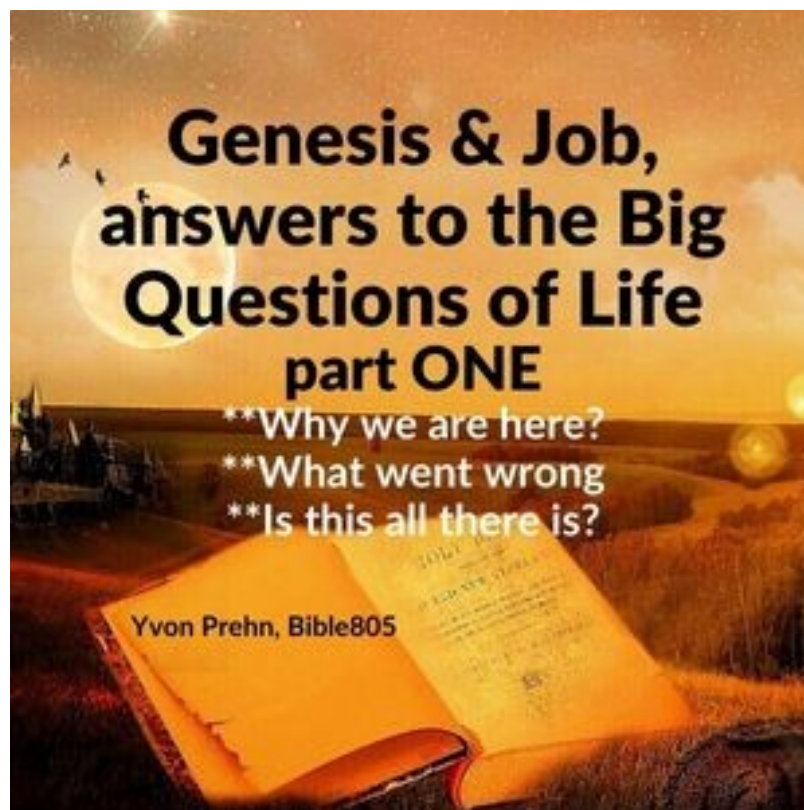


Handouts, including Notes, Chart, and Questions

for



The Bible gives us answers to the Big Questions of life—

- How did the world begin?
- Why are there troubles in this world?
- Is this all there is or is there life after death?
- God hasn't left us alone to answer these questions and many more that trouble us in our quiet moments and worst nightmares, as we will learn in our lesson today. . . .

Week One of Thru the Bible—

Genesis & Job, answers to the Big Questions of Life, part ONE

****Why we are here?**

****What went wrong?**

****Is this all there is?**

Yvon Prehn, teacher

The beginning of the Bible

- Is literally THE BEGINNING —“In the Beginning, God” Gen. 1:1 tells us.
- Before all else, we are introduced to the protagonist of the story—God.
- From beginning to end it is **His Story**.
- The story begins with God creating a parenthesis in eternity to carefully craft a world.
- He then fills this world with living creatures and ultimately with one created in His image—mankind, male and female, to whom He assigns fulfilling work and with whom He will walk with in a perfect world.
- But an enemy was also there—Satan, the antagonist. Almost immediately he enters the scene.
- And God's beloved creation turn against Him, believe Satan's lie, and that sets up the plot, the storyline of the rest of the Bible.

Before we move on a with the plot, the storyline

- I want to acknowledge that much has been written about the details of Creation.
- If those details are important to you, there are many resources online where you can check out, but we won't be talking about them because for our study,
- The emphasis is not so much about the when and how of creation, **but about the Who**, the God who created is the God who as the story goes along cares for, redeems, and ultimately restores his people and creation.
- As has been said, history is truly HIS STORY.
- And it's a long story, so let's get started.

As you start reading through the Bible

- You'll begin reading in Genesis, which is what most people expect as we start reading through the Bible, but then after 3 days you jump into Job.
- **“What is going on!?”** You might ask.
- In most Bibles, the book of Job is close to the middle of the Bible, just before Psalms.
- However, in most chronological Bible reading plans Job is placed near the beginning of the book of Genesis.
- The chronology is important because....

