

***Part One, Introduction, overview, authorship  
and dating of both books***

**Before answering any questions, meet the One who will answer them**

- We are introduced to the protagonist of the story that fills the Bible, when it says, “In the Beginning, **God**” Gen. 1:1.
- 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 in a perfect world.
- But an enemy was also there—Satan, the antagonist. Almost immediately he enters the scene.
- And God’s beloved creation turns against Him, believe Satan’s lie, and that sets up the plot, the storyline of the rest of the Bible.
- This is the setting for the answers to the big questions we all ask and here they are—

**The Big Questions this series will answer**

- **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 Part Two and then the second three in Part Three of this series of lessons.***

**God doesn’t make us wait**

- Or make us read through the whole Bible for answers to these questions.
- *They are given early on if you do a correct chronological reading of it.*
- Not only in the Bible805 reading plan (which you can get a copy of and is on the [www.Bible805.com](http://www.Bible805.com) website), there are many chronological reading plans wherein 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 unrelated Bible stories, hopeful promises, and upbeat snippets**

- When you read the Bible in chronological, historical order—or put another way, ***in the order that the events truly happened in—***

- The entire story of the God's redemptive plan for his Creation will make more sense.
- When you understand the correct chronological order of God's revelation to his people, you get the foundation in place and God's actions in the rest of the Bible are more understandable.
- ***This is why it is extremely important to date and read Job correctly very early on because it teaches foundational truths that are important for our understanding of the Bible and BIG questions in life, that if we aren't solid in an understanding of them, we will always have problems.***

### **THREE Important, Foundational lessons to understanding the Bible & Life**

- When you read the Bible with Genesis and Job as you start, and when you correctly UNDERSTAND how to interpret Job, which you'll learn in this series, you'll learn THREE incredibly important foundational lessons for not only understanding the Bible, but all of life—***given very briefly now***, the series of all three lessons will dive deeply into them.
- **ONE—God's absolute right to do things**, His control over all things in heaven and earth, people, Satan and his demons—this right is also known as His Sovereignty—He is King.
- **TWO—a foundational reality we must grasp and that is our relationship with Him is NOT a transactional one**, where we can put expectations and demands on Him based on what we want or think we deserve and if we do certain things, He is obligated to act in a certain way.
- **THREE—there is a lot more going on** in the spiritual world than we are aware of in ways both terrifying and ultimately comforting.

### **A corrective, just in case**

- Another way to put what I just shared is the popular saying "God is God and we are not."
- In that, I may have given the impression that God's control is that of an unfeeling despot.
- Nothing could be further from the truth, and we must always be assured that God's control over all events in our lives comes from a God who, in His very nature ***personifies love and who has our eternal BEST always in mind for us.***
- No matter how challenging current circumstances might be, we have a good God, who will ultimately right all wrongs, heal all pain, wipe away all tears, and bring us safely home.
- With that clarified, let's get into the lesson by first establishing the authorship of both Genesis and Job and the timeline of when they were written.

### **Genesis and Job have one author—Moses, numerous reasons why follow**

- However, in both books 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 to Moses.
- In addition, Moses had access to oral and written records of what happened prior to his life.
- We'll next look at a chart on the lengthy timelines of the early Biblical characters to illustrate how this is possible.
- Then we'll look at the traditional, geographical, and historical details that affirm Moses as the author of both books.

## How historical records were created

- A foundational answer to how did he know about anything that happened prior to his life is that—
- Written records and oral history had begun long before he lived.
- Moses lived **1526 BC (birth)** and **1406 BC (death)**.
- Writing arose about 2,000 years prior in **Sumerian Cuneiform in Mesopotamia— c. 3500–3200 BCE**.
- **Egyptian Hieroglyphs** — developed c. 3200–3000 BCE
- *And oral history was around long before that.....*

## Oral History

- Which is simply one person telling another about their life.
- Here is a timeline of the early Bible characters and the importance of oral history for our Bible—and how it shows that oral history is reliable.
- Noah’s father, Shem’s grandfather, Lamech, knew the 1st man created.
- Abram, the patriarch of Jewish history was alive before Shem (son of Noah) died.
- Only 2 people away from Creation—imagine the family stories (oral history) for this oral history to have come into the family of Moses.
- And you think your grandma has great stories!

