

The Book of
JOB

A Study Book by
David A. DeWitt

Our Purpose

Relational Concepts has been organized to provide motivational instruction for men and women interested in being used by God in their present positions in the community.

We believe that Christian doctors, mechanics, housewives, realtors, lawyers, secretaries, plumbers, businessmen, etc. are the most effective spokespersons the church has.

These people are generally not in a position where they can take the time to go to a Bible college. Our purpose is to bring quality instruction to them, where they are, to be applied in their family and their community.



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Introduction

Job is the oldest book in the Bible and possibly the oldest book in the world. No one knows for sure who wrote it, where Job lived, or when it took place. Yet, it remains the most fascinating book on suffering, in all of literature.



Where Did Job Live?



We know from the cultural data in the book that it took place in the Near East. The first verse tells us that Job lived *in the land of Uz*. Lamentations 4:21 tells us that (at least at the time of Jeremiah, around 600 B.C.) Uz was the land of the Edomites (*Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, Who dwells in the land of Uz*). Since Edom was the territory southeast of the Dead Sea, it is likely Job lived in this area. Ryrie says, “This area was also identified with Uz by Ptolemy, a Greek general under Alexander the Great, in the third century B.C.” (“Ryrie Study Bible”).

Who Wrote Job?

Here are some suggestions with my comments:

1. **Job** himself. Possibly. Some ancient authors (like Moses) do address themselves in the third person, but the point of the book is that Job had no idea of the cause of his suffering, and it was never revealed to him, at least through the end of the book.
2. **Elihu**. More likely. He’s the fourth friend, the one who spoke in chapters 32–37. He seems to be an observer from the beginning, who did not speak because he was the youngest. It also seems that he experienced God speaking to Job out of a whirlwind at the end and could have witnessed Job’s restored prosperity and Job’s death (Job 42:16–17).
3. **Moses**. Unlikely. This is according to Jewish tradition, but I’m not sure why.
4. **Solomon**. Also unlikely. This suggestion is because the poetry of the book is similar to that of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. That’s a good argument, but it may just mean that all ancient poetry was similar. Also, Job’s poetry is mixed with narrative, Solomon’s is not.
5. **Someone after the Babylonian Exile such as Ezra, or an anonymous author 200 years before Christ**. This usually assumes Job is a fictional character created at that time. But this is impossible because Job is mentioned as a historical figure along with Noah and Daniel in Ezekiel 14:14 and 20. An author, like Ezra, is possible, if he revised an earlier work.

Anyway, it seems to be written by someone who was aware of, and recorded, the lengthy conversations of the book and had firsthand information about Job’s situation and the culture of the day. Whoever wrote it was also inspired by God and received revelation from God not available to anyone during the events covered in the book.

When Did Job Take Place?

We can be fairly certain that Job lived during the Patriarchal Age (between Abraham and Joseph—somewhere between 2100 and 1900 B.C.). Here’s why.

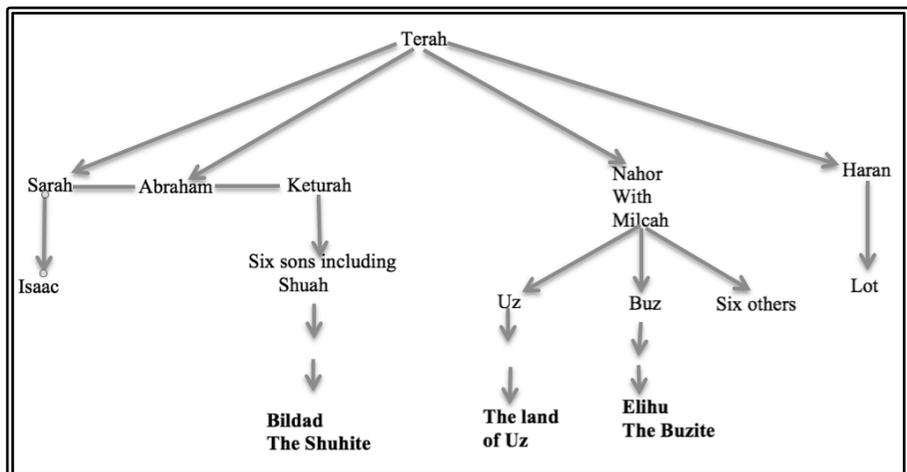
1. Job lived 140 years after his time of suffering (42:16). Before this, he had 10 young adult, or at least teenaged, children. So Job probably lived to be over 200. Terah, Abra-

ham's father, died at the age of 205; Abraham lived to be 175; Isaac lived 180 years; and Jacob died at the age of 147. So this would put Job in that approximately 2000 B.C. era.

2. Job's wealth was primarily measured in livestock (1:3; 42:12). That was also true of Abraham (Genesis 12:16; 13:2), and Jacob (Genesis 30:43; 32:5).
3. The Chaldeans (Job 1:15, 17) were apparently nomads in the book. Later on, the Chaldeans were part of the Babylonian Empire.
4. The Hebrew word קֶשֶׁת (qesitah), usually translated *piece of money* (42:11), is used elsewhere only twice (Genesis 33:19 and Joshua 24:32), both times in reference to Jacob, who lived in that general time period.
5. The book of Job includes no references whatsoever to the Mosaic Law (the priesthood, commandments, statutes, ordinances, tabernacle, Sabbath or other religious days or feasts). Also, Job's daughters were heirs of his estate along with their brothers (Job 42:15). This was not possible later under the Mosaic Law, if a daughter's brothers were still living (Numbers 27:8).
6. Job offered animal sacrifices as a patriarch, functioning as the priest of his family, as did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Genesis 12:7-8; 26:25; 35:1-7), and Noah (Genesis 8:20).
7. Job seems to be aware of the revelation of the character of God through that given to Abraham. He knew there was only one, personal, omniscient, just, sovereign, involved God who was called אֱלֹהִים (Elohim) and יְהוָה (Yahweh). But Yahweh was not a name for God used by the Canaanites or any other religions. The name יְהוָה (Yahweh) came only from the descendants of Adam through Noah to Terah's descendants, including Abraham.
 - i. Eve said *I have gotten a manchild with the help of יְהוָה (Yahweh)* (Genesis 4:1).
 - ii. Noah said *Blessed be יְהוָה (Yahweh) The God of Shem* (Genesis 9:26).
 - iii. Abraham said, *I have sworn to יְהוָה (Yahweh) God Most High* (Genesis 14:22).
 - iv. Laban said *יְהוָה (Yahweh) has blessed me on your account* (Genesis 30:27).

Roy Zuck ("Bible Knowledge Commentary" Introduction) reports, "Literary works similar in some ways to the Book of Job were written in Egypt and Mesopotamia around the time of the patriarchs." Zuck also tells us:

"Several personal and place names in the book were also associated with the patriarchal period. Examples include (a) Sheba, a grandson of Abraham (Gen. 25:3), and the Sabeans from Sheba (Job 1:15; 6:19); (b) Tema, another grandson of Abraham (Gen. 25:15) [Eliphaz the Temanite may be his descendant], and Tema, a location in Arabia (Job 6:19); (c) [there is also] Eliphaz, a son of Esau (Gen. 36:4), and Eliphaz, one of Job's companions (Job 2:11; these two Eliphazes, however, are not necessarily the same person);



(d) Uz, a nephew of Abraham (Gen. 22:21), and Uz, where Job lived (Job 1:1). Though it cannot be stated with certainty, possibly Job lived in Jacob's time or shortly thereafter. Job was a common West Semitic name in the second millennium B.C. Job was also the name of a 19th-century-B.C. prince in the Egyptian Execration texts. Other occurrences of the name are found in the Tell el-Amarna letters (ca. 1400 B.C.) and in Ugaritic texts."

The Literary Style of Job

There is no other book in the Bible with the style of Job. It is a mixture of prose and poetry, as well as monologue and dialogue. The opening chapters, which describe the real conflict (1–2), and the end of the book, which describes Job’s future (42:7-17), are narrative prose. But the lengthy material in between is poetry. And there is even an exception to that. The opening verse in each chapter that introduces a new speech is narrative, not poetry. This prose-poetry-prose pattern is seen in other compositions of ancient Near East literature, but this is the only place it occurs in the Bible. This would also argue against Solomon as the author because he did not combine prose and poetry.

The Purpose of Job

Why did someone in the ancient world, 4000 years ago, take the time and effort to record the events of the book of Job? Clearly, it was written because of the revelation of the first discussions between God and Satan. That discussion alone disproves the idea that all suffering is a judgment of God. It is interesting that the first book of the Bible (chronologically) is a commentary on suffering. The men of the book have almost no special revelation. Because they refer to God as יהוה (*Yahweh*) and אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), they were probably aware of creation, the Fall (Genesis 1–3), and the Flood of Noah (Genesis 6–8), but that’s about it. And even those were probably stories handed down through the ages. There is no evidence in the book that they had any other special revelation from God, or any inspired Scripture whatsoever. So they are arguing from the standpoint of the natural revelation (Romans 1) and their conscience (Romans 2), plus whatever was passed on to them as Shemites (descendants of Shem from Noah). The **purpose** of the author is to show us how good believers, who honor God, who fear and respect the just character of a sovereign God, cannot figure out what God is doing in their lives.

The Theme of Job

The **purpose** of a book is the intended message of the historical author to his audience.

The **theme** is a more general statement of how this book should be applied to all ages.

The theme consists of:

A subject: the answer to the question, “What is the author talking about?”

A complement: the answer to the question, “What is the author saying about that subject?”

In Job,

The **subject** is: The suffering that occurs in the life of a godly person.

The **complement** is: The reasons for that suffering are bound up in the sovereignty of God, and therefore, not available to the person who is suffering.

Theme of Job – The reason for suffering cannot be known.

Outline

The general outline of the major divisions of the book of Job are straightforward, and they follow the traditional chapter divisions:

- I. The Pre-Discussion Narrative – Chapters 1–2
- II. The Discussion Between Job and His Friends – Chapters 3–37
- III. The Post-Discussion Revelation of God – chapters 38–42

The breakdown within those major divisions will be considered as they are encountered.

