

# Unsolved Mysteries, Unanswered Questions, and Undeserved Suffering

Lesson 1

## Studying Job Is a Challenge

- It is a very long and wordy story!
- It is a very familiar but often misunderstood story!
- It is a very mysterious yet meaningful story!

## Unsolved Mysteries in Job

1) **WHEN** did the story itself actually take place?

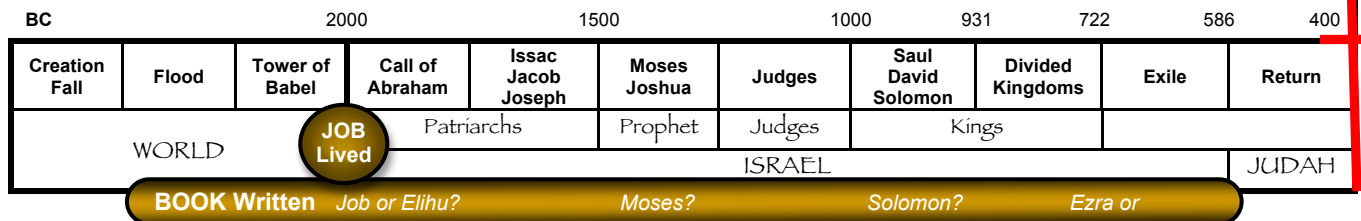
### The Story of Job Probably Took Place during the Time of the Patriarchs

- The **longevity** of Job (at least 140 years) is similar to the patriarchs. Job 42:16
- The **prosperity** of Job is measured in livestock like the patriarchs. Job 1:3; 42:12
- The **hostility** of Job's enemies (Sabeans and Chaldeans) is consistent with the patriarchal period. Job 1:15, 17
- The **responsibility** of Job as the family priest is like the patriarchs. Job 1:5
- The **terminology** in Job is similar to the patriarchal period. For example: Sheba, Tema, Eliphaz, Uz, Job
- The **scarcity** in Job of references to Israel's formal covenants, law, or institutions is in harmony with the patriarchal period.
- The **historicity** of Job should not be questioned. Ezekiel 14:14; 20; James 5:10-11

**We know JOB was a REAL HISTORICAL PERSON and that HIS STORY really is HISTORY!**

Read **Genesis 11:9—12:1** to get a feel for the life and times of Job.

2) **WHO** wrote the Book of Job and when?



**Personally, I lean toward JOB or one of the four counselors! IF SO, then Job is the oldest book in the ENTIRE BIBLE!**

3) **WHERE** did the story take place and where did his friends come from?

*"in the land of Uz...In the East" is all we are told (1:1, 3), but east of what?!*

*"[His skin] itched and oozed so badly that he took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself, then went and sat on a trash heap, among the ashes." (2:8, The Message)*

4) **WHAT** kind of story (literature) is it?

- Job is the **first of five WISDOM** Books in the Bible: *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*

What Do the Wisdom Books Teach Us? Wisdom books reveal the **HEART (PASSION-PURSUIT-PRIORITIES)** of a life surrendered to the LORD...even in the midst of unfathomable and undeserved suffering like Job's.

What Is Wisdom according to the Wisdom Books? Wisdom is the *skill* of seeing and living life from God's **PERSPECTIVE**...even in the midst of unfathomable and undeserved suffering like Job's.

*"To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity;" Proverbs 1:3; Proverbs 1:1-7*

How Can We Learn to Live Life from God's Perspective? Skill in living life from God's perspective comes from **FEARING** the LORD...even in the midst of unfathomable and undeserved suffering like Job's.

*"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction." Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; 15:33  
Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil." Proverbs 3:7*

*[Job] was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. Job 1:1*

*And he said to man, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding. Job 28:28*

What is the Fear of the LORD? To know God for who He really is and **RUN TO HIM** with a faith that obeys...even in the midst of unfathomable and undeserved suffering like Job's.

**Job:** To Fear the LORD Is to **KNOW** Him more than anything else. *Job 28:28; 42:1-2, 5-6*

**Psalms:** To Fear the LORD Is to **PRAISE** Him more than anything else. *Psalms 111:10*

**Proverbs:** To Fear the LORD Is to **TRUST** Him more than anything else. *Proverbs 1:7.3-5-6*

**Ecclesiastes:** To Fear the LORD Is to **OBEY** Him more than anything else. *Ecclesiastes 12:13*

**Song of Songs:** To Fear the LORD Is to **LOVE** Him more than anything else. *Song of Songs 7:10; 8:6*

*"To fear God is to stand in awe of His righteousness, majesty, and power and to trust Him by humbly depending on Him." ~Bruce Wilkinson*

- Job is a **ONE-OF-A-KIND** piece of literature that is beyond compare.

*"...the greatest poem, whether of ancient or modern literature." ~Tennyson*

*"Tomorrow, if all literature was to be destroyed and it was left to me to retain one work only, I should save Job." ~Victor Hugo*

*"The Book of Job taken as a mere work of literary genius, is one of the most wonderful productions of any age or of any language." ~Daniel Webster*

## Unanswered Questions in Job

- 1) WHY doesn't God **CLEARLY** answer all the questions about suffering that the story seems to raise?

*Why do righteous suffer?*

*Why do bad things happen to good people?*

*Where is God when tragedy strikes our lives and all hell breaks loose on earth?*

*Why is God so often silent and seems so distant during the suffering of His people?*

*If God is so great (all-powerful) and so good (all-loving), why does He allow such evil to occur?*

*Why does God continue allow Satan to ruin so many lives with his lies and demonic attacks?*

*Tough questions like these are real and rise up in our hearts, whenever we—or someone we love—suffers!*

### The Biggest Question Job Asks Is Never Answered by God

**WHY** does such a godly, blameless man of integrity like myself have to endure such undeserved suffering from God?

- 2) The Book of Job raises more questions about suffering than answers, but the answers it does provide are the ones God knows we **really NEED** and the ones we will be **most SATISFIED** with in the end!

## Undeserved Suffering in Job

Job's suffering was undeserved and such suffering is always...

**mysterious** and so is the story of Job!

**universal** and so is the story of Job!

**timeless** and so is the story of Job!

**personal** and so is the story of Job!

**emotional** and so is the story of Job!

How has your own experience of suffering been unfathomable like an unsolved mystery with unanswered question?

What questions are you asking about your suffering that are going unanswered by God?

What answers do you think God wants to reveal to you through the Book of Job? Prepare your heart this week to receive His answers.