

**A Man Named Job (c. 2200 BC)**

Job 1–2

**A Man Named Job**

1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

3 His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

4 And his sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

5 And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered 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 did Job continually.

**“Have you considered my servant Job?”**

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

**The First Test**

13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house:

14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

15 And the Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

16 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

17 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house:

19 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

**“He still holds fast his integrity”**

2:1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he *is* in thine hand; but save his life.

**The Second Test**

7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.  
 8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.  
 9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.  
 10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

**Job's Friends Come to Comfort Him**

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.  
 12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.  
 13 So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

**Job's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)****Job 3****Job Curses the Day He Was Born**

1 After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.  
 2 And Job spake, and said,  
 3 Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a man child conceived.  
 4 Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.  
 5 Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.  
 6 As *for* that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.  
 7 Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.  
 8 Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.  
 9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but *have* none; neither let it see the dawning of the day:  
 10 Because it shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.

**Job Wishes He Had Died at Birth**

11 Why died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?  
 12 Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?  
 13 For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,  
 14 With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;  
 15 Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:  
 16 Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants *which* never saw light.  
 17 There the wicked cease *from* troubling; and there the weary be at rest.  
 18 *There* the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.  
 19 The small and great are there; and the servant *is* free from his master.

**Job Bemoans His Fate—God Grants Him Life When He Longs for Death**

20 Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul;  
 21 Which long for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;  
 22 Which rejoice exceedingly, *and* are glad, when they can find the grave?  
 23 *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?  
 24 For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.  
 25 For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.  
 26 I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

*Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.*

### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) The following internal evidence argues for the patriarch period as the historical setting of Job:
  - A) Job lived to be much older than 140 (Jewish tradition holds that his age at death was  $70 + 140 = 210$ ; cf. Job 42:16).<sup>1</sup> This age matches the ages of those who lived immediately after the flood (Gen 11:13–23). Also, the patriarchs lived to similar ages: Abraham lived to be 175, Isaac 180, Jacob 147, and Joseph 110.
  - B) Job’s wealth consisted primarily of his possessions, his animals and his servants (Job 1:3; 42:12; cf. Gen 12:16). This is consistent with what we know of wealth during the time of the patriarchs (cf. Gen 13:1–2; 24:35).
  - C) Job indicated no knowledge of organized religion—Mosaic, Levitical or otherwise; like the patriarchs he was a priest to his own household (Job 1:5).<sup>2</sup>
- 2) A placement of the story of Job before Abraham seems best—such a position gives Job a good chronological placement and avoids interrupting the patriarch narratives of Genesis 12–50.

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<sup>1</sup> Job 42:16 LXX says that “Job lived after his affliction a hundred and seventy years: and all the years he lived were two hundred and forty” (a variant says that all Job’s years were 248).

<sup>2</sup> Robert L. Alden, *Job*, New American Commentary Vol. 11, 26.