Questions about the Introduction

1. Job lived in the land of Uz. Later, that was the area inhabited by the descendants of
 - A. Esau
 - B. Lot
 - C. Ishmael
2. With respect to the Dead Sea, the land of Uz is located mostly
 - A. North
 - B. South
 - C. East
3. The author of Job was most likely
 - A. Job
 - B. Elihu
 - C. Solomon
 - D. We don't know the author
4. The book of Job was written about
 - A. 2500 B.C.
 - B. 2000 B.C.
 - C. 1500 B.C.
 - D. We do not know when it was written
5. At the time of the discussions in the book, Job's age was most likely
 - A. Between 40 and 60 years old
 - B. Between 60 and 100 years old
 - C. Between 100 and 120 years old
6. Which of the following did Job do religiously?
 - A. He functioned as a priest.
 - B. He kept God's commandments.
 - C. He kept the Sabbath.
7. The literary style of Job, which makes it unique in the Old Testament, is that it contains
 - A. Metaphors and hyperbolas
 - B. Prose and poetry
 - C. Monologue and dialogue
8. The purpose of Job is
 - A. To show us that good men cannot figure out what God is doing in the lives of His people.
 - B. The reason for suffering cannot be known.
 - C. The reason for our suffering is not available this side of eternity.
9. The theme of Job is
 - A. To show us that good men cannot figure out what God is doing in the lives of His people.
 - B. The reason for suffering cannot be known.
 - C. The reason for our suffering is not available this side of eternity.
10. True or False? The outline of Job follows the traditional chapter divisions.

Answers: 1. A. 2. B. 3. D. 4. B. 5. B. 6. A. 7. B. 8. A. 9. B. 10. True.

I. The Pre-Discussion Narrative — Chapters 1 – 2

Chapter 1 — Job Loses His Wealth and His Family



Chapter 1 includes three narrative descriptions:

- A. Job's pre-suffering wealth (verses 1-5)
- B. The first discussion between God and Satan (verses 6-12)
- C. The result of Satan's first attack on Job (verses 13-22)

Read verses 1-5—The book takes place in the *land of Uz*, which (as previously mentioned) seems to be the territory of Edom, the area where the descendants of Jacob's brother Esau later settled. The central character of the book is, of course, Job (Hebrew, **יֹבֵב** *Iyyob*). He is mentioned three times in the Bible outside of this book (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; James 5:11). In all three cases, he is seen as one of the greatest men of all history. Job is described with four virtues. He was:

- *Blameless* (meaning “complete, without moral blemish, morally whole”)
- *Upright* (or “straight” in the sense of not deviating from God's standards)
- *Fearing God* (“revering” and “being afraid of” *God*) *and*
- *Turning away from evil* (“shunning,” or “turning aside from,” *evil*)

A more complete look at Job's life before suffering can be seen in chapter 29, where Job said: *When I went out to the gate of the city, when I took my seat in the square, the young men saw me and hid themselves, and the old men arose and stood. The princes stopped talking and put their hands on their mouths... Because I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the orphan who had no helper. The blessing of the one ready to perish came upon me, and I made the widow's heart sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; My justice was like a robe and a turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy, and I investigated the case which I did not know. I broke the jaws of the wicked, and snatched the prey from his teeth* (verses 7-17).

Job had ten children, *seven sons and three daughters*. And his wealth was measured in terms of his *possessions, 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants*. That meant he was *the greatest of all the men of the east* (probably meaning east of the land promised to Abraham).

Then we get another interesting glimpse of Job's pre-suffering life when we hear about his children. The seven sons had the habit of throwing a party *each one on his day* (probably his birthday) *and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them*. Job did not attempt to prohibit their parties, but he was concerned that they might *have sinned and cursed God in their hearts*. So when the parties were over, Job would get up early in the morning and perform an animal sacrifice for each one. So Job, as the family patriarch, functioned as a priest, and offered animal sacrifices—as did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Genesis 12:7-8; 26:25; 35:1-7), and Noah (Genesis 8:20). Actually, the tradition went all the way back to Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:4).

Read verses 6-12—The narrative continues, but the scene changes from earth to heaven. We find ourselves in the presence of God, and creatures called *the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD*. The author does not use the term for angels, מַלְאָךְ (*malak*, plural *malakim*). He used that word only one time in the book (Job 4:8). The phrase *sons of God* does seem to refer to angels in Job 38:7. So we can conclude: these are angels, Satan was also an angel, and angels *came to present themselves before the LORD*. It seems that until they are cast out during the upcoming tribulation period (Revelation 12:7-10), bad angels (demons or evil spirits) have access to the heavenly realm. At least Satan, the ruler of the bad angels, seems to be required to report to God, and we know God sometimes used *evil spirits* to accomplish His purpose (Judges 9:23; 1 Sam. 16:14-16). It also seems that Satan has discussions with God about believers. Jesus told Peter, *Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat* (Luke 22:31).

Next, we should observe that the chain of events leading to Job's suffering, and this book, began with God taunting Satan about Job. *Have you considered My servant Job?* The argument between God and Satan was about the motive for goodness. God pointed out that Job was *a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil*, to prove there were people who desired to conform to the righteousness of the character of God. Satan's point was that nobody just desires to fear God and live righteously. Satan believed the only reason Job lived for God was because God *blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land*. This brings us to a very significant moral question.

Would you love God and keep His commandments if God did not do things for you, or if God condemned you to a life of suffering, or if God had not promised you eternal life?
As a servant of God, would you serve Him with no promise of blessing from Him?

Satan says you would not. Satan believes nobody will imitate the character of God, or desire to please God, as an end in itself. He thinks people will only turn away from evil if they are buying blessings from God. Satan believed that Job was just like any idol worshipper who sacrifices to his god in order to get some benefits from his god. So God and Satan have a sort of bet going. If Satan is right, then Job will curse God when he loses God's blessings. If God is right, then Job will hold to his integrity without God's blessings. God then gave Satan permission to destroy all that Job had, *only do not put forth your hand on him*.

Read verses 13-22—Job then received four reports, back-to-back:

1. *The Sabeans attacked and took your oxen and donkeys. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword,*
2. *The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and...servants and consumed them*
3. *The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword,*
4. *Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died.*

In each case, the servant said, *and I alone have escaped to tell you*.

In verse 21, Job said, *Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.*"

Notice that all of Job's suffering came about from natural (not supernatural) events.

Chapter 2 — Job Loses His Health

The second discussion between God and Satan (verses 1-7)

Read verses 1-7—As in the discussion of chapter 1, God asked Satan essentially the same question, *Where have you come from?* Satan’s answer is also the same each time, *from roaming about on the earth and walking around on it*. Peter told us that’s what Satan does (1 Peter 5:8). We know Satan is also *the god of this world* (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2) and *the whole world lies in the power of the evil one* (1 John 5:9). Satan’s statement about *roaming about on the earth* may also be a claim to dominion over the earth (see Deuteronomy 1:36; 11:24; Joshua 1:3; 14:9).

Then God took credit for the *ruin* of Job, and that He did it *without cause*:

- Integrity is being *blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil* in order to please God, not to get things from God.
- Although individuals have real free will, God causes everything, including our suffering.
- Satan wishes to destroy us, but he is ultimately only an unwitting servant of God.
- God does not tell us what He is doing in our lives.

We never return to the throne of God in the book. Nor do we hear any further discussion between God and Satan. We hear nothing from God until the end of the book, and we hear nothing at all about God’s, or Satan’s, evaluation of Job’s suffering. All we know is, *Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head* (verse 7). The rest of the book takes place on earth, with men trying to figure out what God is doing.

The result of Satan’s second attack on Job (verses 8-13)

Read verses 8-10—The book’s first discussion on earth is between Job and his wife. It is clear to her that all this could not have happened by chance, so her advice is, *Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die*. This is the only thing we hear from her in the entire book. The interesting thing is that she questions the value of integrity (“moral uprightness emphasizing honesty”). Apparently, for her, integrity has limited value. It is no longer valuable at some point in the scale of pleasure to suffering.



Job does not call her a fool. He said, *You speak as one of the foolish women speaks*. In other words, she was acting like something she was not. Job uses the most basic Hebrew words here for good and bad — טוב (*tob*) **good**, pleasant, agreeable, or beautiful, and רַע (*ra*) **bad**, evil, distress, misery, injury, calamity or adversity. The author tells us that Job held fast to his integrity.

Read verses 11-13—These verses create the scene for the rest of the book. Job’s friends, *Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite* hear about Job’s condition and make arrangements to meet and come to Job together. *They sat down on the ground with him for seven days* without saying anything. From the nature of the following discussions, we can probably assume they used this time to assemble their thoughts and possibly even write them down. There was a fourth friend there, too, *Elihu the Buzite*. We do not know when he arrived, but he was younger, and he may have been there the whole time, since he seems to know what the others said. And he may be the author of the book.

Questions about Chapters 1 – 2

1. Chapter 1, verses 1-7, tell us that
 - A. God caused Job's suffering.
 - B. Job's suffering was in the sovereign plan of God, but not orchestrated by God.
 - C. God allowed Job's suffering but did not cause it.
2. Chapter 1 tells us that Job was *blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil*. Chapter 29 adds that he was also
 - A. Wise
 - B. Wealthy
 - C. Generous
3. The reason Job sacrificed for his sons was because he was afraid that they might have sinned
 - A. Outwardly
 - B. Inwardly
 - C. Deceptively
4. The reason we conclude that the phrase *the sons of God* (in Job 1 and 2) refers to angels is because
 - A. That phrase always means angels.
 - B. That phrase seems to mean angels later in the book.
 - C. No one but angels ever appear before the throne of God.
5. Job's suffering came about because of
 - A. God's challenge to Satan
 - B. Satan's challenge to God
 - C. Job's blameless character
6. Satan accused Job, one of God's saints, while speaking with God.
 - A. He still does that.
 - B. He only did that before Christ died on the cross.
 - C. He only did that before He was cast out of heaven.
7. Job's discussion with his wife was one of
 - A. Criticism
 - B. Disagreement
 - C. Disappointment
8. A lesson from Job chapter 2 would be
 - A. Integrity is serving God, not getting things from God.
 - B. God is the cause of everything.
 - C. Satan is only an unwitting servant of God.
 - D. All of the above.
 - E. A and B

Answers: 1. A. 2. C. 3. B. 4. B. 5. C. 6. A. 7. A. 8. D (E is possible, if you assume C is true but not taught in Job 2).