Instead of simply hopeful promises and unrelated Bible stories

- **When you read the Bible in chronological, historical order you see how events**

fit together, why the prophets preached when they did, how prophecy is fulfilled, and the power of progressive revelation.

- ***You see for yourself how God is the ONE AUTHOR of the ONE story of the Bible.***
- Reading the Bible with any system is better than not reading it at all, but when you read it in chronological, historical order you'll see the difference it makes.
- Please check out the foundational lessons that explain why it is important to read this way in more detail—links and schedules for reading are on the website, www.bible805.com
- Next, I'll give you some additional reasons for why Genesis and Job should be read together.

Genesis and Job have one author—Moses

- However, in both cases Moses is more of an editor than how we normally think of an author.
- An author creates the content, but in Genesis and Job the words are not originally his—the content was revealed from God, plus Moses had access to oral and written records of what happened prior to his life. (See chart on the lengthy timelines of the early Biblical Characters).
- Let's now look at the traditional, geographical, and historical details that affirm Moses as the author of both books.

Timeline of the early Bible characters and the importance of oral history for our Bibles

Traditional witness of Moses' authorship

- **Contemporary, anti-supernaturalist views dispute that Moses was the author of the book of Job and refer to it as a fictional, allegorical story by an unnamed author.**
- **Though there is no evidence of any sort for this view.**
- **However, thousands of years of history and tradition hold the view that this quote summarizes:**
- *"Uniform Jewish tradition ascribed the book of Job to Moses and also accepted it as part of the true canon of Scripture. This ascription seems quite reasonable if Moses is regarded as the editor Moses most likely came into possession of Job's record during his forty-year exile from Egypt in the land of Midian (not far from Job's own homeland in Uz), and quickly recognized its great importance. . . . It was probably similar to how he compiled and organized the primeval (of or relating to the earliest ages) records from which he has also given us the book of Genesis.*

[That being the case] the book of Job is probably the oldest book in the Bible.

- *It contains more references to Creation, the Flood and other primeval events than any book of the Bible except Genesis and provides more insight into the age-long conflict between God and Satan than almost any other book."*
<https://www.icr.org/books/defenders/2603>
- This is the view I believe is true.
- Just as later books in the Bible refer to other accounts of contemporary history being written, and since we have ancient writings from other civilizations at that time, and earlier (e.g. the Gilgamesh epic), and Moses had access to all the learning of Egypt, it makes sense he would have read works available to him when he fled to Midian and afterwards.
- Following are additional evidence of Moses as author of Job and an early date for its content.

Geographical evidence for Moses' authorship of Job

- Biblical archeology and geography places Uz (where the book takes place) near Midian (as the previous IRC quote states)—where Moses spent 40 years after he fled Egypt.

- It was not an accident God sent Moses to the specific place where he would have heard the oral history of Job and perhaps had access to written documents of Job's story.

Historical evidence on dating the book

- For Moses to be the author, the book needs to take place of prior to the time of the Exodus, during the time of the Patriarchs.
- ***That is what the book shows through the historical details of internal evidence because it describes a time that was—***
- Similar to the Patriarchal society described elsewhere in the Bible—a nomadic lifestyle of living in tents, wealth measured in herds of various kinds.
- Pre-law, as evidenced by Job's personal sacrifices for his family if they sinned.
- A time without formal priesthood or temple structure—referred to in any way.
- A time without overall strong, central government, none mentioned.
- Our overall picture of Job is similar to how we would picture the world of Abraham, which would be consistent with the world presented in accounts of both of their lives.

One more thing

- Reading Job out of historical context or reading it as part of the poetical books has a very dangerous potential result—
- And that is for people, not only Biblical critics, but casual readers, to perhaps without thinking make Job into a fictional character who represents unjust suffering.
- That is NOT how the Bible presents Job and to think of him in that way robs the book of much of its power.
- Here is how the Bible confirms Job as a real individual....

