

**A PERSONAL
VERSE-BY-VERSE COMMENTARY**

JOB

By

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David Guzik: "Judging by the style of the Hebrew it uses, some scholars judge Job to be the oldest book of the Old Testament.... Some believe that the *Jobab* mentioned in Genesis 10:29 is Job, which would put him in the era between Noah and Abraham."

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.

As I read through the helps, it seems that the first question to address is "Is Job a real person?" The Bible speaks for itself.

Ezekiel 14:14 "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD."

Ezekiel 14:20 "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness."

James 5:10 "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience."

James 5:11 "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

When did he live? One can only infer from the available facts.

- He lived another 140 years after the time of testing (Job 42:16-17). David tells us in Psalms that 70-80 years was the normal life expectancy of man...

Psalms 90:10 "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

...so it was well before his time.

- No mention is made of his heritage as among God's chosen people or of God's great works on their behalf. This leads me to believe that he lived at a time before God separated them out. God identifies him as one who has no comparison on planet earth (Job 1:8). This makes me think he was before the time of Abraham.

"perfect" - **tam**, *tawm*; complete; usually (morally) pious; specifically, gentle, dear

"upright" - from 3474; straight (literally or figuratively).... 3474. **yashar**, *yaw-shar*; a primitive root; to be straight or even; figuratively, to be (causatively, to make) right, pleasant, prosperous.

“feared” - **yare**}, *yaw-ray*, fearing; morally, reverent:—afraid, fear (-ful).

The words used to describe Job seem to indicate that he was a very moral man. One whose company other men would enjoy (gentle—not brash or overbearing, pleasant). By observation of his actions, one could tell that he feared God with reverence and respect. Because of this fear he “eschewed” (departed, turned away from, withdrew from) evil. Other verses in scripture couple the fear of God with hating evil.

Proverbs 8:13 “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.”

Proverbs 16:6 “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.”

Job 1:2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

Job 1:3 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.

These verses indicate that Job was a wealthy man who had a large family. In fact, he was the most respected man of his day in the land of the east. I would think that this description was made to give perspective to the Jewish audience reading this story. It would make me think that “the east” was recognized as home to many of the most wealthy and respected persons of the then known world.

According to Eerdman’s Bible Dictionary, the land of the east was a phrase used “descriptively as referring to the general region from northern Mesopotamia to Arabia.” It also locates Uz in the general area of Edom.

I liked this quote from Spurgeon: “A man may be a good man and a rich man, but it is not usually the case. I am afraid that what Mr. Bunyan says is all too true, ‘Gold and the gospel seldom do agree; Religion always sides with poverty.’”

Job 1:4 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.

Job 1:5 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.

Job had a close-knit family. The brothers and sisters enjoyed one another’s company. Although the sons at least are grown and on their own, Job is still actively supervising and interceding in their lives as their spiritual head.

“every one his day” – Some suggest that this is a possible reference to birthdays.

I'm not sure what it means when it says he "sent and sanctified them" after their days of feasting. When I looked up the words, it seemed to indicate that he was ensuring their moral purity in some way. One author indicated that he thought this was a time of encouragement and exhortation from father to child re self-examination of his actions, and that makes sense to me.

The spiritual condition of his children was very important to Job. He arose "early" in the morning to offer burnt offerings on their behalf—not as a group, but for each individual child. It would seem that Job understood the need of "atonement" for sin to restore fellowship to God. Then we are told that Job did this continually. The wording seems to indicate that Job interceded daily for his children thinking they might have sinned against God *unaware* (from the Hebrew for "hearts").

This is quite an example for us. How diligently do we cover our children in prayer? Do we continue to invest in them spiritually once they are on their own? What are the true priorities in our life? What gets our attention first?

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

Who are the sons of God? Angels—direct creations of God, and the Septuagint translates it as such. I remember hearing Chuck Missler explain how sons of God are direct creations of God; in other words, not by means of birth from another. This term is only used of angels in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, however, it is used in reference to those that have been born again and made new creations in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

The verse goes on to say "and Satan came also." To me this indicates a connection and a distinction. It makes me think that there are set times of accountability for the angels. The angels were created for a purpose. The following verses in Hebrews supports this thought:

Hebrews 1:13-14 "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

Satan is one of these created beings; in fact, he was one of higher position.

Ezekiel 28:13-15 "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

Even though iniquity was found in him, Satan is still allowed to present himself before God as the accuser of the brethren. Even his name, Satan, indicates his position as God's "adversary, the arch enemy of good."

Revelation 12:10 "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

When you put these thoughts together, you realize that these "days of presentation" for the sons of God probably continue to this day.

Job 1:7 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.

Satan has no specific ministry to report on, so the Lord asks Satan what he has been up to—not because He doesn't know, but to begin the conversation about Job. What really strikes me is the civility and calm with which God speaks to him. In my mind it can only be because God knows the end from the beginning. In spite of all Satan's "successes," God knows that He will get all glory and Satan will fail. He knew the end from the beginning when He brought up Job to Satan. He knew that Job would pass the test and that his faith would be strengthened—not weakened. The introspective question becomes—"Would God be able to put my name before Satan with that same confidence?"