## Traditional confirmation 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 support that Moses was the author, that this quote from <https://www.icr.org/> (Institute for Creation Research, conservative Christian site) 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.*

## Another quote from [www.sefaria.org](http://www.sefaria.org), a collection of Jewish history and writings, scholarly Jewish site about Moses’ authorship of Job

- *According to the Talmudic Sages, Moses was the author of the Book of Job. The Midrash explains that he wrote the book in order to comfort the Children of Israel during their suffering in Egypt....Employing the techniques of analysis and philosophical contemplation, he examined and investigated this subject before the Word of God was revealed to him....However, in his glosses on the passage in the Talmud that ascribes the composition of Job to Moses, Rashi notes that Moses also composed Psalms 90 to 101....One of these compositions, Psalm 92.... relates to the same topic as Job, namely, the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous.*  
*Malbim’s Job*, trans. Jeremy I. Pfeffer. Ktav, 2003, from <https://www.sefaria.org/search?q=author%20of%20job&tab=text&tvar=1&tsort=relevance>

## **The book of Job is probably the oldest book in the Bible**

- **Following the reasoning of the previous ICR quote and the Jewish historical view of it—**

- *[Job] 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.
- In summary, just as later books in the Bible refer to other accounts of contemporary history in their books, and since we have ancient writings from other civilizations from 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 evidences 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.
- His father-in-law Jethro was a “priest of Midian” and presumably of the learned class.
- As writing and record keep was extensive at this time, Jethro would have had access to them.

#### **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, they are not 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.

#### **More important than historical trivia**

- 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.
- And the Bible as a whole as a true source for how to deal with difficult times.
- 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.

### **In addition, on dating**

- The quote about Job from Ezekiel, also refutes a common falsehood about Job that it was written (along with many of the prophetic books according to anti-supernaturalist critics) AFTER the Babylonian exile.
- However, this couldn't be the case because Ezekiel, as is unambiguously clear and undisputed was written DURING the Babylonian exile.
- Job had to be written before it and had to be an accepted part of the written history of the Jewish people for Ezekiel to cite him in the way he did.
- This is not a trivial issue.
- Proper dating is a key factor that distinguishes between our view of books of the Bible as true history of God's dealings with people and fanciful musings on spiritual questions.
- Ezekiel isn't the only Biblical author who verifies that Job was a real person....

### **The New Testament adds 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 as a key argument in the teaching of how God comforts his people would not have any meaning if Job was simply a Jewish folk tale written by an unknown person at some indistinct time.
- 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 was then finally compiled into 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).*

### **We've talked about Job, what about Genesis?**

- Traditionally Jewish and Christian sources have attributed the authorship of Genesis, along with the other four books of the Pentateuch (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), to **Moses**.
- It refers to itself in this way in this way and relates how Moses wrote it.
- *Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said.* Exodus 24:4, and *Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests,* Deuteronomy 31:9.
- The New Testament cites Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, with Jesus, mentioning it in many places including Matthew 19:8; John 5:45–47; and Peter referring to Moses authorship in quoting it in Acts 3:22.
- That Moses was the author of Genesis is a foundational, underlying truth of Biblical study throughout all of Jewish and Christian history until.....

### **The Documentary Hypothesis came along**

- The **documentary hypothesis (DH)** is one of the models used by biblical scholars to explain the origins and composition of the Torah (or Pentateuch,).
- A version of the documentary hypothesis, frequently identified with the German scholar Julius Wellhausen, was almost universally accepted for most of the 20th century.
- It posited that the Pentateuch is a compilation of four originally independent documents: the Jahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, and Priestly sources, frequently referred to by their initials
- The first of these, J, was dated to the Solomonic period (c. 950 BCE). E was dated somewhat later, in the 9th century BCE, and D was dated just before the reign of King Josiah, in the 7th or 8th century BCE. Finally, P was generally dated to the time of Ezra in the 5th century BCE.
- The sources would have been joined at various points in time by a series of editors or "redactors". (Wikipedia overview)
- So scholarly, so scary and serious when you first hear it and see it.