Old Testament biblical confirmation that

Job was a real person

- ***The first is from Ezekiel***, a priest and exile from Israel who was deported from Israel to Babylon, prior to the fall of Jerusalem. In a passage where God is giving him a message about coming judgement he writes,
 - *Even if these three men—Noah, Daniel and Job—were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign Lord" (Ezekiel 14:14)*
- God speaks and Ezekiel repeats his words with the clear sense that these three are real persons, because—
- Daniel was his contemporary, a fellow exile to Babylon.
- Not only does Ezekiel consider Noah a real person, but the historical reality of Noah is verified by Jesus when he used him to illustrate how the world would be prior to his second coming in Matthew 24:37-38.
- Ezekiel places Job as a real individual alongside these other two, clearly taking him out of the realm of fictional character.

New Testament biblical confirmation that Job was a real person

- *As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. James 5:11*
- James cites Job in a way that assumes he is talking about a real person. His assertion here would not have any meaning if Job was simply a Jewish folk tale written by an unknown person.
- In addition to this specific example, please note: ***The Bible is the best commentary on itself***. Because of that we should expect that the various parts of the Bible agree with and comment on each other as these varied passages of Job do.

Summary and review of what we know about Job so far

- Based on tradition, Biblical confirmation, and the historical and geographical evidence we have, we will read Job believing that....
- He was a real person who lived about the time of the Patriarchs.
- What took place in the book were true events experienced by Job.
- The finished book was supernaturally revealed to, and perhaps using other records, and recorded in its final form by Moses.
- For us, it follows then that Job (as with all the Bible) *“was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right”* (2 Tim. 3:16, TLB).
- ***That is why we can use the books of Job and Genesis to answer the BIG, Foundational Questions of Life.***

What are the Big, Foundational Questions I’m referring to?

- **How did we get here?**
- **What went wrong?**
Sub question: Who is Satan and what power does he have?
- **Is there life after death?**
- **What about people who have never heard of Jesus?**
- **Why do innocent people suffer?**
- **How can we help people who are suffering?**

We will cover the first three in this lesson and then the next three in the next.

In this lesson, we’ll primarily look at how Job answers our questions, with some references to Genesis. We’ll talk more about the people and stories of Genesis in another lesson.

Overview of Job

- The book opens describing Job as God’s ideal man.
- Satan appears before God and challenges God that Job only serves him because God blesses him.
- To see if that is true, God allows Satan to harm Job and he loses wealth, family, and finally his health.
- Three friends (and a fourth later) come to comfort Job, but instead, accuse, and repeat false beliefs about God.
- Job consistently defends himself and demands a defense before God.
- God responds and shows his power.
- ***Important to note—God never answers Job’s questions.***
- Job repents and is restored.

Question #1 How did we get here? Answered in both books

- “In the beginning God” is how Genesis starts and the Genesis continues with a record of God’s creation of all things.
- God as Creator is confirmed in Job when God confronts him and begins by establishing who He, God is on the basis of creation, when He says—
- *Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you know so much. Do you know how its dimensions were determined, and who did the surveying? What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone as the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? (Job 38:4-7)*

This reality that God created us is a foundation for His claims on us

- And the answer to our questions for meaning and fulfillment in life The rest of the Bible affirms God’s creation as in Ps. 100:3 where it says: *“He made us....”*
- *And in Acts 17:28, where it says “In him we live and move and have our being.”*
- **No such things as a “self-made man or woman.”**

- Humanity is not the result of time plus chance.

We are created by a loving God

- Who knows what is BEST for us and designed our lives for meaning and purpose.
- We sometime trivialize the description of the Bible as the owner's manual and for the best functioning of life we tell people to "read the directions" but it is so true.
- C.S. Lewis put it this way *"God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."*

Question #2 What went wrong?

Genesis tells us that part of the story, Job expands it

- In Genesis 3, an antagonist enters the story—Satan, first introduced as "the serpent"
- God gave humanity only ONE negative command—
- *"Don't eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"*
- But the antagonist, Satan, created doubt about God's goodness and offered an alternative to trusting God, "wisdom" rather than relationship.
- Genesis tells us Adam and Eve chose the alternative—and we call this action "the Fall."

In the story line of the Bible

- The Fall is the conflict that initiates all the following actions of the Bible.
- Everything changes with this event.
- Immediately after the Fall, God promises a Savior and though we don't know the entire story at this time, the actions of that promised Savior would reverse Paradise lost with Paradise regained—but that is a long time from now...
- As we start the story, let's look more closely at the antagonist, at Satan so we can understand his tactics better because unfortunately he is part of many Bible stories and our stories.

