

Job Lesson 1: Introduction

A. **Job is at the top of the list of the most difficult books of the Bible**

1. We don't know the author.
2. We don't know the date of authorship.
3. We don't know the place of authorship.
4. We are not entirely sure of the original language (or languages) in which it was written.
5. The most complete text of Job is found in the Masoretic text, and consists of "archaic Hebrew" which is notoriously difficult to translate.
6. The book contains hundreds of rare Hebrew words, the translations of which are uncertain.
7. The literary forms used in Job are myriad.

B. **10 Misconceptions about the book of Job**

1. *Missing the Middle*
2. *Suffering Fallacy*
3. *Theodicy Fallacy*
4. *Satan Suggests that God Test Job Fallacy*
5. *Job's Counsellors Repeat Themselves Fallacy*
6. *Job's Counsellors are Stupid Fallacy*
7. *Job's Counsellors Were Always Wrong Fallacy*
8. *Job's Problems Are Solved at the End Fallacy*
9. *The Biblical-Theological Disconnect Fallacy*
10. *The Messianic Connection Fallacy*

C. Date of events: Events of the book take place clearly during the patriarchal period, around the time of Abraham.

D. Date of writing: This issue is highly controversial, and the bottom line is no one knows for sure.

E. Author: Not known with any certainty. Chou makes a strong case that the author is Elihu. Evidence for authorship by Elihu:

F. Job as the Bible's Prequel: The best way to think of Job is as a book that asks key questions that are answered not in the book of Job, but in the rest of the bible.

- The book of Job revolves around 2 court-room scenes: one in heaven and one on earth. Both courtrooms consider the rightness of God.
- The foundation of the world view of Job and his friends is called the Divine-Retribution principle.
- Because of this principle, Job's friends assumed that because Job was suffering, he MUST have sinned seriously. God afflicts Job for the express purpose of drawing out of him the deepest questions possible, so that He could reveal how much we need His special revelation.
- Job's wishes are ultimately fulfilled through the work of Christ, though he never realized this in his lifetime.
- We will see that Job's friends set up a false dichotomy: either God is right and man is wrong, or vice versa. But because of the Gospel, God can be right and man can be made righteous!
- This book uses the literary device of irony extensively.
- The Bible is Job's wish granted.
- James 5:11—an important NT reference to Job
- The events of the book of Job should be understood as God designing the perfect scenario to show that the divine retribution principle breaks down and is an inadequate explanation for the human experience. Suffering here is a God-given device to help us focus on that future reality.