

Doctrine of Job

1. The narrative of Job and his experiences are history not fiction as many over the years have contended.

2. This conclusion is required by the reference to Job elsewhere in the Bible.

Eze 14:13 "Son of man, if a country sins against me by being unfaithful and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its food supply and send famine upon it and kill its men and their animals,

Eze 14:14 even if these three men--Noah, Daniel and Job-- were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD ...

Eze 14:19 "Or if I send a plague into that land and pour out my wrath upon it through bloodshed, killing its men and their animals,

Eze 14:20 as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness.

Jam 5:11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

3. The author of the book is unknown and the time of the writing is arguably around c. 1550 B.C. Most expositors think Moses wrote the book.

4. Job's homeland was somewhere to the east of Palestine near the border of the desert. There are several indications that he lived in the patriarchal age in what we would today call Saudi Arabia.

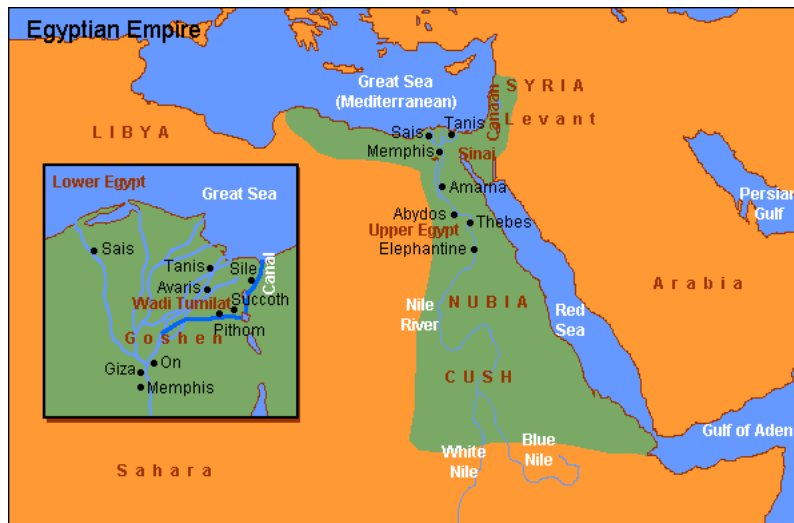
5. Reasons why most expositors believe Job lived just before or at least during the age of the patriarchs.

- the longevity of Job,
- the flourishing of true religion supported by special divine revelation before the Abrahamic covenant
- certain early social and ethnic features such as the nomadic status of the Chaldeans
- the patriarchal form of worship and sacrifice,
- land marks mentioned

- his name--Job was a name prominent in the 2nd millennium B.C. but not found in the 1st millennium.

6. Wycliffe writes: "The name Job occurs in the Berlin Execration texts from Egypt and in the Amarna letters as well as in the Akkadian texts from Mari and Alalakh.

7. Best information would seem to teach Moses learned about Job from his Midianite father-in-law during his stay in Midian. Job's trials were taught from year to year family to family over a significant period of time and finally recorded in writing by Moses even before he penned the first five books of the Old Testament.



8. That Job was involved early on in the angelic conflict is made clear in the first and second chapters of Job.

Job 1:1 In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.

Job 1:2 He had seven sons and three daughters,

Job 1:3 and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East ...

Job's First Test

Job 1:6 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.

Job 1:7 The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it."

Job 1:8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."

Job 1:9 "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied.

Job 1:10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.

Job 1:11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

Job 1:12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job 1:13 One day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house,

Job 1:14 a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby,

Job 1:15 and the Sabeans attacked and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

Job 1:16 While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

Job 1:17 While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

Job 1:18 While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house,

Job 1:19 when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

Job 1:20 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship

Job 1:21 and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."

Job 1:22 In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

Job's Second Test

Job 2:1 On another day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him.

Job 2:2 And the LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it."

Job 2:3 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason."

Job 2:4 "Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life.

Job 2:5 But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face."

Job 2:6 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

Job 2:7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head ...

Job 2:9 His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!"

Job 2:10 He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

9. Job lived east of Palestine in what is now western Saudi Arabia to a ripe old age.

Job 42:12 The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys.

