Zerah, a grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:17). The early kings of Edom, as listed in verses 31-39, apparently did not hold hereditary office and so were probably elected for life terms. It is reasonable to suppose that Job was such a king considering his vast wealth and his distinction of being the greatest man in the East. In fact, in Job 29 he seems to portray himself as a king.

As descendants of Abraham and Isaac, many of the Edomites probably continued to worship the true God in this early period—helping to explain the religious understanding of Job and his friends.

We will consider the themes and issues of the book as we progress through it, summing up the book’s great lessons at the end.” [END]

Job 1:

Verse 1 – See above in the introduction about the land of Uz.

Regarding the name and meaning of Job, the Jamieson-Faucet-Brown (JFB) commentary does a good job showing the possibilities: “The name comes from an *Arabic* word meaning “to return,” namely, to God, “to repent,” referring to his end [Eichorn]; or rather from a *Hebrew* word signifying one to whom enmity was shown, “greatly tried” [Gesenius].”

We learn a great deal about Job by God’s wonderful description of him.

We are told he is “blameless, upright, fears God & shuns evil”. Wow!

What praise! What are we to understand from these Hebrew words?

The word “blameless” in the Hebrew means: perfect and complete in the KJV is almost always translated “perfect”. We understand that no one is “perfect” without sin. This wouldn’t mean that Job never made a mistake, but was a man who had proven and consistent integrity, character and genuineness in all facets of his life.

Here’s an excerpt from the UCG reading program: “

As The Expositor's Bible Commentary explains: "That Job was 'blameless' (*tam*) and 'upright' (*yasar*) should not be construed to imply he was [utterly] sinless (cf. 13:26; 14:16-17). The former, from the root 'be complete' (*tmm*), usually refers to a person's spiritual maturity and the integrity (purity) of his inner being." It continues “The translation "blameless" gives the sense of being beyond reproach—that is, having no obvious sins to criticize. In the New Testament, we find that John the Baptist's parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth, were blameless (Luke 1:6), as was the apostle Paul (Philippians 3:6). Indeed, all elders and deacons in

the Church are expected to be blameless (1 Timothy 3:2, 1 Timothy 3:10; Titus 1:6-7). In Job's case, it seems clear that it was difficult to find any specific transgressions of God's law of which to accuse him.” [END] The word “upright” comes from a word that means “straight”. It’s almost always (87% of the time) translated as “right, upright, righteous”. He stayed straight on the path he understood and didn’t veer. Job did what was right!

It says that Job “feared God”. In our study through Genesis, this was only used once in the context of someone having a proper fear, reverence and respect of God. It was said about Abraham in Genesis 22:12 when after almost sacrificing Isaac out of obedience to God, God said “now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me.”

Like Abraham, Job had this proper fear of God. (I’ll leave it at that, as we could do a whole sermon on this topic).

Lastly, it said he “shunned evil”. This is an interesting word. It means “to turn aside from, to depart, to remove”. It’s most often translated to “put/take away”, “depart”, or “remove”.

Job didn’t tolerate or put up with “evil”. He removed it and departed from it. Evil had no place in Job’s life.

From a human standpoint, this was an incredible man!

Verse 3 – After describing his great wealth of possessions and servants, it tells us that Job was “the greatest of all the people of the East”.

John Gill’s commentary states: “that is, he was a man of the greatest wealth and riches, and of the greatest power and authority, and was had in the greatest honour and esteem”

Verse 4 – This word for “feast” means “feast, banquet, drink”. By itself it doesn’t have a negative connotation (compare Gen 19:3, 21:8)

Verse 5 – Job was so zealous to obey God and look out for those he loved, that he went above and beyond to offer burnt offerings (sin

offerings) on behalf of his children in case they had sinned in some manner.

Verse 6 –We spoke in an early reading in Genesis about this term “Sons of God” usually being used about men who obey and fear God, but can also apply to obedient angels (messengers) of God. Here these “sons of God” present themselves, meaning to “place, stand, set or station oneself” before the Lord. In addition to the sons of God, another being comes with them: Satan. We all know this name. However, it’s interesting to me, that if we were reading the Bible for the first time, the name or title of Satan, this evil angelic being that opposes God, is not used a lot in the Old Testament. In fact, outside of the book of Job, we find “Satan” 4 times (1 Chronicles 21:1, Psalm 109:6, Zechariah 3:1,2). It’s found 14 times in the book of Job. Additionally, it’s found an additional 37 times in the New Testament. “Satan” means “adversary, one who withstands” (BDB).

I’m finding myself wrestling with potential “assumptions” as I begin reading this interaction between Satan and the Lord.

First, where is this interaction taking place. Before reading this right now, I would have told you emphatically that it is occurring in the throne room of God. Is that true? Maybe, but maybe not.

I would have also told you that this interaction was occurring between Satan and God the Father. Is that true? Or was the interaction with the other God Being, the One we later know as Jesus Christ, but in the Old Testament was known as The Word?

I can’t say for sure either way.

Here’s an excerpt from the UCG reading program, that helps us to see some of the complexity: “Job 1:6 tells us of a remarkable event—the “sons of God” coming to present themselves before the Lord. As the book later says that the “sons of God” were present at the creation of the earth (Job 38:6-7), it is clear that the reference is to the angels—God’s

"sons" by virtue of His having created them. Even more remarkable on this occasion is that Satan comes among the angels appearing before God, leading to a dialogue between God and Satan. Many believe this event occurred in God's heavenly court. Yet it seems highly unlikely that God the Father would allow Satan to be in His direct presence and defile His celestial throne room. Indeed, nothing abominable or profane is permitted to enter the holy city of God, the New Jerusalem, that now waits in heaven (Revelation 21:27). God cast Satan down from heaven prior to man's creation and will later do so again at the end of the age in response to a last demonic assault. Why would the Father grant Satan casual access to heaven in between? In a related vein, some think Satan's constant accusation of God's people before God in Revelation 12:10 occurs in heaven. However, we should consider that whenever God's people pray to Him they are coming before His throne (see Hebrews 4:16). Surely Satan's words too, though spoken on earth, are heard before God the Father in heaven. Yet is that what was happening in the book of Job?