II. The Discussion between Job and His Friends — Chapters 3 – 37

Chapter 3 — Job Curses His Birth

The first two chapters were prose, and now we begin a long section of mostly poetry (3:1–42:6), but it's a unique expression of poetry in that each discussion is introduced with a prose statement. As we move through this section, application is more difficult than interpretation. We can usually figure out what each of the men is saying, but sometimes they are right and sometimes they are wrong. So we must first evaluate what they say from what we know to be true in other Scripture passages, which clearly differentiate right and wrong morality and theology. Application must follow interpretation, so the interpretations of this debate must be examined before they can be applied.



Concerning Job, Ryrie has an excellent perspective:

Job speaks out of great physical and mental anguish. His own basic presupposition, that God always blesses the righteous and afflicts the wicked, has proven faulty. If he judges by his experience, he must conclude that his theology is wrong, for he cannot put what he believes to be true of God together with what is happening to him. Though at times Job reacts with hostility, he always turns back to God. Much of what he says later is exaggerated, untrue, and virtually blasphemous, but he never renounces God (“Ryrie Study Bible,” page 781).

Read verses 1-19—Job wishes he had died before birth, at birth, or soon afterwards

- Job cursed his conception (verse 11), his birth (verse 12), and his survival after birth (verse 12). Thus Job sees himself existing as a human being all three times.
- His wish to not have been born negates the value of all of his good works between his birth and his current suffering. Previous pleasure does not relieve present suffering.
- Job says that at death there is no difference between kings and slaves (verses 14-19). A view shared by Solomon in Ecclesiastes.

Most commentators believe verse 8 (*Let those curse it [the night—verse 7] who curse the day, Who are prepared to rouse Leviathan*) refers to some enchanters, who thought they had power to curse certain days. To rise up the *Leviathan* is a metaphor about the cursed day. But it is not clear that this was a mystical beast. Later God speaks of this beast as if it were still alive and well—and real (Job 41:1; Psalm 74:14; 104:26; Isaiah 27:1). Most likely, this is a metaphor, not a reference to a mystical beast. For example, if I said, “He’s as big as an elephant,” I am using the word “elephant” metaphorically, not mystically. Verse 12, *Why did the knees receive me,* may also help date the book in the patriarchal period since this phrase is also used of the birth of Joseph’s children (Genesis 50:23).

Read verses 20-26—Job wishes for death—One interesting thing here is that Job wished he were dead (verse 21) but never considered suicide or euthanasia. He never asked his friends to help him die. He complained that God did not take his life, yet he left his life in God’s hands. Job expanded on the phrase *Why is light given to him who suffers, and life to the bitter of soul.* The question is, “Why does God not bring death to the one who is suffering, rather than allow him to continue on in his agony?”

Chapters 4 – 5 — The First Speech of Eliphaz the Temanite



Read 4:1-6—Job helped strengthen the weak—Eliphaz the Temanite was probably the oldest of the three friends. Apparently, he felt obligated to speak first. Even at that, he asked permission, with the comment, *who can refrain from speaking?* As he began, he told us a bit more about Job's past. Job (1) *admonished many*, (2) *strengthened weak hands*, and (3) *his words have helped the tottering to stand*. Then Eliphaz basically asked, "What advice would you give yourself?" Verse 6 (*Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?*) says that Job was confident that his future would be secure because of his integrity and his fear of God. Eliphaz was right in thinking Job's assumptions were wrong. Obviously, *integrity* and the *fear of God* did not result in Job's ongoing wellbeing. Therefore, this advice, which Job had used to *admonished, strengthened* and *helped* many others, was faulty.

Read 4:7-11—Eliphaz said the innocent do not perish, *And those who sow trouble harvest it*—Eliphaz made an observation and a conclusion (note, the *lion* in his metaphor are *those who sow trouble*). The problem is, many innocent perish and many who *sow trouble* do not *harvest it*. For example, consider, Genghis Kahn, Attila the Hun, Hitler, Stalin, and Ceausescu. None of these cruel dictators harvested anything equal to the suffering they caused. The conclusion of Eliphaz, *By the breath of God they perish*, is true ultimately, but not necessarily during this life.

Read 4:12-21—Eliphaz had a vision—Next, Eliphaz relates a vision he had at night. The message was all of God's servants, from angels to men, sin and die because of their sin (*their tent-cord plucked up within them*). The problem is, we should not believe in, or get our theology from, visions. There is no way to confirm that visions are the Word of God.

Read 5:1-7—Eliphaz compared Job to a fool—Next, Eliphaz said Job was *a fool* who is angry and jealous. He claimed Job had begun to prosper *taking root* but was cursed by his own foolishness, and that's why Job lost **his children** and **his wealth**—a grim evaluation of Job's situation. According to Eliphaz, *affliction does not come from the dust, nor does trouble sprout from the ground*. His point being, the source of those afflictions comes from within man. And such troubles are inevitable because *man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward*. [The word for *sparks* is literally "sons of Resheph," a god of plagues and flames.] But Job's history was not one of a fool who is angry and jealous. It's true that troubles are common, even inevitable, *as sparks fly upward*, but not that man was born for that purpose or that his troubles are always caused by his actions.

Read 5:8-16—God does unsearchable things—Eliphaz gave Job the advice, *I would place my cause before God*. In itself, this is good advice.

Read 5:17-27—Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty—Eliphaz rightly stated, *how happy is the man whom God reproves*. The problem is, we do not know if any particular suffering is the discipline of God, therefore, we should not consider it a signal of some sort to change some particular behavior. Behavior change should be based on God's Word, not an occasion of personal suffering or any other experiential circumstances.

Chapters 6 – 7 — Job's Reply To Eliphaz

Read 6:1-7—Job's complaining matches his suffering

In verse 2, Job claimed that if *my grief* [literally, *anger*] were actually weighed and laid in the balances together with my calamity [literally, *destruction*], then the scales would balance. His complaints would match his suffering. He follows this with several illustrations of things that go together in balance—an animal's complaint about its lack of food, the need of tasteless food for salt.



Read 6:8-13—Job is innocent, but longs for death—Job wanted God to *grant* his *longing* to die (also stated in 3:20-23; 7:15; 10:18-19; 14:13). He believed his suffering would end, only if *God would ... crush* him, *loose His hand* from sustaining Job's life. The one *consolation* and *joy* in Job's pain was that he *had not denied* [or, *hidden*] *the words* [or *speech*] *of the Holy One*. This is the first, of several statements, Job makes about his innocence (see 9:21; 16:17; 27:6).

Read 6:14-30—Job expected kindness from his friends, but found they acted deceitfully Job compared his friends to *torrents of wadis, which vanish*. Wadis are deep gorges, suddenly filled with water but dry in the summer when you need them. Job said to Eliphaz, *Teach me, and I will be silent; and show me how I have erred. How painful are honest words! But what does your argument prove?* Job makes an excellent point—if you are going to correct someone, *prove* your point with *honest words*.

Read 7:1-10—Job expressed the futility of life—Job compared the value of his life to that of a slave or a hired man. Then he gave some gory details about his suffering. *My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt, my skin hardens and runs*. Next, Job gave an important principle about death—*he who goes down to Sheol does not come up*. There are no such things as ghosts or visitations from dead loved ones (Luke 16:28-31).

Read 7:11-12—Job spoke to God from a life in anguish

These verses require some clarification. *I will speak in the anguish of my spirit* [the immaterial *spirit* that separates man from animals], *I will complain* [usually translated, *speak* or *meditate*] *in the bitterness of my soul* [this word is usually translated *physical life*]. *Am I the sea, or the sea monster, that You set a guard over me?* Many commentators say Job is referring to ancient myths about sea monsters, but there is no reason to understand Job saying anything other than he is not dangerous like the sea or a large sea creature.

Read 7:13-19—Job wonders why God examines man, every moment

Job understood that God had caused his suffering because God is not only always present, but always judging. *You never turn Your gaze away from me, nor let me alone*. Job's statement is true. God is omnipresent and always judging, but that does not mean our suffering is because of that judgment.

Read 7:20-21—Job asked God, Why then do You not pardon my transgression?

Job asked the same question two ways. *Have I sinned? What have I done to You?* Job correctly assumes that sin is whatever we do against the character of God. But Job's mistake was to have the same premise as his three friends, namely, that suffering was always a judgment of God on one's personal sin.

Questions about Chapters 3 – 7

1. In chapter 3, Job mostly curses
 - A. His conception
 - B. His birth
 - C. His survival after birth
 - D. All of the above equally
2. In 3:8, the phrase, *Who are prepared to rouse Leviathan*, refers to
 - A. People who claim to be able to curse certain days
 - B. People who claim to raise up a mythical sea creature
 - C. People who claim to raise up a real sea monster
3. In 3:20-26, Job wants
 - A. God to kill him
 - B. His friends to kill him
 - C. The courage to kill himself
4. In 4:1-6, Eliphaz said that Job thought his ongoing well-being was secure because he *admonished, strengthened* and *helped* many others.
 - A. Eliphaz was right.
 - B. Eliphaz was wrong.
 - C. Eliphaz was guessing.
5. In 4:7-11, Eliphaz said, *those who sow trouble harvest it*.
 - A. Eliphaz was right.
 - B. Eliphaz was wrong.
 - C. Eliphaz was guessing.
6. In 5:7, Eliphaz said, *man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward*. Eliphaz meant,
 - A. The nature of man is to cause trouble.
 - B. Trouble naturally comes to man.
 - C. Man's foolishness causes trouble.
7. In 6:14-30, Job speaks about the *torrents of wadis which vanish*. The wadis are dry creek beds created by sudden floods of water in the rainy season. In the summer, these wadis are dry. Here they are
 - A. Job's friends
 - B. Job's complaints
 - C. Job's suffering
8. In 7:9, Job said, *he who goes down to Sheol does not come up*. He meant,
 - A. There is no evidence of life after death.
 - B. Those in Sheol will never leave there.
 - C. No one comes back to the living from the dead.
9. In 7:20-21, Job is confused because he incorrectly believes
 - A. God sometimes does not forgive sin.
 - B. God does not forgive sin unless we repent.
 - C. God forgives unknown sin.