### **It dominated**

- Much scholarly work from the mid-1800s until late 1900s.
- Largely discredited in the details of it now in the scholarly world, but many doubts remain, uncertainty placed in the minds of many.
- **Conclusions— unsubstantiated and inconsistent, no verification of the process, or interim manuscripts or identity of redactors, in contrast to the clear documentary history of the Old Testament (which we will cover in the How We Got Our Bible series of lessons).**
- **HOWEVER**—still tremendous damage as many see this and the Old Testament in general, not as the revealed Word of God in a verifiable time—which is so incredibly important, but as the works of men written long after the historical facts, they talk about.

### **We will rather trust Jesus for His evaluation**

- As briefly shown earlier and many more verses could be cited, Jesus repeatedly referred to Moses as the author of the Genesis and his teachings in it.
- He validated not only authorship, but clearly stated His opinion on many of the more “controversial” passages in Genesis, such as...

- Talking about creation and the first humans in Matthew 19:4-5 and Mark 10:6-7.
- The story of Noah and the flood, again of people's actions and the consequences of them. Matt. 24:37-39.
- Recalling God's blessing of Abraham, Luke 24:27.
- In summary, Jesus clearly believed and taught that Moses was the human author of Genesis and that the teachings in it has the authority of God, which is why, along with the book of Job we are using them to answer our 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 Part Two and then the second three in Part Three of our journey through the Bible in Chronological Order.***

**One thing to remember as we start**

- These books give us answers, but we must acknowledge and I want to forewarn you—
- Not every answer will be the answer we want.
- It won't be for the questions we ask and answer in Genesis & Job and it won't be for many of the remaining books we look at in the remaining lessons.
- As it isn't for our lives.
- But what we do get, and what Job got at the end of the book, isn't the perhaps the answers we think we want or need, but better than that.
- God shows up. He did for Job and He will for us in every step we take in life and forever.

**For more lessons to help you know, trust, apply, and teach the Bible, go to:  
[www.Bible805.com](http://www.Bible805.com)**

DISCUSSION GUIDE for Answers to the Big Questions of Life from Genesis and Job – Part One: Introduction, Overview, Authorship and Dating of Both Books

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Brief Lesson Summary

This lesson introduces the foundational questions that will be explored throughout the Genesis and Job series. It begins with the central truth that the Bible is God's story, revealing His creation, His purposes, and His answers to life's most important questions. The lesson explains why Genesis and Job are placed together in a chronological study of the Bible and why understanding them correctly provides an essential foundation for understanding both the Bible and life.

Special attention is given to the authorship and dating of Genesis and Job. The lesson presents historical, geographical, traditional, and biblical evidence supporting Moses as the author or compiler of both books and affirms that Job was a real historical person. Throughout the lesson, three foundational truths emerge: God's sovereignty over all things, the non-transactional nature of our relationship with God, and the reality of an unseen spiritual world.

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Ice-breaker Question

What is one 'big question about life' you have asked at some point, and where did you look for answers?

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Discussion Questions for a Group; Journal Questions for Individual Study

1. The lesson begins with the words, 'In the beginning, God.' How does starting with God change the way we think about life's biggest questions?
  
2. Why do you think understanding Genesis and Job early in a chronological reading of the Bible helps establish a foundation for understanding the rest of the Bible?
  
3. Which of the three foundational lessons stood out most to you: God's sovereignty, our relationship with Him not being transactional, or the reality of the spiritual world? Why?

4. The lesson emphasizes that Job was a real person who experienced real suffering. Why is it important that Job be understood as a historical individual rather than merely a fictional character?

5. How does Jesus' affirmation of Moses and the events recorded in Genesis strengthen your confidence in the reliability of the Bible?

6. The lesson concludes by reminding us that God may not always give us the answers we want, but He does give us Himself. How have you experienced God's presence during a time when you did not receive the answers you expected?