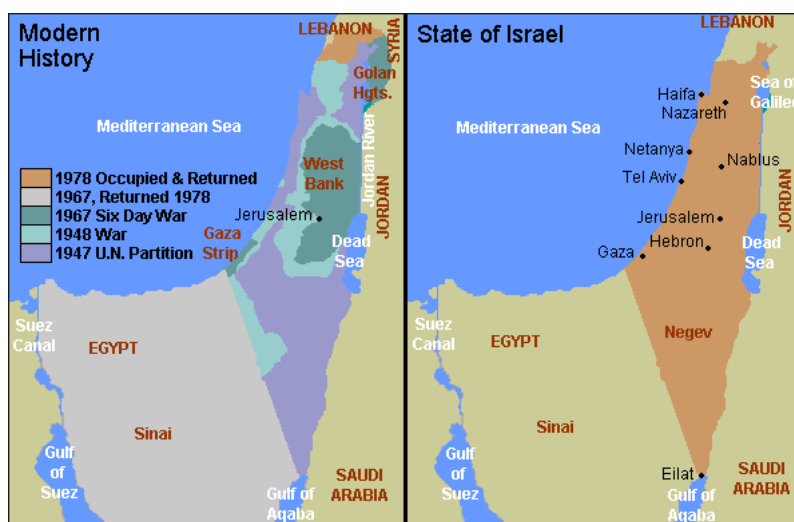
Job 42:13 And he also had seven sons and three daughters.

Job 42:14 The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch.

Job 42:15 Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.

Job 42:16 After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation.

Job 42:17 And so he died, old and full of years.



10. Materially prosperous and genuinely pious Job had continued for perhaps some 70 years in the manifest favor of God and men.

10.1 Then the sudden, well-nigh total reversal of all his earthly circumstances introduced the great crisis that gives Job's life special significance in the angelic conflict.

11. Out of the agony and enigma of his sufferings arose the complaint of Job recorded in chapter three.

Job 3:1 After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth.

Job 3:2 He said:

Job 3:3 "May the day of my birth perish, and the night it was said, 'A boy is born!'

Job 3:4 That day -- may it turn to darkness; may God above not care about it; may no light shine upon it ...

Job 3:16 Or why was I not hidden in the ground like a stillborn child, like an infant who never saw the light of day? ...

Job 3:20 "Why is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul,

Job 3:21 to those who long for death that does not come, who search for it more than for hidden treasure ...

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

Job 3:26 I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil."

12. Job's complaint gave occasion for a long formal discussion between Job and his three philosophical friends. (Job chapters 4-31)

13. The debate served to demonstrate the foolishness of the traditional wisdom of the world which led his wife and friends to false judgment that Job's sufferings were the consequence of a radical defection from the protocol of God. It was thought early on and continued even as a precept of the Jewish faith that "good men prosper and bad men are rebuked of the Lord."

14. But it took the revelation of the voice of the Lord Himself out of a whirlwind to bring the anguished sufferer back to the peace of a humble and trusting servant of the Lord (Job 38:1-42:6). One of Job's friends named Elihu prepares the stage for the Lord's response. There are many truths found in Elihu's dissertation irrespective of his false supposition that Job's conduct had caused His suffering.

14.1 As we will later see, Job's only error was in not accepting the events of his life as God's will and thus his failure to thank God in all things.

1Th 5:18 In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

15. A sample of the message from the young Elihu:

Job 32:2 But Elihu ... became very angry with Job for justifying himself rather than God.

Job 32:3 He was also angry with the three friends, because they ... condemned Job and had not helped him think straight ...

Job 32:6 So Elihu ... said: "I am young in years, and you are old; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know.

Job 32:7 I thought, 'Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom.'

