

**Patriarch Period:
A Man Acquainted With Suffering *Job 1:1-42:17***

As you know the nature of our study is chronological. Job is the first of the books that will begin to be out of biblical order. Job is thought to have lived at or before the time of Abraham. *The Reese Chronological Bible* gives the date of the birth of Abram as 1967 B.C. Reese gives the dates of B.C. 1997-1967 for Job's birth.

Job was a historical character. Evidence of this is that we find him mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel in the Old Testament and James in the New Testament.

The study of Job is simple and yet complex in nature. The characters are important in understanding this book because it is for the most part a dialogue of Job with his friends. One thing that I always found hard to understand was who was speaking at any particular time. I will attempt to help with this problem in this study.

I offer this outline for our study.

- I- Job's Suffering *Job 1-3***
- II- Visits and Dialogue With His Friends *Job 4-37***
- III- God's Call For An Answer *Job 38-41***
- IV- Job's Answer and Renewed Blessings *Job 42***

I- Job's Suffering *Job 1-3*

In the first part of the book we are introduced to Job. Job was a very wealthy man. (1:3) He was also a righteous man who feared God greatly. (1:5)

Job was an illustration of righteousness that God held up to Satan. God in His sovereignty and

providence allowed Satan to afflict Job by killing his children and stealing his livestock. (1:13-19) Job rose up and worshipped God. Satan next is allowed to touch Job's body with afflictions. The afflictions were so great that when Job's friends came toward him they did not know him at first. (2:12)

To make matters worse Job had a wife that constantly tried to get him to curse God and die.

I remind us that Job did not have the advantage of reading the first two chapters of the book that bears his name for reference toward understanding the testing that he was subject to. Chapter 3 records for us that Job wished he had never been born. Job was a man acquainted with sorrow.

II- Visits and Dialogue With His Friends *Job 4-37*

Job's friends did more ministries to him before they said anything that with what they said. They come to Job, recorded in 2:11-13, and sit down with him.

Beginning in *Job 4* we have the section of dialogues Job has with his friends. The way I wish to present this is by character study of sorts. There are four characters here not including Job. Eliphaz; Bildad; Zophar and Elihu.

a- Eliphaz- The following are the speeches of Eliphaz. Eliphaz bases his advice on his personal experience.

4:1-5:27 The reasoning for Job suffering is that he is suffering because of sin (4:8)

15:1-35 Eliphaz reasons that the suffering is the result of sin again. (15:6) He also calls Job a blow hard. (15:2)

22:1-30 Eliphaz says that Job had cheated the poor (**22:6**); not fed the hungry (**22:7**); mistreated the widows and orphans (**22:9**). His advice to Job is to repent and turn back to God. (**22:21-26**)

b- Bildad- The speeches of Bildad in which he based his advice on tradition are as follows.

8:1-22- Like Eliphaz Bildad also concludes that Job is suffering because of his sins. (**8:20**) He has the same advice of repentance and turning back to God. (**8:5-6**)

18:1-21- He rebukes Job for impatience and presumption.

25:1-6- Bildad declares the sovereignty of God and claims that no man can be just in His sight.

c- Zophar- His speeches are only 2 in number. He chastises Job and claims he should have known these truths before. (**11:6; 20:4**)

11:1-20 Zophar again claims that Job is suffering because of his sin. (**11:4-6**) He also, like the first two, advises him to turn back to God in repentance. (**11:13-15**)

20:1-29 He accuses Job of being a hypocrite. (**20:5**)

We cannot help but notice that the thought of the three friends thus far is that all suffering that Job is doing and in fact all suffering that any saint find themselves in is the result of sin. We know that this is not true however.

d- Elihu- The last one to speak to Job is Elihu. Elihu was a young man and probably did not speak until now because of his youth. We have four speeches recorded of Elihu but no response from Job recorded to these.

1- First Speech: **32:1-33:33**- Elihu rebukes Jobs other three friends for not answering Job. **33:11-12**. He

thought he was God's answer to Jobs problems. (**33:6**)

2- Second Speech: **34:1-37**- Elihu accuses Job of foolish speaking in **34:35-37**.

3- Third Speech: **35:1-16**- In this third speech he accuses Job of false and self-righteousness. **35:2**

4- Fourth Speech: **36:1-37:24**- He admonishes Job to consider God's glory and His majesty.

d- Job's Answers: We have a total of nine separate speeches recorded in which Job answers the friends charges. They are recorded in **Job 3; 6-7; 9-10; 12-14; 16-17; 19; 21; 23-24; 26-31**. Job discussed many things in these speeches. Job held on to the fact that he was not suffering for any sin that he was aware of and the fact that he had helped his fellowman.

We also see him cursing the day he was born and wishing to die. Job did not ever curse god and die as his wife had suggested.

III- God's Call For An Answer 38-41

Before Job can answer Elihu God joins the discussion. God calls Job to answer questions that no man can answer. In all of the scriptures there is not any section where the glory of God our Creator is set forth as it is in **Job 38-41**. God asked Job where he was when the foundation of the earth was laid. **38:4**. He also asked him if he knew the size of creation. **38:18**. He also ask him if he could control the rain. **38:28**. God sets all the things that man cannot do and the things that He alone can do. This section always has a very humbling effect upon me as I read it, as it should any man.

STEP 3

Jobs answer to God was to see that in the face of God's righteousness that he was, "...vile." 40:4

IV- Job's Answer and Renewed Blessings 42

Again Job acknowledged that God is indeed magnificent. 42:1-6. We see that Job is vindicated before his friends and God tells them that He is displeased with them and to allow Job to pray for them and God will accept his prayers.

Job's health is restored his wealth is restored two fold. 42:10. The only thing not restore two fold were his children. Some have said the reason he did not get two times the children was though they had died that Job had not really lost them but they were reunited in eternity. Job lived to see not only his grandchildren but also his great grandchildren. God restored Job to his former position.

Application to Life's Steps:

- 1- We know that all suffering is not the result of sin.
- 2- We must resist the temptation to elevate ourselves spiritually above someone who is suffering.
- 3- We must learn to be compassionate to those friends who are in trouble unlike Job's friends.

4- God is sovereign in all of His creation and is an awesome God.

5- Man in comparisons to the power and glory of God must stand silent before Him.

Retracing our Steps:

1- Was Job's suffering the result of sin in Job's life? _____

2- What reason did Job's friends give for Job's suffering? _____

3- What stood out in your mind in chapter 38-41 concerning God? _____

4- Is there someone you are aware of that could use a visit from a true friend? If so will you make a commitment to visit them to encourage them? _____

5- What is one theory as to why Job did not get 2 time the children as he did the rest of his possessions? _____