Answers: 1. B. 2. A. 3. A. 4. A (that is what Job thought). 5. B (because Eliphaz meant during this life). 6. C. 7. C (the water which vanishes are his friends). 8. C. 9. C (Job wondered why God did not pardon Job's unknown sin).

Chapter 8

The First Speech of Bildad the Shuhite



Read verses 1-7—Bildad called Job’s words a *mighty wind*

Bildad the Shuhite may be a descendant of Shuah, a son of Abraham by his second wife, Keturah (Genesis 25:2). He called Job’s words a *mighty wind* and suggested that Job’s sons were killed because they sinned. Then he advised that Job *seek God, and implore the compassion of the Almighty, and He will restore your righteous estate.*

Read verses 8-19—Bildad encouraged Job to learn from past generations

Bildad made the case of a conservative. *Please inquire of past generations, and consider the things searched out by their fathers.* Then, beginning with verse 11, he gave some difficult illustrations. Apparently, he was saying Job is like a papyrus plant that grows in a marsh (Job’s former righteousness), but then the papyrus *withers*, cuts itself off from its marsh water, and *so are the paths of all [like Job] who forget God.* According to Bildad, for Job to trust his innocence is like leaning on a *spider’s web*. Job is like a plant that thrives early but is uprooted.

Read verses 20-22—Bildad tells Job, if you repent, God will yet fill your mouth with laughter—

This arrogant self-appointed critic believes that all suffering is a judgment from God on *the tent of the wicked.* He said that God wants Job to be happy, so all he has to do is repent and stop sinning. These know-it-all, short-sighted “friends” are one of life’s plagues.

Chapters 9 – 10 — Job’s Reply to Bildad

Job pointed out that tradition is not a reliable source of the knowledge of God. God also revealed things about Himself even in nature (9:4-12). Job correctly pointed out that, although it is good to listen to the wisdom of the elders, they are not an infallible revelation of God.

Read 9:1-15—God is revealed through nature—Job began his response with *I know that this is so*, that God punishes the guilty. Then he asked the basic question of all religion, *But how can a man be in the right before God?* The answer is *without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness* (Hebrews 9:22), and there was no propitiation until Christ died on the cross (1 John 2:2). But Job and his friends did not know that. So Job accurately states what he knows about God. He is: omniscient (3-4), omnipotent (5-8), creator (9-10), invisible (11), sovereign (12-13), and a judge (14-15).

Read 9:16-35—Job believed that he is *guiltless*, but it didn’t matter—The view of God’s sovereignty over morality is fascinating. Job said, *Though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty* (20). Job is wrong here. Good and evil are based on God’s unchanging character, not some arbitrary decision He makes. God does not declare the guiltless guilty.

Read 10:1-17—Job spoke *in the bitterness of his soul*—Job’s faulty theology (that all suffering is a punishment of God and all good things are a reward from God) forced him to make a bad conclusion stated in the form of a bad question, *Is it right for You indeed to oppress [the righteous], and to look favorably on the schemes of the wicked* (10:3)?

Read 10:18-22—One more time, Job said he wished he had not been born.

Chapter 11

The First Speech of Zophar the Naamathite

Read verses 1-12—Zophar said that Job was *an idiot* (12)—Zophar’s authority was not experience nor the tradition of the elders but what appeared right to him. He not only called Job a sinner, but rebuked him for trying to understand God. Zophar basically said two things in this paragraph. First, Job is claiming *My teaching is pure, and I am innocent*. Second, Zophar wished God would reveal real wisdom to Job, even though Job is an idiot, as incapable of understanding as a donkey is of producing a man.

Read verses 13-20—If Job would repent, his *life would be brighter than noonday* (17).

Chapters 12 – 14 — Job’s Reply to Zophar

These chapters bring an end to the first round of debates. Job’s three friends have concluded that He is suffering because of his sins. Job rejected their conclusions and insisted that death was his only hope. But this left the three friends even more angry and eager to correct Job. In this long speech, Job severely criticizes them (12:1–13:2), declares his own righteousness (13:3-19), and then appeals to God (13:20–14:22).

Read 12:1-6—It’s easy for those living comfortably to say God is punishing the suffering

What destroys the argument of Job’s friends is that in many cases, *The tents of the destroyers prosper, and those who provoke God are secure* (6).

Read 12:7-13:2—Job essentially said, “Tell me something I don’t already know”

Basically, Job said, “You and I, and even the animals of nature, know God is sovereign. So what?”

Read 13:3-19—Job said, you smear with lies; you are all worthless physicians

Job told his friends that they are the ones that will be judged by God for their lies (7-12). Then he gave us three positions: (1) *Though He slay me, I will hope in Him*, (2) *Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him. This also will be my salvation*, (3) *For a godless man may not come before His presence* (15-16). Job is right here, except salvation is not based on a good argument.

Read 13:20-28—Job asked God to (1) stop tormenting him and (2) begin talking to him

This is a prayer that again reflects the error of Job and his friends, that all suffering is God’s punishment on sin. *How many are my iniquities and sins? Make known to me my rebellion and my sin. Why do You consider me Your enemy* (23-24)? Job’s assumption was, since I don’t know what sin I am being punished for, it must be some unknown sin.

Read 14:1-21—Job said, when man dies he will not live again (meaning on earth)

In verses 1-6, Job said God numbers man’s days. In verses 7-12, Job said, unlike a tree, man will not sprout again, he’s permanently dead. In verses 13-21, Job used many poetic expressions, which are difficult to interpret. *Sheol* can mean death or a place of life after death. *All the days of my struggle I will wait until my change comes*, *change* could be death or resurrection. *You will call, and I will answer—You could be a call to die or a call to raise from the dead*. At any rate, Job is correct in thinking that when people die, they do not come to life again. They are not re-incarnated, made into ghosts or live in another physical body on earth.

Chapter 15

The Second Speech of Eliphaz



Read verses 1-16—Eliphaz told Job, *Your own mouth condemns you*—Eliphaz accused Job of having *windy knowledge* (1-6), ignoring the wisdom of *the gray-haired and the aged [who] are among us* (7-13), and overlooking the fact that man is *detestable and corrupt* (14-16). Then he offered an illogical argument. Even if Job's words were *detestable and corrupt*, they were about his present condition, uttered after his suffering began. So his words to his friends could not be the cause of Job's suffering.

Read verses 17-35—Eliphaz debated Job's statement (of 12:6) that wicked men prosper Job's earlier observation of 12:6 (*The tents of the destroyers prosper, and those who provoke God are secure, whom God brings into their power*) destroyed the whole argument of Eliphaz. So Eliphaz attacked Job's observation viciously, basically saying, "No Job, you are wrong." *The wicked man writhes in pain all his days, Distress and anguish terrify him* (27). But then the arguments of Eliphaz defeated themselves. He said of the wicked man, "*For he has covered his face with his fat and made his thighs heavy with flesh... nor will his wealth endure*" (28-29). If the wicked did not prosper, how would he be fat and wealthy in the first place?

Chapters 16 – 17

Job's Reply To All Three "Friends"

Read 16:1-5—Job answered, *Sorry comforters are you all*—Rightly Job criticized his friends by saying, *I too could speak like you, if I were in your place*.

Read 16:6-17—Job described his suffering accurately, but made mistakes about the cause—Whether he spoke up or not, Job's *pain is not lessened*. God had *exhausted* him and *shriveled* him up with all his agony. All this is true, but then Job made two mistakes. **First** he wrongly concluded, *His anger has torn me and hunted me down* (9). That assumes he knows God's motives. **Second**, Job said *God hands me over to ruffians and tosses me into the hands of the wicked* (11). I assume this is a reference to the three friends. Whoever the *ruffians* are, it's true that God is sovereign, but they came on their own free will. Although everything is in the plan of God, the actions of people are not necessarily in the will of God or directed by God. There are free will aspects of suffering which should not be attributed to the directives of God.

Read 16:18-22—Job said, *my witness is in heaven, and... My friends are my scoffers*

Read 17:1-3—Job claimed there was no one to guarantee a release from his death sentence

Read 17:4-9—Job said his friends were trying to please God, but without understanding

In verses 4-5, Job said his friends are trying to please God for a reward (5). And God will not exalt his friends but punish their children. Then Job said that people mocked him (6), and he could hardly see (7), and unlike Job's friends, *The upright will be appalled at this* (8-9).

Read 17:10-16—Job asked, *Where now is my hope?*

In verse 10, Job invited his friends to another round of debate (*But come again all of you now, For I do not find a wise man among you*). Then he seemed to say his friends can't hurt him because his *plans*, his *wishes*, and his *hope* have all disappeared. All that faced him is death (*Sheol*).

Questions about Chapters 8 – 17

1. Who was the most critical and insensitive to Job's condition?
 - A. Eliphaz the Temanite
 - B. Bildad the Shuhite
 - C. Zophar the Naamathite
2. Bildad the Shuhite was basically a
 - A. Conservative
 - B. Liberal
 - C. Experientialist
3. Zophar the Naamathite was basically a
 - A. Conservative
 - B. Liberal
 - C. Experientialist
4. In 9:2, Job asked, *But how can a man be in the right before God?* His answer is
 - A. By a blood sacrifice
 - B. With repentance
 - C. By asking for mercy
5. In 9:20, Job said, *Though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty*
 - A. This is possible because God is sovereign.
 - B. This is impossible because God could not declare the guiltless guilty.
 - C. This is possible but unlikely. God could do it but will not do it.
6. Job said: *Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him. This...will be my salvation, For a godless man may not come before His presence (13:15-16).*
 - A. Job was right.
 - B. Job was wrong because he should not argue his way before God.
 - C. Job was right except salvation does not come from his arguing his case.
7. From his second speech (chapter 15), we learn that Eliphaz the Temanite was basically a
 - A. Conservative
 - B. Liberal
 - C. Experientialist
8. Job said of God, *His anger has torn me and hunted me down (16:9).* Job was wrong because
 - A. God does not act out of anger.
 - B. This assumes Job knows God's motives.
 - C. This assumes God hunts people down for punishment.
9. In 17:4-9, Job said that his three friends were
 - A. Going to be punished by God
 - B. Just trying to please God
 - C. Mistaken about the judgment of God
 - D. A and B
 - E. All of the above
10. In 17:10-16, we learn that Job's biggest problem was
 - A. He lost his influence.
 - B. He lost his hope.
 - C. He lost his family.