Job 32:8 But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding ...
 Job 32:10 "Therefore I say: Listen to me; I too will tell you what I know.
 Job 32:11 I waited while the three of you spoke, I listened to your reasoning; while you were searching for words,
 Job 32:12 ... not one of you has proved Job wrong; none of you has answered his arguments ...
 Job 32:20 I must speak and find relief; I must open my lips and reply.
 Job 32:21 I will show partiality to no one, nor will I flatter any man;
 Job 32:22 for if I were skilled in flattery, my Maker would soon take me away...
 Job 33:1 "But now, Job, listen to my words; pay attention to everything I say ...
 Job 33:3 My words come from an upright heart; my lips sincerely speak what I know ...
 Job 33:5 Answer me then, if you can; prepare yourself and confront me.
 Job 33:6 I am just like you before God; I too have been taken from clay ...
 Job 33:8 "But you have said in my hearing-- I heard the very words--
 Job 33:9 'I am pure and without sin; I am clean and free from guilt ...
 Job 33:12 "But I tell you, in this you are not right, for God is greater than man.
 Job 33:13 Why do you complain to him that he answers none of man's words?
 Job 33:14 For God does speak-- now one way, now another-- though man may not perceive it.
 Job 33:15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men as they slumber in their beds,
 Job 33:16 he may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings,
 Job 33:17 to turn man from wrongdoing and keep him from pride,
 Job 33:18 to preserve his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword.
 Job 33:19 Or a man may be chastened on a bed of pain with constant distress in his bones,
 Job 33:20 so that his very being finds food repulsive and his soul loathes the choicest meal.
 Job 33:21 His flesh wastes away to nothing, and his bones, once hidden, now stick out ...
 Job 33:26 He prays to God and finds favor with him, he sees God's face and shouts for joy; he is restored by God to his righteous state.
 Job 33:27 Then he comes to men and says, 'I sinned, and perverted what was right, but I did not get what I deserved.
 Job 33:28 He redeemed my soul from going down to the pit, and I will live to enjoy the light.'
 Job 33:29 "God does all these things to a man-- twice, even three times--
 Job 33:30 to turn back his soul from the pit, that the light of life may shine on him.
 Job 33:31 "Pay attention, Job, and listen to me; be silent, and I will speak ...
 Job 34:4 Let us discern for ourselves what is right; let us learn together what is good.
 Job 34:5 "Job says, 'I am innocent, but God denies me justice.
 Job 34:6 Although I am right, I am considered a liar; although I am guiltless, his arrow inflicts an incurable wound ...
 Job 34:9 For he says, 'It profits a man nothing when he tries to please God.'

Job 34:10 "So listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong.
Job 34:11 He repays a man for what he has done; he brings upon him what his conduct deserves.
Job 34:12 It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice ...
Job 34:14 If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath,
Job 34:15 all mankind would perish together and man would return to the dust.
Job 34:16 "If you have understanding, hear this; listen to what I say.
Job 34:17 Can he who hates justice govern? Will you condemn the just and mighty One?
Job 34:18 Is he not the One who says to kings, 'You are worthless,' and to nobles, 'You are wicked,'
Job 34:19 who shows no partiality to princes and does not favor the rich over the poor, for they are all the work of his hands?
Job 34:20 They die in an instant, in the middle of the night; the people are shaken and they pass away; the mighty are removed without human hand.
Job 34:21 "His eyes are on the ways of men; he sees their every step.
Job 34:22 There is no dark place, no deep shadow, where evildoers can hide.
Job 34:23 God has no need to examine men further, that they should come before him for judgment.
Job 34:24 Without inquiry he shatters the mighty and sets up others in their place.
Job 34:25 Because he takes note of their deeds, he overthrows them in the night and they are crushed.
Job 34:26 He punishes them for their wickedness where everyone can see them,
Job 34:27 because they turned from following him and had no regard for any of his ways.
Job 34:28 They caused the cry of the poor to come before him, so that he heard the cry of the needy ...
Job 34:31 "Suppose a man says to God, 'I am guilty but will offend no more.
Job 34:32 Teach me what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, I will not do so again.'
Job 34:33 Should God then reward you on your terms ...
Job 35:5 Look up at the heavens and see; gaze at the clouds so high above you.
Job 35:6 If you sin, how does that affect him? If your sins are many, what does that do to him?
Job 35:7 If you are righteous, what do you give to him, or what does he receive from your hand?
Job 35:8 Your wickedness affects only a man like yourself, and your righteousness only the sons of men.
Job 35:9 "Men cry out under a load of oppression; they plead for relief from the arm of the powerful.
Job 35:10 But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night,
Job 35:11 who teaches more to us than to the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds of the air? ...
Job 35:16 So Job opens his mouth with empty talk; without knowledge he multiplies words ...

Job 36:2 "Bear with me a little longer and I will show you that there is more to be said in God's behalf ...

Job 36:5 "God is mighty, but does not despise men; he is mighty, and firm in his purpose.

Job 36:6 He does not keep the wicked alive but gives the afflicted their rights.

Job 36:7 He does not take his eyes off the righteous; he enthrones them with kings and exalts them forever.

Job 36:8 But if men are bound in chains, held fast by cords of affliction,

Job 36:9 he tells them what they have done-- that they have sinned arrogantly.

Job 36:10 He makes them listen to correction and commands them to repent of their evil.

Job 36:11 If they obey and serve him, they will spend the rest of their days in prosperity and their years in contentment.