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#### Life Application Suggestions, consider and respond

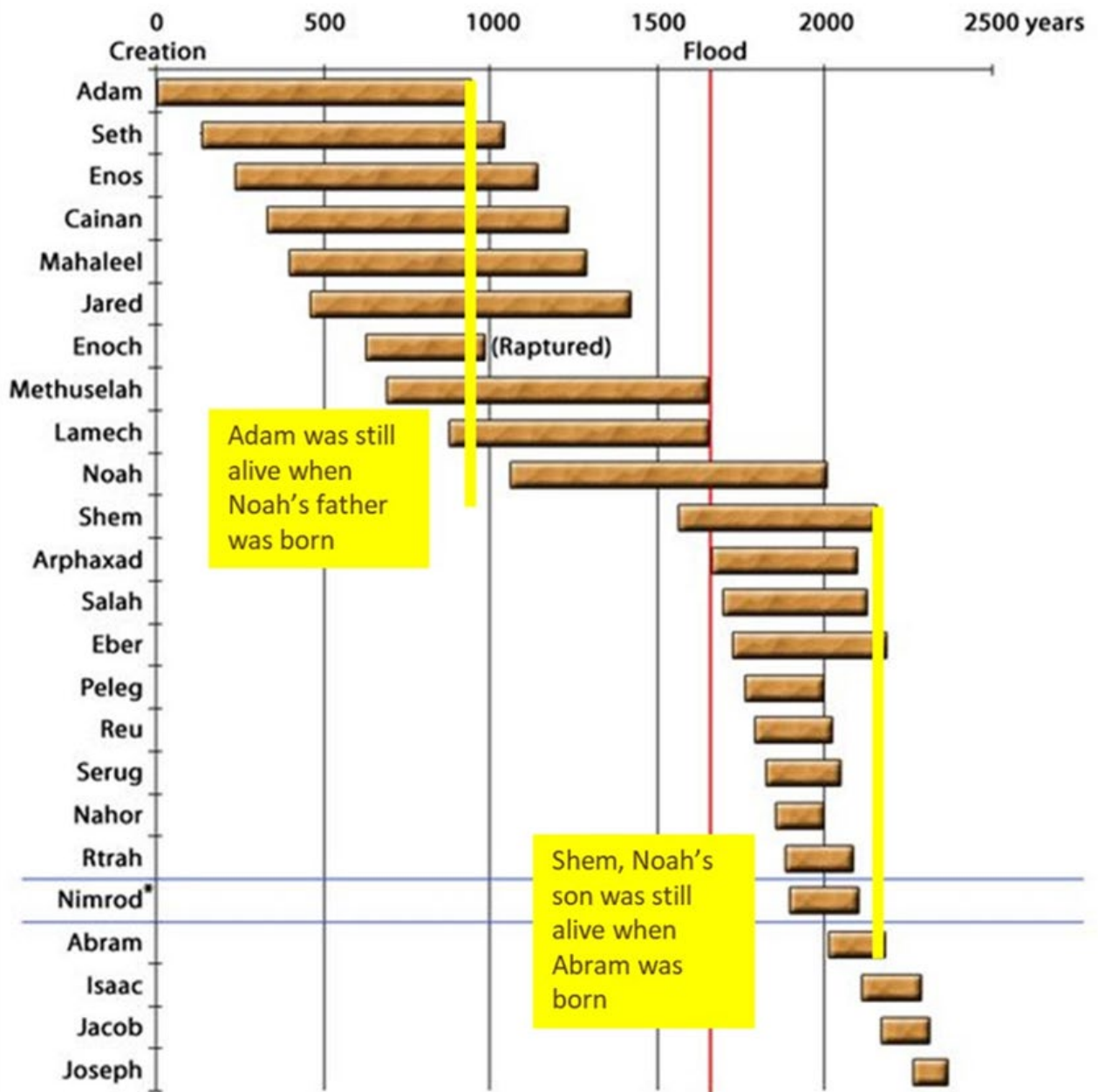
1. Read Genesis chapters 1-3 this week and note every truth you learn about God's character.
2. Reflect on an area of your life where you may have treated your relationship with God as transactional.
3. When facing questions or uncertainties, begin by asking, 'What does the Bible teach about God?'
4. Spend time thanking God for His sovereignty, His love, and His presence, even in situations you do not fully understand.

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#### Prayer Focus

Thank God for revealing Himself through His Word and for providing answers to life's most important questions. Pray for a deeper trust in His sovereignty, confidence in the truth of the Bible, and a willingness to follow Him even when all questions are not fully answered.

# Timeline of the Old Testament Patriarchs



\*Nimrod does not form part of the patriarchal lineage of Abraham, but was inserted to illustrate the estimated time when this tyrant lived.

[www.ltradio.org](http://www.ltradio.org)