Answers: 1. C. 2. A (8:8-19). 3. C (11:1-2). 4. C (9:15). 5. B (because of God's character). 6. C. 7. A (see note 15:1-16). 8. B. 9. D (17:5). 10. B.

Chapter 18

The Second Speech of Bildad

Read verses 1-4—Bildad said, *Show understanding and then we can talk*—

The arguing is now becoming a war of words, where Job and his friends accuse each other of the same thing. Job was surprised that Eliphaz attacked him a second time (16:3), but Bildad wondered when Job would stop talking (18:2). Later, Job came back with the same argument (19:2). Job had said Bildad and the others were not wise (17:10), and Bildad replied that *Job* was the one not being **sensible**. Zophar compared Job to the foal of a donkey (11:12). Job said **stupid** animals had more know-how than his advisers (12:7-9).



Read verses 5-21—Bildad gives a “grocery” list of what he believes happens to the wicked—In verses 5-6, the *lamp goes out*, symbolizing Job’s life and prosperity (21:17; Proverbs 13:9; 20:20). In verses 7-11, Bildad used six Hebrew words for traps, more than in any other passage. The point is, whatever Job did would ensnare him. So Job would be terrified wherever he turned. In verses 12-21, Bildad said the wicked person loses his *strength*, gets *disease*, loses security, lives in terror, the *memory of him perishes from the earth*, *He has no offspring or posterity*, those in both the east and the west *are appalled at his fate*.

Chapter 19 — Job’s Second Reply to Bildad

Read verses 1-12—Job said, even if I sinned, it’s none of your business—*These ten times* is probably an idiom for “often” (Genesis 31:7, 41; Numbers 14:22; Daniel 1:20). Job maintained, *if I have truly erred, my error lodges with me*, meaning it was his problem, not theirs. Job claimed he had not trapped himself, as Bildad said (18:8-10), but in reality *God* had trapped him. Again Job placed the blame squarely on God (3:23; 6:4; 7:17-21; 9:13, 22, 31, 34; 10:2-3; 13:24-27; 16:7-14; 17:6). *Know then that God has wronged me* (6), actually means God has *bent me* or *overthrown me*. Most of what Job said about God’s action is true, except he continued to say God has *kindled His anger against me* (11) which mistakenly assumes he knows God’s motives.

Read verses 13-19—Job said all the people he knows have rejected him

Read verses 20-29—I know that my Redeemer lives—Job said his friends just add to the persecution of God. Then he gave the most quoted passage.

***I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth.
Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God.***

I know that my Redeemer lives is better translated, *I know that my vindicator or defender lives*. God is pictured as Job’s living personal *defender*, the one who will clear him of all blame. *And at the last He will take His stand on the earth*. Sometime in the future (which we know to be the Second Coming of Christ—Matthew 24; Revelation 19) God (in the person of Christ) will stand on the earth (literally, *on the dust*.) *Even after my skin is destroyed* [literally, *stripped off* (probably meaning by worms)] *yet from my flesh I shall see God* (25-26). Apart from his flesh, Job will see God with actual eyes of a non-flesh (resurrected) body.

Chapter 20

The Second Speech of Zophar

Read verses 1-29—Zophar said, *the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless momentary*

After complaining that he *listened to the reproof which insults me*, Zophar claimed that *the spirit of my understanding makes me answer* (3). His *understanding* gave an explanation of why Job was once prosperous. It was because evil men prosper in the short-term, but then their sin catches up with them, and they end up like Job. This idea dominates Zophar's thoughts throughout the chapter.

Chapter 21

Job's Second Reply To Zophar

Read 1-18—The reality is, the wicked do indeed not always suffer

After an appeal for Zophar to pay attention to basic facts and reason (1-6), Job gave a list of examples, which prove that the wicked do not always suffer. They sometimes defy God and remain prosperous all the way to the grave. This paragraph sounds a lot like Psalm 73.



Read 19-21—The punishment of the children do not hinder the wicked

Next, Job said Zophar could not explain the prosperity of the wicked by claiming their children will bear their punishment. When a wicked man dies, he does not care what happens to his descendants.

Read 22-34—Wicked people often die fat and happy

Job continues his examples. Some die fat and some are wasted away (24-26), but there is no correlation between that and their character. Job suggests that Zophar ask travelers who see the same thing everywhere (29). No one dares to criticize the wicked, and they even have an honorable burial with people guarding their tomb. Job then rightly concludes, *Zophar's answers remain full of falsehood.*"

Chapter 22 — The Third Speech of Eliphaz

Read verses 1-14—Eliphaz said Job has done evil things and thinks God cannot see it

Specifically (in 6-9), Eliphaz told Job, *you have taken pledges of your brothers without cause, and stripped men naked. To the weary you have given no water to drink, and from the hungry you have withheld bread... You have sent widows away empty, and the strength of the orphans has been crushed.* But how does he know this? Possibly some have complained that Job did not give them enough, or spread rumors about him. Anyway, we know this is not true from God's evaluation of Job.

Read verses 15-30—If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored

This is the same old, tired, useless, evaluation, which assumes Job needs to repent.

Chapters 23 – 24— Job’s Third Reply to Eliphaz

Read chapter 23—Job said, *I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food*—There is a lot of good theology in this chapter (*what His soul desires, that He does. For He performs what is appointed for me... I would be dismayed at His presence; When I consider, I am terrified of Him [13-15]*). Job’s mistake here is to think, *I would present my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments.*

Read chapter 24—Job wonders why God does not list a schedule for judging the wicked. Job’s attitude is well put by the “Bible Knowledge Commentary.” Job thought, “If God would post on a universal bulletin board His schedule for judging, people would be less frustrated over His seeming lackadaisical attitude toward sin.” The rest of the chapter is a list of sinners who, Job suggests, are evil because they don’t know when God will judge them for their sin. In the latter part of the chapter, Job understood that God will judge evil but because He seems to tolerate it and His judgment is slow in coming, evil continues on the earth. This idea is common in Psalms and the prophets (Psalm 13:1-2; Habakkuk 1:2).

Chapter 25 — The Third Speech of Bildad

[There is no Third speech from Zophar]

Read the 6 verses of chapter 25—*How then can a man be just with God?*

In these short 6 verses, it seem that Bildad has run out of arguments. He does not even deal with Job’s previous statements about the seeming inequalities and human injustice. Instead he returns to the old argument that no man can stand before a revealing God.

Chapter 26

Job’s Third Reply to Bildad

Read the 14 verses of chapter 26—God *hangs the earth on nothing*



After he sarcastically accuses Bildad of useless counsel (1-4), Job went on to tell us some great things about God. He said God rules over *departed spirits, Sheol/ Abaddon*, and the physical universe. Then Job listed other things we can now demonstrate scientifically. *He stretches out the north [the stars, planets, and moons] over empty space and hangs the earth on nothing, and wraps up the waters in His clouds. He has inscribed a circle on the surface of the waters (10).* Isaiah wrote, *It is He who sits above the circle of the earth (Isaiah 40:22).* The chapter has a beautiful conclusion. *Behold, these are the fringes of His ways; and how faint a word we hear of Him!*

Job Gives Us The First Concept of Suffering Among Believers

Job and his friends all believed that (A) God is the creator of all things, and He is sovereign over His creation, (B) God is morally good, true, and just, (C) God is involved in His creation, and (D) God judges sin and rewards righteousness. Therefore, they concluded that human suffering is a judgment of God. But what is really fascinating is that the whole book of Job (the first book of the Bible) was written in ancient times to debunk that conclusion.

Questions about Chapters 18 – 26

- In 18:7-11, Bildad used six Hebrew words for traps. He meant,
 - Job would be terrified wherever he turned.
 - Job would be caught in the traps he is setting for his friends.
 - Job is trying to trap his friends in false arguments.
- Job also used the *net* example in 19:6. Job was referring to
 - Being trapped by his friends.
 - Being trapped by God.
 - Being trapped by suffering from God.
- Job 19:25-26 is probably the most memorized passage in the book. When Job said, *As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives*, he meant,
 - I know I will be saved.
 - I know I will be avenged of the accusations of my friends.
 - I know there is a living God who will pay for my sin.
- In chapter 20, Zophar's *understanding* was that Job's former wealth, and well-being, was because
 - Job was once a righteous man.
 - Evil men like Job get away with it for a time.
 - Other people thought Job was a righteous man.
- Chapter 21 may be the most powerful chapter in the book to prove Job's argument. It says,
 - Evil people often prosper.
 - Good people are not always prosperous.
 - Both good and evil people suffer and are sometimes prosperous.
- In chapter 22, Eliphaz said Job was suffering because in the past he
 - Refused to help people
 - Refused to give glory to God for his wealth
 - Was proud of his accomplishments
- In chapter 23, Job listed some good theological points. His one mistake about God is to think
 - [Whatever] *His soul desires, that He does.*
 - When I consider, I am terrified of Him.*
 - I would present my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments.*
- In chapter 24, Job suggested people sin because
 - God is slow to judge them.
 - They prosper from it.
 - God only disciplines His saints.
- In chapter 25, Bildad said,
 - Job refused to listen to reason.
 - Only evil people suffer.
 - All people are evil.
- Chapter 26 is filled with Job's observations about the work of God.
 - Some of what Job said is right.
 - Most of what Job said is right.
 - All of what Job said is right.

Answers: 1. A. 2. B. 3. B (see note 19:20-29). 4. B. 5. A. 6. A. 7. C. 8. A. 9. C. 10. C.

Chapters 27 – 31

Job's Last Reply To His Friends



Chapter 27

Read the 23 verses of chapter 27—Job claimed, *I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go*—Job told his friends, *Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me* (1-6). Job was committed to integrity because it was clear to him that God will indeed judge the wicked.

Chapter 28

Read verses 1-11—**Man searches the earth for knowledge**—This is a fascinating little picture of a person going in a basket down a mineshaft to find the hidden knowledge of the earth. He can learn much that is unavailable to animals on the surface (7-8).