Other scriptures to understand Satan more fully

- He was the highest of created beings, an angel who once held a place of honor before God, but he rebelled and was removed from his place.
- *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground—mighty though you were against the nations of the world" (Isa 14:12, TLB).*
- Read Ezek. 28—for more pictures of his fall when you have time.
- We wish we knew more about this extraordinary back story—what we do know is clothed in symbolic language and there is much we do not know.
- God has told us all we need to know. His past does not concern us as much as what he is doing now, and the book of Job gives us important insight to his current actions and limitations.
- We need to keep these things in mind as we read through the Bible and in our daily lives.

What Job shows us about Satan

- That Satan has access to God.
- He is allowed to initiate:
 - Natural disasters
 - Crime and death
 - Sickness
- All of these he did to Job.
- No where in the Bible are we given specifics about his ability to do them today.
- However, we do know that when and if they happen, they are ALL UNDER God's control and limitations.
- Not only do we see this in Job but also in the New Testament when Jesus stills the storm with his words in Matthew 8:23–27.

More about how Satan's power is limited

- Clearly in Job, Satan is subordinate to God—no dualism in the Bible—God and Satan are not two equal powers engaged in a cosmic battle.
- Satan is God's creation, not eternal, not all powerful, not all-knowing. He cannot read your thoughts or know the future for certain.
- He is also not omni-present; he can't be everywhere at one time, though he has legions of demonic powers.
- In Job 1 Satan appears before God in an obvious place of submission.
- God questions him, limits him—we see this as a foundational lesson in Job.
- It is an assurance also repeated in the New Testament ***"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them [Satan and his influence]: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).***

Though limited, Satan can still cause a lot of trouble

- Satan is not at all original in his strategies
- What he used then to tempt Adam and Eve, he continues to use now
- ***The simple statement in Gen. 3:1 Did God really say.....Satan continues to use again and again.***
- Satan always begins with questioning if God really said something, and it then progresses to suggesting an alternative that sounds good but is ultimately destructive.
- To stand up against that you need to know what God's Word truly says, what He truly wants you to do.
- It is ONLY through God's Word that you will know for certain what God wants because our world, our culture, our values today seem so pleasing in many ways, as the fruit did to Eve, but they are ultimately destructive.

Additionally, what we see about Satan in Job

- Satan is a restless, he wanders the earth and he is an accuser of God's people—then and now.
- In Job 1:7 *"The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, 'From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.'"*
- In the New Testament, we see this hasn't changed, *"Be careful—watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart" (1 Peter 5:8 TLB)."*

In that wandering, he accuses God's people

- Job 8, God point out the blameless life of Job, and Satan responds, *"Does Job fear God for nothing?"*
- Satan will twist every good thing in our lives (and the lives of others) to something evil.
- That chatter in your head constantly telling you what a mess you are is seldom from God.
- God's voice of conviction gives you a way to do better, Satan simply pounds you—don't listen to him.
- Evaluate your life in light of God's Word, confess your sin if necessary, and press ahead assured of God's love and forgiveness.
- ***Also, this is why slander, gossip, thinking evil of our brothers and sisters, of anyone is SO wrong—we are listening to Satan, we are doing Satan's work when we shouldn't be doing that.***
- We never know what is truly going on in another's life. Grant them the grace you receive from God and want for yourself.
- Don't gossip; grant grace. Don't accuse; pray.

Satan's interference with people is significant, but it will not last forever

- And we are reminded *"For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and*

blood, but against persons without bodies—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world” (Eph. 6:12, TLB)

- Jesus rose from the dead and Satan’s interference with God’s people will also someday come to an end and Satan will be thrown in the Lake of Fire.
- The accusing chatter in our minds will cease, the interference in our lives and world will be over.
- *‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down’” (Revelation 12:10).*

- Hopeful words, but who will be around to see that?

Question # 3 Is There Life after Death?