Job 36:12 But if they do not listen, they will perish by the sword and die without knowledge.

Job 36:13 "The godless in heart harbor resentment; even when he fetters them, they do not cry for help ...

Job 36:15 But those who suffer he delivers in their suffering; he speaks to them in their affliction.

Job 36:16 "He is wooing you from the jaws of distress to a spacious place free from restriction, to the comfort of your table laden with choice food.

Job 36:17 But now you are laden with the judgment due the wicked; judgment and justice have taken hold of you ...

Job 36:21 Beware of turning to evil, which you seem to prefer to affliction.

Job 36:22 "God is exalted in his power. Who is a teacher like him?

Job 36:23 Who has prescribed his ways for him, or said to him, 'You have done wrong'?

Job 36:24 Remember to extol his work, which men have praised in song.

Job 36:25 All mankind has seen it; men gaze on it from afar.

Job 36:26 How great is God--beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out.

Job 36:27 "He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams;

Job 36:28 the clouds pour down their moisture and abundant showers fall on mankind.

Job 36:29 Who can understand how he spreads out the clouds, how he thunders from his pavilion?

Job 36:30 See how he scatters his lightning about him, bathing the depths of the sea.

Job 36:31 This is the way he governs the nations and provides food in abundance.

Job 36:32 He fills his hands with lightning and commands it to strike its mark.

Job 36:33 His thunder announces the coming storm; even the cattle make known its approach ...

Job 37:5 God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding.

Job 37:6 He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth,' and to the rain shower, 'Be a mighty downpour.'

Job 37:7 So that all men he has made may know his work, he stops every man from his labor.

Job 37:8 The animals take cover; they remain in their dens.
Job 37:9 The tempest comes out from its chamber, the cold from the driving winds.
Job 37:10 The breath of God produces ice, and the broad waters become frozen.
Job 37:11 He loads the clouds with moisture; he scatters his lightning through them ...
Job 37:14 "Listen to this, Job; stop and consider God's wonders.
Job 37:15 Do you know how God controls the clouds and makes his lightning flash?
Job 37:16 Do you know how the clouds hang poised, those wonders of him who is perfect in knowledge?
Job 37:17 You who swelter in your clothes when the land lies hushed under the south wind,
Job 37:18 can you join him in spreading out the skies, hard as a mirror of cast bronze?
Job 37:19 "Tell us what we should say to him; we cannot draw up our case because of our darkness ...

16. Let's look at a sample of God's message in response to Job's attitude and the advice of Job's friends.

Job 38:1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said:
Job 38:2 "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?
Job 38:3 Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.
Job 38:4 "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.
Job 38:5 Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?
Job 38:6 On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone--
Job 38:7 while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?
Job 38:8 "Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb,
Job 38:9 when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness ...
Job 38:12 "Have you ever given orders to the morning, or shown the dawn its place ...
Job 38:34 "Can you raise your voice to the clouds and cover yourself with a flood of water?
Job 38:35 Do you send the lightning bolts on their way? Do they report to you, 'Here we are'?
Job 38:36 Who endowed the heart with wisdom or gave understanding to the mind?
Job 38:37 Who has the wisdom to count the clouds? Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens ...
Job 39:1 "Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you watch when the doe bears her fawn?
Job 39:2 Do you count the months till they bear? Do you know the time they give birth?
Job 39:3 They crouch down and bring forth their young; their labor pains are ended.
Job 39:4 Their young thrive and grow strong in the wilds; they leave and do not return.
Job 39:5 "Who let the wild donkey go free? Who untied his ropes ...
Job 40:1 The LORD said to Job:
Job 40:2 "Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!"

17. Job's reaction to the message:

Job 40:3 Then Job answered the LORD:

Job 40:4 "I am unworthy--how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth.

18. Thus was Job proved acceptable, a good and faithful servant, a witness for the Lord in the appeal phase of the angelic conflict.

19. If any fault was demonstrated by Job, it was his questioning of God, a most understandable reaction but contrary to the ultimate trust God deserves.

20. As vindication of Job before the eyes of his human accusers, God crowned the earthly life of his servant with twofold restoration. (Job 42:7-17)

Job 42:7 After the LORD had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.

Job 42:8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has."

Job 42:9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer.

Job 42:10 After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

Job 42:11 All his brothers and sisters and everyone who had known him before came and ate with him in his house. They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the LORD had brought upon him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.

Job 42:12 The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys.

Job 42:13 And he also had seven sons and three daughters.