Satan's answer is very general. It brings to mind some other verses in scripture.

1 Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Peter was speaking from personal experience—Luke 22:31-32 "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Job 1:8 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?

As noted above, it is the Lord that brings Job to Satan's attention. How does God introduce Job to Satan? As "my servant." The Hebrew used is the word for "bondservant, worshipper." What a wonderful reputation Job has with God—"there is none like him in the earth." I don't think this means that Job is sinless, but it does show that we have the ability to attain a position of approval in the eyes of God by how we conduct our lives. That approval seems to be based on his actions toward his fellowman as well as to God. At this point in time no other man on earth was his spiritual equal.

Chuck Smith offers some interesting insight on the word "consider": "The word considered is the word that I'm interested in, though, because it is actually a

military term. It is the term that is used of a general who is studying a city before he attacks it in order that he might develop his strategy whereby he can destroy the city.”

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

Job 1:10 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.

Job 1:11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

It is obvious from Satan’s answer that Job had caught his attention. He was aware of his position and reputation. In fact, he has a ready answer. The fact that he uses the term “hedge about him” indicates that he has probably tried to penetrate that hedge in the past, but was unable due to God’s blessing and protection. He implies that the only reason Job reverences God is because of his health, wealth, and protection. I think it is significant to note that this challenge is being made in the presence of the sons of God.

Job 1:12 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 Lord gives Satan permission to attack Job; however, there is one condition—he cannot touch Job personally. The most obvious truth gleaned here is the fact that Satan’s power is limited and under the sovereign control of God, but it is obvious his power is great. Satan has a new project, and he immediately leaves to work his evil.

Job 1:13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house:

Job 1:14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

Job 1:15 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.

Job 1:16 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.

Job 1:17 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.

Job 1:18 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:

Job 1:19 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.

Satan waits for the opportune time, when the children are all in fellowship with one another again. It's like blitzkrieg. One after another Job gets messengers telling of disaster—

- 1) The oxen and asses are stolen and the servants tending them are all killed but one.
- 2) Fire from heaven has consumed the sheep and all the servants tending them but one. In the servant's eyes, this fire had to be from God; but we know that was a wrong assumption.
- 3) The camels have been stolen and all the servants tending them killed but one.
- 4) A great wind destroyed the house of Job's oldest son during a dinner party with all his other children in attendance; all in the house had been killed except the messenger.

Note that Satan was able to get men to cooperate with his plans, so we know they did not fear God. Maybe their leaders were demon-possessed.

Satan left Job nothing except his home and his wife. He must have exercised all the power granted him to the max. He is sure that such a deluge of disaster will cause Job to curse God.

Chuck Smith summarized the situation well: "In Job we have the picture of a man who was reduced perhaps more than any other man has ever been reduced, to just the bare essence of existence. With Job it's just raw existence. Everything that we think as necessary for life, everything that we consider to be important for our lives was stripped away from Job. His possessions, his family, his friends, his health, lost everything. He even lost the consciousness of the sense of his own worth as he began to curse the day that he was born and cry out for death."

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Job 1:21 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.

Job 1:22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

How does Job respond? With extreme grief and sorrow. He tears his robe and shaves his head, recognized signs of mourning. What does he do next? He falls down on the ground and worships God—not a natural response in the flesh. How does a parent maintain such self-control in light of the loss of all his children, let alone all his other worldly possessions? I can't imagine.

Job's response testifies that he recognizes God is the giver of all things—beginning with life. He came into this world with nothing, and he would leave it with nothing. He recognizes the sovereignty of God in bestowing blessing. Just

as He has the authority to give blessing, He has the authority to remove blessing. He has no clue that Satan is involved and that this testing is a result of his commitment to serve God.

Satan has failed. "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." I thought the entry in Strong's for "foolishly" was interesting:

tiplah, *tif-law'*; from the same as 8602; frivolity:—folly, foolishly
8602. **taphel**, *taw-fale'*; from an unused root meaning to smear... untempered.

In other words, Job kept his emotions under control and didn't respond rashly.

When testing comes our way, what is our response? It is expected that we respond in grief and sorrow as events dictate. The test becomes, are we willing to acknowledge God's sovereignty and worship Him in spite of the devastating circumstances? This brings to mind the following verse:

1Thessalonians 5:18 "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

I liked David Guzik's thoughts at this point:

- We should never think the good things of this world come to us from the earth; they come from heaven.
- They come to us as *gifts*; that is, they are undeserved.
- God gives His gifts with kindness and thoughtfulness.
- Knowing this sweetens the value of everything we have; things are more precious because they are gifts from a loving God.
- This prevents us from dishonesty; we want nothing in our hand except what God gives us, and do not want to mix what He gives with what the devil gives.
- It is foolishness to take pride in having more than what another has.
- It is easy to give back to God when we really understand that all we have comes from Him.
- We must always worship the Giver and not the gifts. The Giver is greater than the gifts He gives.