- The answer is incredibly important to understand
- Because as the Apostle Paul told us, *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”* (1 Cor. 15:19).
- Of the many Big Questions of Life Job answers, the question of *Is There Life after Death* is definitely the most important because it literally puts all else that happens to us into proper perspective.
- If there is no life after death, no salvation from the punishment of death, there is no point to the rest of the Bible.
- But there is salvation from death, there is a Savior who will conquer death and the effects of his victory will reach back to the earliest days of humanity
- Our God is an eternal God, and He did not create throw-away creatures.
- And Job affirms this truth.

Job provides an early and definitive answer to this question

- Job 14:14-15 affirms physical, bodily resurrection, I’ll read it and then I we will take a closer look at the Hebrew words:
- ¹⁴ *If someone dies, will they live again?
All the days of my hard service
I will wait for my renewal to come. (**chaliyphah—a change of garments, a renewal**)* ¹⁵ *You will call and I will answer you;
you will long for the creature your hands have made.*

*Job: 19: 25 I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.*

²⁶ *And after my skin (**basar**) has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh (**basar**) I will see God;*

²⁷ *I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!*

- A few notes, on v.14— “chaliyphah” is similar to the Apostle Paul taking about his earthly tent being exchanged for a heavenly one. 2 Cor 5:1
- “basar” skin in this life; flesh in the next—SAME WORD. Resurrection to the Christian is tangible; solid; a renewal into what we were created to b

Even early in his struggles, Job knew

- As the passage we just discussed shows, Job knew that his earthly pain was not all there was to his story.
- There are sadly many, including some in the church and some who teach the Bible who will say that “in the Old Testament there was no clear belief of life after death.”
- That is simply not true as this passage in Job and many others show.
- I also have a revised and complete lesson on this topic *Is There Life after Death?* on www.Bible805.com where I go through Old Testament passages that affirm

the truth of life after death, plus a shorter lesson that critiques those who deny it. Please see the podcasts, videos, and printed materials on this topic—again, the links for it are at www.Bible805.com

One more hopeful reminder

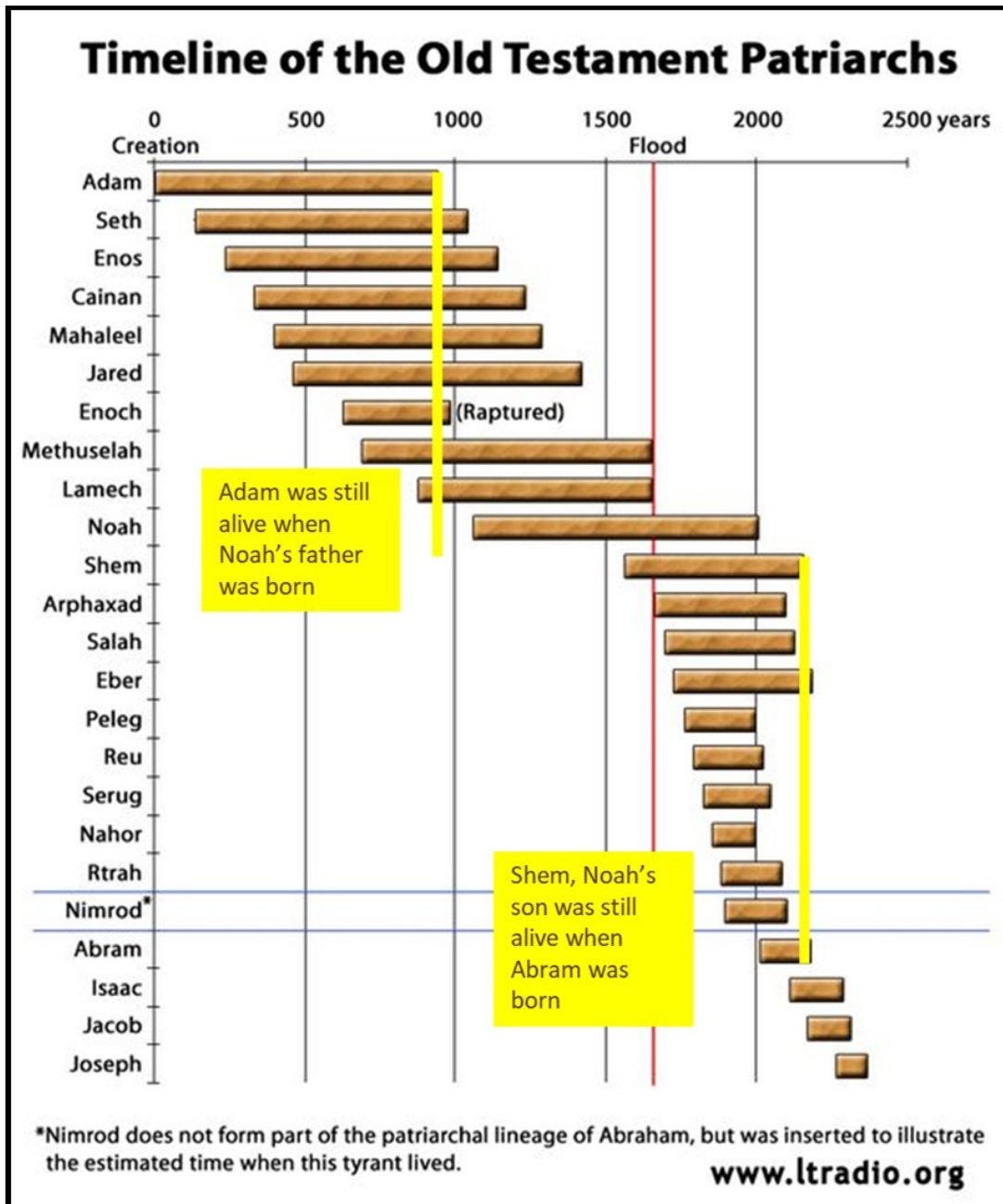
- As one writer said, if we truly believe in the promised joy of a fulfilling, meaningful eternity spent with those we love and a God who loves us, even the most horrible experiences of life will seem like one night spent in a bad hotel.
- You might be in that horrid, bad hotel now, but be assured that as the book of Job shows us and the rest of the Bible affirms, joy will come—perhaps not in this life, but it will come, and it will last forever.