In considering the matter, it is nowhere specified that God in Job 1 was God the Father or that the Lord in this chapter was in heaven at all. It seems much more likely that the Lord here in the book of Job, who later spoke to Job, was God the Word (see John 1:1-3), the One who would become Jesus Christ (verse 14). The preincarnate Christ walked on the earth in patriarchal times. Recall that He was the Lord who walked and talked with Abraham while in the company of angels (see Genesis 18). God, as we know from other passages, has angels walking about on the earth who report back to Him. And consider that Ezekiel 1 and 10 portray the preincarnate Jesus in possession of a portable throne on which to travel about the world. With that in mind, it should be easier to imagine reconnoitering angels appearing before the preincarnate Christ somewhere *on the earth* and then Satan—whom God has allowed to

remain as the ruler of this world for the time being—coming upon this gathering.” [END]

Verse 8 – Take note that it is God who brings up Job to Satan (not the other way around). This is important because God continues to work with His people (God calls Job His servant) in whatever state of refinement they are in. No one is ever so “blameless” that God says “I’m done here. Nothing else to do with this person.” As God’s people, those God has called now to a relationship with Him, He continues to refine and complete us until the end of our life.

God repeats the high praise of Job found in verse 1 and adds “there is none like him on the earth”. Referring back to the introduction of this book, this would seem to indicate that the other patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) are not living at this time, and that at this time in human history, that Job stands alone in great character.

Verse 10 – Could be translated a “hedge” or “fence”.

Verse 12 – After God allows Satan the limit of destroying “all that he has”, Satan leaves the Lord’s presence. This word presence means “face, presence” and would indicate that Satan was talking face to face with the Lord in His literal presence.

Verse 13 to 19 – These verses describe the terrible events that were allowed by God to fall upon Job. I won’t go into these verses because I believe they read clearly.

Verse 21 – In the midst of unbelievable emotional pain and hardship, we see Job make an incredible statement: “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

This continues to speak to what a great person of faith and integrity that Job was.

Verse 22 – In his deep grief, Job did not sin or accuse God of wrong doing. Amazing!

The UCG reading program has more to add on this whole section from verse 8 to the end: "The Lord mentions the righteous life of Job to Satan, who is quick to argue that God has essentially "bought" Job's loyalty through protecting and blessing him (Job 1:8-11). Take away the hedge of protection, Satan argues, and Job will "curse" God. We should note that, oddly enough, the word for the verb "curse" used throughout this passage (verses 5, 11; 2:5, 9), *barak*, normally actually means "bless."

Gleason Archer's *New International Encyclopedia of Bible*

Difficulties offers this possible explanation: "The verb *berak* means 'say goodbye to' in Genesis 24:60; [31:55]; Genesis 47:10; Joshua 22:6; 2 Samuel 13:25; and 1 Kings 8:66, generally with the connotation of invoking a parting blessing on the person taking his leave. From this usage we may surmise that an insolent sinner might say goodbye to God Himself, with the intention of dismissing Him from his mind and conscience, of totally abandoning Him.... [Commentator] Delitzsch (Keil and Delitzsch, Job, 2:51) calls this use of *berak* an antiphrastic euphemism. He feels that in Job 2:9 it clearly means... 'say goodbye to'...as a benedictory salutation at parting. But in his general handling of these negative usages, he prefers to render it 'dismiss God from one's heart' (*ibid.*, 2:49)" (p. 237).

Surprisingly, God responds to Satan's challenge by putting Job's possessions and family in the destroyer's power. Yet note that God does not at this time permit Satan to do Job any bodily harm (verse 12). This demonstrates that God has total power over what Satan is permitted to do. While this fact should provide us with comfort, for many it is extremely disturbing that God would allow Satan to hurt Job in any way, especially given the great loss of family he suffers.

Verses 16 and 19 apparently speak of lightning and a destructive tornado respectively, showing that weather calamities can be acts of Satan. Yet these events were by the express permission of God...

Job 1:18-19 seems to say that Job lost all his children, though Job 19:17 may indicate that at least two of them were not in attendance at the ill-fated banquet and therefore survived. In any case, Job's loss of children and his wealth in a single day is difficult to fathom. Yet his reaction to it is stunning. Though he grieved deeply, Job's response was one of humbly worshiping God, acknowledging God's sovereignty over all circumstances (Job 1:20-21). This is truly amazing considering that Job did not have the special knowledge the reader of the account has regarding the discussion between God and Satan. Despite the horror of what had happened, and the seeming abandonment by God that he must have felt, he did not sin (verse 22). Instead, God says that he held fast to his "integrity" (Job 2:3), the Hebrew word here having the same root as the word for "blameless" in chapter 1. In fact, "when Job said, 'May the name of the Lord be *praised*' (v. 21), he was using...the same word that Satan used in v. 11 as an euphemism with the opposite meaning. The play on the root *brk* ('bless') is forceful. It stresses how the Accuser is foiled at this point. Instead of cursing God to his face, Job praised him" (*Expositor's*, note on verses 20-22)." [END].