Read verses 12-28—**In his entire quest for knowledge of the earth, man cannot find wisdom**—Man finds knowledge as he scientifically examines things. He gets a glimpse of wisdom only when he looks at death and the afterlife. But true wisdom is only found in God.

Chapter 29

Read the 25 verses of chapter 29—**Job spoke of the months gone by, when God watched over me**—Job first described those days as *When my steps were bathed in butter* under the care of God (1-6). Of course, his error was to assume his current suffering was a time when God was not watching over him. Then Job explained how he helped everyone from princes to widows.

Chapter 30

Read the 31 verses of chapter 30—**Job's gnawing pains take no rest**—Even the lowly people whom Job helped, now insult him (1-15). He was in physical pain (16-19), and God did not answer him (20-23). When he *expected good* from others, they gave him *evil* (24-26). *Therefore my harp is turned to mourning, and my flute to the sound of those who weep* (27-31).

Chapter 31

Read the 40 verses of chapter 31—**Job ended by declaring his innocence in moral matters**—He declared innocence when it came to his personal morality, specifically in the area of lust, deceit, covetousness, and adultery, (1-12); helping those around him with needs (13-23); wealth (24-25); other religions (25-28); his enemies (29-30); and aliens (31-32). Therefore, he will make his case to God (33-40). This chapter's claims are validated by God's earlier statement that Job was *a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil*. Some examples include: *I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?* (1), *If I have walked with falsehood... let God know my integrity* (5-6), *It is not true that, my step has turned from the way, or my heart followed my eyes...* (7).

In verse 15, notice the claim that the human fetus is a person. Speaking of his slaves, Job said, *Did not He who made me in the womb make him, And the same one fashion us in the womb?*

Chapters 32 – 33

The First Speech of Elihu the Buzite

Seeing that Job and the older three friends were finished (32:5,15-16), Elihu spoke, being too angry to hold in his comments. Elihu was *the son of Barachel the Buzite*, probably a descendant of Abraham's nephew Buz (Genesis 22:20-21).

Read chapter 32—Because he was the youngest, Elihu held back, but no more—Elihu said he now chose to speak because (A) Job justified himself before God and (B) Job's friends *had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job*.

Read 33:1-7—Elihu said, *Refute me if you can... no fear of me should terrify you.*

Read 33:8-11—Elihu represented Job's position as pure, innocent, and victimized.

Read 33:12-22—Elihu said God speaks through *dreams, visions, and suffering*.

Read 33:23-24—Elihu believed an angel [or a messenger] could be a *mediator*, make a *ransom*, be *gracious*, and *deliver the sinner*. Unknowingly, Elihu described the work of Christ on the cross.

Read 33:25-33—Elihu repeated the answer of the other three friends, that God will restore the repentant.

Chapter 34 — The Second Speech of Elihu

Read verses 1-4—Elihu began, *Let us know* ["understand"] *among ourselves what is good*.

Read verses 5-9—Elihu stated Job's position, *I am righteous, but God has taken away my right*.

Read verses 10-28—Elihu said, *here is what we agree on, Far be it from God to do wickedness*—Elihu rightly concluded that the God of the universe is sovereign and just. Therefore, He rewards goodness and punishes sin. But Elihu's mistake is the same as the others, in that he assumes God's justice is always carried out during this life on earth.

Read verses 29-30—Elihu attempted to answer Job's observation about evil men and nations—Elihu said, even when it seems like God does not punish evil, He has not lost control over either nation or man.

Read verses 31-37—*Job ought to be tried to the limit, because he answers like wicked men*

Chapter 35 — The Third Speech of Elihu

Read verses 1-3—Elihu stated Job's point as, *What profit will I have, more than if I had sinned?*—Elihu said Job thinks, "There is no value in righteousness because I am suffering just as if I'd sinned."

Read verses 4-16—Elihu claimed, *He does not answer, because of the pride of evil men* Elihu made two basic claims here. First, God is in the heavens and not affected by good or evil. Second, God does not listen to the prayers of proud men, like Job.

Elihu's Quotations of Job

In Elihu's First Speech

33:9a "I am pure" (cf. 6:10; 9:21; 10:7; 12:4; 16:17; 31:6)

33:9b "Without sin" (cf. 13:23; 23:11)

33:9c "I am clean and free from guilt" (cf. 9:20-21; 10:7; 27:6)

33:10a "God has found fault with me" (cf. 10:6)

33:10b "He considers me His enemy" (cf. 13:24; 19:11)

33:11a "He fastens my feet in shackles" (cf. 13:27)

33:11b "He keeps close watch on all my paths" (cf. 7:17-20; 10:14; 13:27)

In Elihu's Second Speech

34:5a "I am innocent [righteous]" (cf. 9:15; 20; 27:6)

34:5b "God denies me justice" (cf. 19:6-7; 27:2)

34:6a "I am right" (cf. 27:5-6)

34:6b "I am guiltless" (cf. 10:7, chapter 31)

34:6d "His arrow inflicts an incurable wound" (cf. 6:4; 16:13)

34:9 "It profits a man nothing when he tries to please God" (cf. 21:15)

In Elihu's Third Speech

35:2 "I will be cleared by God" (cf. 13:18; 23:7)

35:3 "What profit is it to me, and what do I gain by not sinning?" (cf. 21:15)

In Elihu's Fourth Speech

36:23 "You [God] have done wrong" (cf. 19:6-7)

Chapters 36 – 37 — The Fourth Speech of Elihu

Read 36:1-4—Elihu claimed, *there is yet more to be said in God's behalf*—Elihu had more to say, but it sounds like more of the same. He claimed, *I will fetch my knowledge from afar* (3) and *For truly my words are not false* (4). His comment, *One who is perfect in knowledge is with you* is hard to interpret. It could refer to Elihu, God, or mockingly to Job.

Read 36:5-23—Elihu said that God *declares to them their work, and their transgressions*
This section says nothing new and agrees with Job's other friends, that all suffering is a judgment from God. One can only wonder how cruel these people were to young people who were suffering from diseases like smallpox, polio, diphtheria, and typhoid.

Read 36:24-33—Elihu recalled the sovereignty of God and concluded that natural events are the judgment of God—After giving some good sound conclusions about God's sovereignty over things like rain and lightning, Elihu went on to say, *For by these He judges peoples; He gives food in abundance* (31). So for Elihu, the weather is an indication of the blessing or cursing of God. This is obviously absurd.

Read 37:1-13—From the breath of God ice is made, and the expanse of the waters is frozen
Elihu continued with more examples of God's control over nature. Job and his friends (and you and I) would all agree. But then Elihu made unwarranted conclusions, like *He seals the hand of every man, that all men may know His work*. There is no basis for the conclusion that the sovereignty of God over natural events results in us knowing what God is doing with those events.

Read 37:14-24—Elihu, once again, referred to the sovereignty of God—Elihu reiterated the point that Job could not possibly understand God's work in creation. But we might then ask, "So, why does Elihu think he understands God's work in judgment?"

Evaluative Comments on the Arguments of Job's Friends

1. All of Job's friends made observations about the sovereignty of God. They reminded Job that the work of God, observed in creation, shows us how awesome God is and, therefore, how it is impossible for mere men to understand Him. But if God's work cannot be understood, then why do they think they can understand it when it comes to Job's suffering?
2. Job's friends all made the assumption that Job was suffering because of his sin. They rightly understood that a good God would judge righteousness and sin with rewards and punishments. But that does not mean all suffering is caused by sin. This is a logical error on their part. Let's put it in terms of $A+B=C$. For instance, it is true that A (the judgment of God) + B (the sin of man) = C (the suffering of man). But that does not mean C is always a result of $A+B$. For example, $3+6=9$, but that does not mean that every 9 is a result of adding $3+6$. It is also true that $1+8=9$, $2+7=9$, and $4+5=9$. So it does not follow that Job's suffering was because of the judgment of God on a sinful man.
3. Job's friends repeatedly made the mistake of thinking they knew what God was doing. Nobody knows what God is doing (Ecc. 3:11; 11:5; John 3:8). That's the point of the book.
4. Job's mistake was to agree with his friends that suffering is caused by sin. But what's really interesting is that whoever wrote the book of Job, wrote it to debunk that whole idea.
5. Job's friends took Job's overstatements of his own righteousness and used them as proof that his suffering was a punishment from God. But that would only suggest Job should be punished in the future. It is not evidence that those statements caused his suffering. They are saying those statements are evidence of Job's pride. But they have no idea about Job's motives in those statements. Job's friends never refute Job's true observation that evil people do not always suffer. One of the most morally disturbing facts of the universe is that there is no justice in this life. And it is one of the most compelling arguments for an afterlife.

Questions about Chapters 27 – 37

- In chapter 27, Job said, *Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me*. He meant,
 - I have not sinned and I will not sin.
 - God will judge my integrity.
 - I will continue to turn away from evil.
- The phrase in Job 28:4, *He sinks a shaft far from habitation*, means
 - God searches the ways of man.
 - Man searches the ways of God.
 - Man searches the earth.
- Chapter 29 describes Job
 - Before his suffering began
 - While his suffering was ongoing
 - After his suffering was over
- In chapter 30, Job said, *my harp is turned to mourning, and my flute to the sound of those who weep* (verse 31). He was referring to
 - The lowly people Job helped, who now insult him
 - The fact that he is in physical pain
 - God not answering him
 - B and C
 - All of the above
- In 31:1, Job said, *I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?* He meant,
 - I will not look at a virgin.
 - I will not lust after a virgin.
 - I will continue to turn away from evil.
- In chapters 32–33, Elihu spoke for the first time. Which statement below is NOT true?
 - Elihu believed Job’s friends were wrong about Job’s suffering.
 - Elihu said God speaks through dreams, visions, and suffering.
 - Elihu believed an angel could be a mediator for Job.
 - Elihu believed that God will restore the repentant.
- In 34:10-28, Elihu said there is one thing we can all agree on:
 - God is sovereign.
 - God is just.
 - God is the creator.
- In chapter 35, Elihu said Job was suffering because of his
 - Pride
 - Selfishness
 - Self-righteousness
- Elihu’s third speech in chapters 36 and 37 is
 - Basically the same thing he said before
 - A new theory about Job’s attitude
 - A rebuke of Job’s other friends
- The problem with the arguments of Job’s friends is that all four of them are
 - Illogical
 - Inaccurate
 - Insensitive

Answers: 1. B. 2. C. 3. A. 4. D. 5. B. 6. A. 7. B. 8. A. 9. A. 10. A.

III. God's Spoke and Job Responded — 38:1-42:6

Chapters 38 – 39

God's First speech

These are the first words of God to man ever recorded. [God's revelation to Adam, Noah, and Abraham were not recorded by Moses until ca.1500 B.C.] This is also the longest oration God ever gave to man. God's delivery consisted of over 70 questions, which Job could not answer. They are basically a natural science exam, with a condemnation for questioning God's judgment. We should notice that God did not simply tell Job he didn't know what he was talking about, but, using statements of irony (like, *Tell Me...Instruct Me... Since you know*), brought Job to where he concluded it for himself. There are two parts to God's oration (chapters 38-39 and 40-41). This includes Job's two brief repentant responses, one inbetween God's two speeches (40:3-5) and one at the end of God's second speech (42:1-6).



Read Job 38:1—Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said

Notice—God did not communicate to Job with silent “whisperings,” or from circumstantial events, or from inner guidance, or coincidental messages, or a heart-felt inclination. God answered Job out of a real, physical, generally observable whirlwind, and spoke with a real audible voice in real words that could really be verified by Job's four friends. It has nothing to do with Job's feelings or his faith.

Read 38:2-3—Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

The first question used a metaphor that is not clear, although the meaning of the question is completely clear. *Darkens counsel* could mean one who pollutes God's counsel (muddies the water), doubts God's counsel, or it may just mean one who stands before God casting a shadow, making a dark spot. At any rate, the point is clear. Job's words without knowledge were questioning the judgment of God. And this is Job's sin. In the end, God told Job's friends, *you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has* (42:7). So Job was only incorrect in that he questioned the judgment of God, thus assuming he had enough knowledge to do that. Hence the next mocking phrase, *Now gird up your loins like a man* [a common figure of tucking in your garments in preparation for a journey], *and I will ask you, and you instruct Me!*

Read 38:4-7—Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Verse 4 is actually a metaphysical rather than a scientific question. When God *laid the foundation of the earth*, Job had not yet been created. Neither had Adam and Eve, for that matter. So where was he before he was, and before anybody was? Of course, Job didn't know, and that's the point of the following litany of questions on cosmology, oceanography, meteorology, and astronomy. Verses 5-6 describe God putting the earth into orbit, using images for constructing a building. Verse 7, *When the morning stars sang together*, may be a reference to the stars seen in the morning (possibly Venus and Mercury), indicating those stars were created before the earth. [Remember, every light in the sky was called a star.] Or this phrase might be just another way to say, *and all the sons of God shouted for joy* (no doubt a reference to angels—Psalm 148:2-3 also makes that connection). At any rate, it indicates that the creation of the physical universe was after the creation of angels.

Read 38:8-11—Who enclosed the sea?

The creation of the sea (as in Genesis 1:2) is described with images of childbirth.

Read 38:12-15—*Have you ever in your life commanded the morning?* In the morning, the wicked, who are active at night (Job 24:14-17; John 3:19), have to hide. It is as if the morning light were shaking them out of a blanket of darkness (13).

Read 38:16-18—*Have you entered into the springs of the sea?* My guess is Job didn't know there were springs in the sea.

Read 38:19-21—*Where is the way to the dwelling of light...and darkness?* We still have no idea about this. I Googled: "Where does light come from?" I found many answers, all of which somebody else disagreed with. The most agreed upon answer was, "Light is a form of energy that is given off when electrons 'jump' orbits. Energy is neither created nor destroyed so the energy has to go somewhere and it is released in the form of electromagnetic radiation 'light.'" So my next question is, "Why do orbit-jumping electrons produce electromagnetic radiation, and why can we see it?" It seems we still don't know *the dwelling of light*.

Read 38:22-24—*Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or... the hail?* The word *storehouse* is a common metaphor for the directive control of God over natural events (Psalms 33:7; 135:7; Jeremiah 10:13).

Read 38:25-30—*Who has cleft a channel for the flood, or a way for the thunderbolt?* Interestingly, this says the seemingly haphazard zigzag path of a wadi or a thunderbolt is designed by God. Also, in this paragraph, we have a focus on *rain that falls on a land without people... To satisfy the waste and desolate land* (26-27). So rain and the vegetation it grows are for God, not man.

Read 38:31-33—*Can Job lead forth a constellation of stars?*

Read 38:34-35—*Can Job lift up his voice to the clouds, so that an abundance of water will cover him?*

Read 38:36-38—*Who has put wisdom in the innermost being, or given understanding to the mind?*

Read 38:39-41—*Can Job feed the young lions or the ravens?*

Read the 30 verses of chapter 39—*The mysteries of the animal kingdom*—Chapter 30 continues the discourse begun in 38:39 and extends it to the wild goat, deer, wild donkey, wild ox, ostrich, horse, hawk, and eagle. One of the most interesting comments God made is about the ostrich. He said, *She treats her young cruelly, as if they were not hers; Though her labor be in vain, she is unconcerned; Because God has made her forget wisdom, And has not given her a share of understanding.* So, if we evaluate the ostrich on human terms, she would be considered cruel and without wisdom or understanding. Clearly, the sovereign hand of God over His creation predetermined that there would be a cruel, stupid ostrich. If Job didn't know why God made such a beast, then neither could he figure out why God made Job to suffer.

Chapters 40 – 41

God's Second Speech

Read 40:1-5—*Let him who reproves God answer*—Before His second speech, God invited Job to respond. Here was Job's chance to do what he said he wanted to do, *present my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments* (23:4). But what did Job do? He said, *Behold, I am insignificant; what can I reply to You? I lay my hand on my mouth.* And that's what you and I will say when we face God.



Read 40:6-14—Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified? Here we come to the root of Job’s sin. By complaining that God had done him an injustice, Job was *annuling* [פָּרַרְ (parar) usually translated *breaking*] God’s judgment. That meant Job was condemning God in order to justify himself. The word *condemn* is רָשָׁע (rashah) meaning, *to act wickedly*. This verb has occurred several times already in the book of Job. Job said he would tell God not to condemn him (10:2). Eliphaz told Job his own words were condemning him (15:6), and Elihu believed the three older friends had condemned Job (32:3). But God said the One who was actually being condemned was God Himself! Job’s self-justification, claiming that he was not acting wickedly, assumed that God was acting wickedly. If Job could conclude that his living in pain was bad, then he was concluding that God was bad.

Read 40:15-24—Behold now, Behemoth—The word בְּהֵמוֹת (Behemoth) is literally a plural form of a common Hebrew word meaning ‘beast.’ Most translators agree that this is an intensive or majestic plural, so the meaning is something like ‘colossal beast.’ Also, we read in verse 19 that Behemoth was the *first of the ways of God*, which suggests that Behemoth may have been the largest of God’s creatures. There are basically four ways this beast has been interpreted throughout history:



1. It is unlikely that Behemoth is some kind of **mythological creature**. God’s first speech dealt with flesh-and-blood animals and birds created by God that Job could not explain. The same is true for the Behemoth and Leviathan. A creature someone just thought up would negate God’s point. Also, the detailed behavior of these beasts is not consistent with a myth.
2. The interpretation that Behemoth was an **elephant** is very old and was common among medieval scholars. The original KJV (1611) had a marginal note, *Or, the Elephant, as some thinke*. But the most outstanding features of the elephant are its trunk, the great size of its feet, and its ears. None of these unique features are mentioned in this passage. Also, the elephant retreats to the depths of the forest during the hot part of the day. This does not seem to fit with 40:21, which says the Behemoth spends his days *in the reeds and the marsh*.
3. The French protestant pastor Samuel Bochart in his *Hierozoicon* (1663), suggested that Behemoth was a **hippopotamus**, and this has since remained as the most common interpretation. But the hippopotamus is noted for its large and strong mouth, with its deadly tusks, and thick skin. None of these unique features are mentioned in this passage. Also the hippopotamus stays in the deeper water, not where *the lotus plants cover him with shade*. But the main disqualifying feature, which makes it unreasonable to conclude that the Behemoth is either an elephant or a hippo is in 40:17 *He bends his tail like a cedar*. Some have suggested that the tail of the hippo can become stiff like the limb of a cedar (RSV: “He makes his tail stiff like a cedar”). But this is clearly not the intent of the passage. The tail of this creature is the size of a cedar, which throughout Scripture was known as an enormous tree.
4. The Behemoth is described as probably the largest animal. No known living animal fits the passage. The only reasonable interpretation is that it was a very large animal which had a tail as large as a cedar tree. An extinct dinosaur would be a reasonable possibility. The theories that this was an elephant or a hippo originated before there was any knowledge of dinosaurs. The reason for rejecting the dinosaur theory today is because of evolutionists who tell us that dinosaurs went extinct millions of years before humans evolved. This idea is

forced on the passage. There is nothing in the passage itself to suggest this. The most likely conclusion is that this is a dinosaur such as what we have named (from fossilized skeletons) a **brontosaurus**.



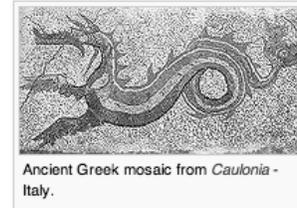
If we believe in the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, we must maintain that the words spoken about Behemoth (and also Leviathan) were spoken by their Creator, who would have known the intimate details of His own design. [The Behemoth material adapted from Alan K. Steel, <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/tj/v15/n2/behemoth>.]

Read the 34 verses of Job 41—*Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?*



There are three common suggestions as to the identification of the Leviathan: (1) a mythical creature, (2) a crocodile, (3) a dinosaur with dragon-like features. Some have also suggested it was a whale or a dolphin, but these don't even come close to the descriptions given to this creature.

We shall consider each of the three main suggestions:



Ancient Greek mosaic from Caulonia - Italy.

1. The identification of Leviathan as a **mystical** beast is more tempting than for the Behemoth because it is a fire-breathing creature with no observable parallel in nature today. Some also suggest the creature is poetic imagery. But all the arguments against Behemoth being mystical, or simply poetic, also apply to Leviathan. This solution seems to nullify the arguments made to Job about the creative wonders of God's physical creatures.
2. There has never been an observable **crocodile** that come even close to fitting this description. Some suggest that ancient crocodiles were much larger than those today, but that would not explain its flesh being like scales (13-17) or its fire-breathing qualities (18-21). The crocodile suggestion seems to be made by those intimidated by evolutionary presuppositions.
3. Any serious literal interpretation has to understand that this beast is not something observable today. It is best to assume that such a beast actually, physically, existed.

The **Leviathan** is referred to six times (in five verses) in the Bible:

- Job 3:8—*Let those curse it who curse the day, who are prepared to rouse **Leviathan**.*
- Job 41:1—*Can you draw out **Leviathan** with a fishhook? Or press down his tongue with a cord?*
- Psalm 74:14—*You crushed the heads of **Leviathan**; you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.*
- Psalm 104:26—*There the ships move along, and **Leviathan**, which You have formed to sport in it.*
- Isaiah 27:1—*In that day the LORD will punish **Leviathan** the fleeing serpent, with His fierce and great and mighty sword, even **Leviathan** the twisted serpent; and He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.*

The word *heads*, of Psalm 74:14, could refer to the greatness of its head, just as Behemoth is a plural word for meaning a great beast, and Elohim is a plural word for God to indicate His greatness. *Heads* could also refer to more than one Leviathan. There are no multiple heads on the one in Job.

Wikipedia lists the following references to ancient dragons.

- In **Ancient Greece** (see image above), the first mention of a "dragon" is derived from the *Iliad*.
- In 217 A.D., Flavius Philostratus discussed dragons (δράκων, drákōn) in **India**.
- **Ethiopia** was inhabited by a species of dragon that hunted elephants.
- **European dragons** exist in folklore and mythology. Dragons are generally depicted as living in rivers or having an underground lair or cave.
- In **Slavic** mythology, the words "zmey," "zmiy," or "zmaj" are used to describe a dragon.
- In **Romania**, there is a similar figure, derived from the Slavic dragon and named *zmeu*.
- In **Polish** folklore, as well as in the other Slavic folklores, a dragon is also called *smok*.
- In **Ukraine** and **Russia**, a particular dragon-like creature has three heads and spits fire.
- The modern **Persian** word azhdahā or ezhdehā اژدها (Middle Persian azdahāg) meaning "dragon," often used of a dragon depicted upon a banner of war.
- In **China**, depiction of the dragon (**traditional**: 龍; **simplified**: 龙) can be found in artifacts from the Shang and Zhou dynasties with examples dating back to the 16th century B.C.
- **Japanese dragon** myths amalgamate native legends with imported stories about dragons from China, Korea and India. Like these other Asian dragons, most Japanese ones, are water deities.
- **Vietnamese dragons** (Vietnamese: rồng or long 龍) are symbolic creatures in the folklore and mythology of Vietnam. According to a creation myth, the Vietnamese people are descended from a dragon and a fairy.

A fire-breathing creature is clearly possible in the natural world. Here is what's needed: (1) Methane gas, which is produced in quite big quantities in the large intestines of mammals, and dinosaurs were probably mammals. (2) Tubes that would transport the methane gas, from the intestine to a storage area. (3) A storage bladder, which would be at the end of the transport tubes probably in or near the head, with a sphincter or muscle to prevent the methane from being forced back down the transport system when it is pressurized. (4) The storage bladder would need to be flexible and contractible, like our own urine bladder or the poison bladders used by deadly snakes. Some of these are capable of considerable pressure. (5) One or two little tubes, like the poison tubes used by snakes, to transport the methane to the roof of the mouth so that when the gas is released it gives the appearance of the creature "breathing fire." (6) Finally, it would need some form of heat or spark to ignite the methane gas just as it is leaving the mouth. Such an electric spark is commonly used by a number of electric generating animals such as the electric eel, electric catfish, and the 500 species of Bombardier beetles. [These six points are adapted from <http://hauns.com/~DCQu4E5g/Fire.htm>.]

Therefore: These two mighty creatures, the Behemoth and the Leviathan, are not some mystical representation of evil. They are given as wonders of God's physical creation in the natural world, which Job was aware of and demonstrated to Job his inability to judge God's decisions.

Chapter 42

The Conclusion



The final chapter is in three parts:

1. Read verses 1-6—Job's repentance

In verses 1-2, Job said God *can do all things*. Job is referring to God's creation. God *can do all things* (A) consistent with His character [God cannot sin, be unjust, unloving, limited, etc.] and (B) which can be done [God cannot make absurd things which cannot exist—like sticks with one end, square circles, or a rock so big He can't move it, etc.].

In verses 3-6, Job quoted two of God's comments. *Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?* To which Job responded, *I have declared that which I did not understand*, and God's second comment, *Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me*. Job never actually addressed this second comment, but he made a general statement of repentance with three parts. Each should be considered individually. Job said,

- A. *I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear*. The question is, "How did Job hear about God?" He referred to Him as Yahweh (LORD), and that revelation only came through the Shem line from Adam to Noah to Abraham. No other ancient religion used that name for God. So, even though he had no inspired Scripture or special revelation, Job had heard about God from the line of revelation we have recorded in the Bible.
- B. *But now my eye sees You*. What Job saw was a whirlwind and a storm. He did not see the form of God, or even a theophany of the pre-incarnate Christ, as Abraham did (Genesis 18-19). But he saw something real, a whirlwind in a storm, and he heard God speaking real words. He received a verbal, special revelation from God.
- C. *Therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes*. Now Job grieved over his sin instead of grieving over his physical losses. The *dust and ashes* are an expression of humility (Job 2:12; 28; Genesis 18:27; Isaiah 58:5; Daniel 9:3). His repentance restored his relationship with God.

2. Read verses 7-9—God’s evaluation

In verse 7, God spoke **to Eliphaz**, probably because he was the eldest of the three, and said *My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends because **You have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has.*** This meant they were in trouble and needed to take action to avoid the justice of God poured out against them. Their judgment was because they *have not spoken of Me what is right.* So apparently, theology matters—a lot. God referred to Job as *My servant* four times, as He did when He originally challenged Satan (1:8; 2:3). It seems that Job was God’s servant all along, but needed some correction and instruction. Job’s friends, however, needed a sacrifice to appease the wrath of God.

Verses 8-9 describe Job as a priest. God told Job’s older three friends to *take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves.* So Job is assigned the role of a priest (as he preformed earlier 1:5). The offering required of the friends was quite large. And in addition, they were to have Job pray for them. The word *prayer* is only mentioned one other time in the book (16:17, *my prayer is pure*), and no prayers are recorded. Elihu was not mentioned in all of this, probably indicating that his comments, although not 100% accurate, were generally true, and he held the right perspective on God’s sovereignty. So apparently, not only does theology matter, but the degree of theological accuracy matters.

3. Read verses 10-17—Job’s restoration

After Job prayed for his friends, *the LORD increased all that Job had twofold.* It seems that Job’s restoration not only followed his repentance but also his prayer for the three who condemned him.

- Verse 11 tells us that Job’s family and other friends comforted him and brought significant gifts.
- Verse 12 gives the number of animals that are doubled. [The chart is from the “Ryrie Study Bible.”]
- Verse 13 is noteworthy in that it lists his restored children as *seven sons and three daughters* [we do not know if it was by the same wife, probably not]. Since this is the same number he had before, yet God promised to double all he had, we can assume the others were still alive in the presence of God. It also indicates that humans have an eternal soul and animals do not.
- Verses 14-15 give us the names of Job’s three new daughters. Job’s other 17 children are not named. We are told two things about them: (1) *In all the land no women were found so fair as Job’s daughters* [apparently physical beauty is a good thing and a gift from God]; and (2) *their father gave them inheritance among their brothers.* [This was an unusual practice in the ancient world. It was only allowed in the Mosaic Law when their brothers had died (Numbers 27:8).]
- Verses 16-17 tell us Job lived 140 more years and died, not from his suffering as he requested (3:20-26; 10:18-22), but *full of years.* According to Jewish tradition, his latter years (140) were exactly twice the number of his former ones (70). There is no way to confirm this biblically, but this does seem reasonable (Terra lived to be 205 and Abraham 175). This would make Job’s age at death 210. Job *saw his sons and his grandsons, four generations,* that is, he lived to see his great-great-grandchildren.

JOB’S FAMILY & POSSESSIONS	
Before Testing (1:2-3)	After Testing (42:12-15)
7 sons	7 sons
3 daughters	3 daughters
7,000 sheep	14,000 sheep
3,000 camels	6,000 camels
1,000 oxen	2,000 oxen
500 donkeys	1,000 donkeys

Questions about Chapters 38 – 42

1. Chapters 38-42 include an appearance of God, which included,
 - A. The first theophany of God ever recorded
 - B. The longest speech of God ever recorded
 - C. The first animal sacrifice ever commanded
2. About how many questions did God ask Job?
 - A. 30
 - B. 50
 - C. 70
3. God's questions proved that Job was
 - A. Ignorant
 - B. Foolish
 - C. Sinful
4. In his first answer to God (40:1-5), Job basically said,
 - A. You are right.
 - B. I was wrong.
 - C. No comment.
5. In 40:6-14, we learn that Job's sin was to
 - A. Annul God's judgment
 - B. Justify himself
 - C. Conclude God was acting wickedly
 - D. A and B
 - E. All of the above
6. The Behemoth described in 40:15-24 is most likely
 - A. A mystical creature
 - B. An elephant
 - C. A hippopotamus
 - D. A brontosaurus
7. The Leviathan in Job 41 is most likely
 - A. A mythical creature
 - B. A crocodile
 - C. A dinosaur with dragon-like features
 - D. None of the above
8. In 42:1-6, Job said, *I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear.* Likely, that meant through
 - A. Noah
 - B. Abraham
 - C. Nature
9. God called Job His servant because he was like a
 - A. Prophet
 - B. Teacher
 - C. Priest
10. *The LORD increased all that Job had twofold.* That included
 - A. His children
 - B. His friends
 - C. His land

Answers: 1. B. 2. C. 3. A. 4. C. 5. E. 6. D (this is possible but not a certainty). 7. C. 8. B (because Abraham lived just before Job). 9. C. 10. A.