

Job

Suffering, yet safe in Gods sovereignty

Job as a character:

He is believed to have lived during the same time as Abraham, or perhaps a little earlier. Consequently, it is also believed that he was not of the same race or, perhaps even from the same social civilization as Abraham, thus not Hebrew. Also, because this is viewed as a wisdom book, and not necessarily historical, Job's story is very difficult to date, and identify authorship. He most certainly didn't write this himself.

Job as a literary work:

Similar to several other Mesopotamian works of ancient times, Job establishes a dilemma based on the holiness of God and the sinfulness of men.

* "Man and His God" – Sumerian – dated about 2000 b.c.

* "Ludlul bel Nemqi" (I will praise the lord of wisdom) – Akkadian – dated about 1250 b.c.

* "The Babylonian Theodicy" – Babylonian – dated about 100 b.c.

Comparisons unanimously demonstrate the superiority of literary, and philosophical qualities of Job (to us that seems logical and obvious because it is inspired by God).

Job as a theology handbook:

The book tells the story of a man, but the lessons are about God:

1. God has established a system for operations with man blessing his righteousness. Righteousness is the goal, not blessing. To test this, Satan is given liberty to rob Job's blessings, and yet "Job did not sin or charge God with wrong." – Job 1:22.
2. God generally blesses righteousness but doesn't guarantee it. Suffering may be part of any righteous person's life.

Thus, the justice and benevolence of God are driven by His wisdom. He has established his relations with men according to His own superior intellect and understanding.

Observations from the book:

1. Infinite wisdom is more in focus than omniscience.
2. Control and maintenance is more in focus than omnipotence.
3. Justice is desired, not feared (by the righteous).

Conclusion: Who God is is more important than His capabilities.

Job as a book of awe:

1. The access and activity allowed Satan.
2. The existence of wondrous creatures:
Unicorns (ch. 39); Dinosaurs (ch. 40); Dragons (ch. 41)
3. The obedience of creation to God (chs. 38-41)