What's next?

- I pray that what we've covered today are comforting truths to those who know Jesus, yet often the answers to our questions today bring up more questions we'll cover in ***Genesis & Job, Answers to the Big Questions of Life, part two—***
- **#4 What about people who have never heard of Jesus?**
- **#5 Why do innocent people suffer?**
- **#6 How can we help people who are suffering?**
- Join me as I lay a solid foundation for studying the remainder of the Bible because The Big Questions covered in this lesson and the next will come up again and again.
- And until then be encouraged with these final words from Job: ***I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. Job 19:25-27***

That's all for now

- For notes from this lesson, related resources, and helpful links go to www.bible805.com



This chart illustrates how the long lives of the Old Testament Biblical characters would have made oral tradition, the passing down of the actions of God in Creation, the Flood, and the early history of the human race and God's people realistic and reliable.

For More: This chart is discussed in the context of the Bible805 lesson on *The Old Testament*, *why we can trust it is the Word of God*, from the series on *How We Got Our Bibles*.

Available at: www.Bible805.com

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—CONTENT REVIEW and APPLICATION

Genesis & Job, answers to the Big Questions of Life, part one

Why are we here? What went wrong? Is this all there is?

1. Why are we reading the book of Job after three days reading in Genesis? Review some of the reasons why it is important to read the Bible in Chronological Order.
2. Why do we believe the book of Job was written by Moses as was the book of Genesis? (well, not actually “written” as God was the ultimate author, but recorded for human reading by Moses). Talk about the reasons from geography, tradition, and historical details in the books.
3. What does it mean for the rest of the Bible and for our lives that God is our Creator? How does that make a difference in the decisions we make? In the prayers we pray?
4. Who is Satan and what power does he have? What trouble does he cause in human life? How is he limited by God? How should we react to the reality of Satan in our daily lives?
5. What does the book of Job tell us about life after death? How does that comfort us? How does that challenge us?
6. What are some cautions we need to keep in mind as we continue through the book of Job? Particularly in how to make certain we understand the errors of the things his friends say?
7. Additional thoughts, comments, questions, or applications from the lesson: