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The Book Of Job

Agony, Epiphany, Humility and Ministry

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

OUTLINE

COMMENTARY



Introduction

This document is truly a *commentary* in that it is a collection of comments rather than a complete analysis or narrative discussion of the Book of Job. It does not address every verse nor provide a complete exposition of the passages dealt with. It is designed as a database of notes to help clarify the point of the book and draw out its practical insights for spiritual life. This commentary will also highlight some of the humor in Job that may escape the casual reader.

The commentary is arranged in single-paragraph blocks and uses digital-style references to facilitate computer searches. For computer sorting purposes, biblical references use a three-letter designation for book titles and zeroes as place holders in the chapter and verse numbers. Consequently, the passage traditionally designated Job 1:1 will appear as JOB 01.01, while Job 19:10 does not require the place holders and will appear as JOB 19.10. Paragraphs given a double-zero designation, such as JOB 00.01, contain introductory information and are not related to a specific verse of the text. Biblical references embedded in the commentary text omit the unnecessary zero place holders but use the dot rather than the more traditional colon. References that do not designate a book refer to verses in the text of Job.

Comments on the English text of Job refer to the New International Version unless otherwise noted. The author has also utilized the standard Hebrew text of Job (Heb.), as well as the Septuagint version (LXX), and makes a reference or two to a manuscript (MS) of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Because of the humor in the book of Job, and the insights it contains on spiritual warfare, I've marked humorous passages with a smiley face, and passages dealing with the spiritual battle with a warrior:



An Outline Of The Book Of Job

Job and His Family Before the Disaster: 1.1-5

God's First Challenge to Satan: 1.6-22

Satan's Response

The First Attack Upon Job

Job Retains His Integrity

God's Second Challenge to Satan: 2.1-3

Satan's Response

The Second Attack Upon Job

Job Tempted By His Wife

Job Submits to God's Providence

The Arrival and Quiet Vigil of Job's Three Friends: 2.11-13

Job's Patience Exhausted, He Utters His Complaint: ch. 3

The Debate Between Job and His Friends

Eliphaz' first speech: chs. 4,5

Don't Be Dismayed; Remember Your Merits

The False Principle: You've Sown What You Reap

The False Principle Reinforced By A True One: You Reap What You Sow (Job 4.8; cf. Gal. 6.7)

The Insensitive Application of the False Corollary

The False Principle Restated: People Bring Troubles Upon Themselves (5.6,7)

Another Misapplication

Eliphaz's Closing Punch: Apply it to yourself! (5.27)

Job's first Reply: chs. 6,7

I'm not bellowing without a reason! (6. 1-7)

If only God would end my life now, and allow me to die in integrity! (6. 8-13)

My friends are like streams that dry up in the heat! (6. 14-23)

You are profoundly insensitive and unjust while my integrity is at stake. (6. 24-30)

Since I'm dying anyway, I'll express my anguish! (7.1-11)

Lord, why are you tormenting me beyond measure? (7.12-21)

Bildad's first speech: ch. 8

God is just, so your children obviously had sinned against Him. (8.1-4)

If you are pure, God will prosper you more than before. (8.5-7)

God blesses the blameless and wrecks the wicked. (8.8-22)

Job's second reply: chs. 9,10

It's futile to contend with God even though I'm innocent! (9.1-20)

God destroys both the blameless and the wicked! (9.21-24)

If God is condemns me, there is no way to get clean before Him. (9.25-35)

Job longs for an advocate and justice. (9.33-35)

Job accuses God of rigging the trial! (10.17)

Zophar's first speech: ch. 11**Job's third reply: chs. 12-14****Eliphaz' second speech: ch. 15****Job's fourth reply: chs. 16,17****Bildad's second speech: ch. 18****Job's fifth reply: ch. 19****Zophar's second speech: ch. 20****Job's sixth reply: ch. 21****Eliphaz' third speech: ch. 22****Job's seventh reply: chs. 23,24**

If only I could present my case to God in court! (ch. 23)

Why doesn't God set days to arbitrate disputes and dispense justice?

God does not charge the oppressor with wrongdoing. (24.2-12)

There are wicked people who hide in the darkness. (24.13-17)

Yet while sinners may be exalted for a time, they will be snatched away by destruction. (24.18-25)

Bildad's third speech: ch. 25**Job's eighth reply: chs. 26-31**

It is arrogant to think one understands God. (ch. 26)

God does destroy the wicked but Job is not wicked. (ch. 27)

Wisdom is difficult to attain, but Job has found it in fearing the Lord. (ch. 28)

The previous glory and influence of Job. (ch. 29)

Because of Job's lost influence, evil ones are now unrestrained. (ch. 30)

Job's morality and integrity of the highest caliber. (ch. 31)

Elihu Enters The Debate: chs. 32-37

Job's Epiphany

God's First Revelation to Job: chs. 38-39

Job's First Confession: 40.3-5

God's Second Revelation to Job: 40.7- ch. 41


Job's Second Confession: Job 42.1-6


God's Rebuke to Job's Friends: 42.7-9

Job's Restoration To Ministry






The Commentary

- JOB 00.01 [SETTING FOR BOOK]:** The story of Job is pre-Mosaic, possibly pre-Abrahamic. Uz was a grandson of Shem, great-grandson of Noah (Gen. 10.23). A “land of Uz” could hardly be recognized earlier than 100 years after the flood. Therefore, if the flood occurred around 2,000 BC, the earliest time period for Job’s life would fall between 2,000 and 1,800 BC. Some commentators suggest a later date, based on terms that seem anachronistic in the text, but a later vocabulary could well have crept into the earlier oral or written history of Job. Suggesting a post-Abrahamic setting, Aristeas the Exegete, a 1st-century BC Jewish scholar, “uses a tradition where Esau marries Bassara from which marriage issues Job. However, other traditions of the period have Jacob killing Esau in a civil war (*Jub.* 37—38 esp. 38:2; *T. Jud.* 9; *b. Sota* 13a; *Gen. Rab.* 100: 63d).” (Source: Freedman, David Noel, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, (New York: Doubleday) 1997, 1992.) Though we don’t know Job’s lineage, strong local traditions place Job’s dwelling place and burial place in Syrian territory not far from today’s Golan Heights.
- JOB 00.02 [AUTHORSHIP AND DATE]:** Abegg, et al, mention a MS of Job written in the paleo-Hebrew script. This MS dates to ca. 225-150 BC, but implies an earlier source dating back to before the Babylonian exile. “Rabbinic tradition attributes the book of Job to Moses.” (Source: *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*.)
- JOB 01.03 [A STRATEGIC TARGET]:** In the book of Job there is much implied about the spiritual battle that is not laid out for us explicitly. It is odd, for example, that once Satan succeeds in afflicting Job with boils, thus setting up the situation where God can do His sanctifying work in Job, Satan disappears from the story and we never hear about the end of the challenge in the heavenlies. We are left to imagine Satan’s comeuppance. Nevertheless, as we learn Satan’s tactics from the rest of the canon and from life experience, we can read some things between the lines in Job. When we read in verse 3 that Job “was the greatest man among all the people of the East,” we realize that Job was a strategic target for Satan because of Job’s influence in the larger community. In fact, Job bemoans the loss of this influence in chs. 29 and 30. When God asks, in verse 8, “Have you considered my servant Job?” He asks ironically, for He knew very well that Satan had already taken an interest in this powerful representative of the True God. In relatively recent times, Satan had narrowly missed destroying the entire human race by dragging them down into depravity. Only Noah and Noah’s family had slipped through his hands. Now, once again, one man stood between Satan and the corruption of the world. Satan took a keen interest in bringing the human race down again, but this time he would begin with the most powerful and righteous representative that God had among mankind. If Satan could destroy Job’s faith, the rest of the human race would surely follow!


- JOB 01.01-05 [JOB’S STRAYING CHILDREN]:** When our children stray from Christ and His laws, our automatic response as parents is, “Where did I go wrong.” Parents often do bear some of the responsibility for their children’s weaknesses, but sometimes the influence of a child’s own fallenness far outweighs any error on the part of parents. The book of Job reveals that even perfect parents must fight spiritual battles on



behalf of straying children. Job provides an early example of a parent interceding for his children.




- JOB 01.05, 11; 02.05;09 [BARAK = TO BLESS OR TO CURSE]: When Job worries that his children may have “cursed God in their hearts,” he actually uses the word *barak*, which normally means to *ble*ss. *Barak* thus appears euphemistically four times in Job. We can hear the sarcasm in Satan’s voice when he tells God, “...strike everything he has, and he will surely *ble*ss you to your face.”
- JOB 01.06A [THE SPIRITUAL REALM]: The book of Job strongly conveys the reality of the spiritual (nonmaterial) realm. Not only do we see the “sons of God” and Satan appearing before Elohim-YHWH, but spirits appear to men and YHWH Himself answers Job out of the storm.
- JOB 01.06B [THE ADVERSARY]: Though the NIV uses *Satan* as a proper name in these passages, the Hebrew is actually *the satan*, i.e., *the adversary*, and thus is more of a title. Note, however, that this is chronologically the earliest reference to Lucifer by this title. It’s possible that Lucifer gained his title as the Adversary (or Accuser) because of his adversarial activities against Job. However, it’s likely that by the time of Job and the other patriarchs, the Serpent from Eden had become recognized by all as the arch adversary of God and of all mankind. 
- JOB 01.07 [ROAMING]: *Roaming* connotes freedom from restraint; roaming or walking over the earth implies some kind of authority over it. Satan’s answer to the LORD (here and in 02.02) has a haughty tone. 
- JOB 01.08 [THE SCHOOLING OF SATAN]: Let us recognize that God has had an age-long purpose of “schooling” Satan and the other fallen angels. It is to God’s eternal glory that those heavenly creatures who rebelled against Him shall at last own that His manifold wisdom is and always has been immaculate. Just as God demonstrated this to the heavenly principalities through the sanctification of Job, He continues to demonstrate it through the church (Eph. 3.10). 
- JOB 01.09 [THE HEDGE]: Satan complains of God having placed a hedge of protection around Job. This protected state is logically the case for all God’s people, but we can breach our own hedge by our sins (see Isaiah 5.1-5). Satan required special permission to penetrate the hedge around Job, for Job was a “perfect” man. We, therefore, must avoid idolatry and all manner of sin that would jeopardize our hedge of protection. We must repent when we recognize sin in our lives and ask God to restore our hedge. If we lead blameless lives, then we can recognize when God is working out deeper purposes in our lives, by allowing our hedge to be penetrated through no fault of our own. 
- JOB 01.12 [THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE ENGAGED]: Because explicit mention of Satan disappears after chapter two, it’s easy to lose sight of the fact that the spiritual battle continues on an intense level throughout Job’s story. Not only are Job’s 

friends infected with the Adversary's spirit of accusation, but his wife becomes Satan's very mouthpiece urging Job to do what Satan promised God Job would do, namely, "curse God" (see note at 02.09). This is not the end of the invisible spiritual engagement, however. Both Job and his friends come under demonic oppression or influence. Job is troubled by nightmares (07.13-15), and begs for relief from them (13.21). Eliphaz is misguided by a frightening spirit that comes whispering to him in the night (04.12-17). Job wonders aloud what spirit is inspiring Bildad's innuendo (26.1-4). Self-confident Elihu brags that a spirit compels him (32.18). We best understand the ferocity of this battle, however, when we recognize Satan's goal. The Devil's ultimate goal, of course, is to destroy Job and every other human being. Since, however, Satan is not permitted to utterly destroy the child of God, and in Job's case is not even permitted to kill his body, the Old Serpent aims at neutralization. The way to neutralize the child of God is to get that child to *disengage from God*. Granted, the true believer never *completely* disengages from his Savior, but Satan all too often succeeds in getting the believer to grow cold toward his God, to stop drawing near to God, to give up on intimacy with God. This is what Satan worked so hard to accomplish with Job. Satan had to neutralize Job's strategic influence in the community (see note at 01.03). If he could not accomplish it by killing Job, he would try to destroy Job's reputation, and more importantly, try to chill Job's heart toward God. Job loved God, but if Satan could get that love to cool, then people would no longer be drawn to God through Job's fervent devotion. If Satan could kill Job's hope, people would stop asking Job for the reason behind that hope (cf. 1 Peter 3.15). It is in pursuit of these destructive ends that Satan relentlessly hammers upon Job with every means that comes to hand.



- **JOB 02.09 [SPIRIT OF ACCUSATION (A)]:** The spirit of the Accuser, the Adversary, begins to infect those close to Job. Job's wife is first to vent her judgmental anger toward Job for the loss of their children and estate. In the LXX of this verse she makes this lengthy statement: "How long wilt thou hold out, saying, Behold, I wait yet a little while, expecting the hope of my deliverance? for, behold, thy memorial is abolished from the earth, even thy sons and daughters, the pangs and pains of my womb which I bore in vain with sorrows; and thou thyself sittest down to spend the nights in the open air among the corruption of worms, and I am a wanderer and a servant from place to place and house to house, waiting for the setting of the sun, that I may rest from my labours and my pangs which now beset me: but say some word against the Lord, and die." With Satan's encouragement, Job's wife jumps to the conclusion that Job had been living a double life, that he was secretly indulging in some wickedness against God. In a retaliatory attitude she encourages him to end his hypocrisy. Using the very word that Satan used to predict Job's fall (01.11; 02.05), she tells her husband to bless (= curse) God openly so that the populace will rid her of such a husband (cf. 1Kings 21.13). What a great example of how Satan plays dirty: he was forbidden to kill Job himself, but he had no scruple about inciting others to kill Job for him!
- **JOB 03.25 [JOB'S FEAR]:** Here is a clue to God's sanctifying purposes for Job. What was it that befell Job that he had been fearing? The loss of his children? The loss of his wealth or influence? Health? This perfect man was nevertheless made of flesh and still had to be cleansed of a subtle idolatry. Ironically, Job was known as a man who "feared God." In



a sense, what Job feared, namely God Himself, has come upon him to do a deep work in his soul.

- **JOB 04.07-08 [SOWING AND REAPING]:** With profound insensitivity to the fact that Job's children have been killed, Eliphaz states the principle of Gal. 6.7. Worse, he first presupposes its corollary! He assumes in verse 7 that whatsoever a man reaps *he must surely have sown*. However, our Lord Jesus is the answer to his rhetorical question: Who being innocent has ever perished? People who suffer a tragedy have not necessarily sown the seeds of that tragedy. The principle of sowing and reaping cannot be fully understood outside of the larger context of spiritual warfare.
- **JOB 04.15-17 [SPIRIT OF ACCUSATION (B)]:** Eliphaz has assumed that Job's catastrophes have come from God. Therefore, there is obviously some dispute between God and Job. But Eliphaz has always known Job to be a man of integrity, so how can God be just in afflicting Job? An evil spirit comes to Eliphaz in the night moments of half-sleep and asks a simple question: "Can a man be more pure than his Maker?" What subtlety! The evil spirit voiced no lie, but firmly planted the thought in Eliphaz's mind that Job had in fact been hiding some impurity and now God has found him out. 
- **JOB 05.06-07 [ELIPHAZ'S LAW OF CAUSATION]:** He took his time getting to the point, but Bildad reminds Job that trouble doesn't happen without a reason but comes with the job description of the fallen race. Bildad's implication is that Job's troubles have come upon him for giving in to his fallenness. Bildad is right that no trouble happens without cause, but is wrong in assuming that the immediate cause of this trouble lies in Job (2.3). Again, life cannot be fully understood apart from the bigger picture of spiritual warfare.
- **JOB 05.17-18 [GOD CHASTENS WHOM HE LOVES]:** Eliphaz states a clear and certain truth: God chastens in order to correct. The only problem is that he misapplies it to Job, assuming that Job had merited *severe* correction. We should understand that though God chastens His children, He does not do so in a burst of anger as human fathers do. On the contrary, God would not bring major catastrophe to chasten whom He loves, without first sending many gentle warnings. Only after we stiffen our necks against God's gentle calls to repentance does He bring severe chastening. It follows that catastrophe unpreceded by warnings probably comes at the instigation of the Adversary, rather than as a chastening from the Father.
- **JOB 05.19-22 [HOW MANY TROUBLES WAS THAT?]:** I've got two words for you: Count Eliphaz's troubles. He gets seven troubles by using two different words for famine and mentioning destruction twice. 
- **JOB 05.26 [WE WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO DIE IN ILL HEALTH]:** How comforting can this blessing be: *May you come to the grave in full vigor!* This reminds me of the Yiddish joke in which a man wishes a friend a happy birthday by saying, "May you live to be a hundred years and three months!" His friend replies, "Thank you, but why 'and three months?'" "Well," says the first, "I wouldn't want you to die suddenly!" 

On the other hand, perhaps Bildad was an early proponent of the “health and wealth gospel.”

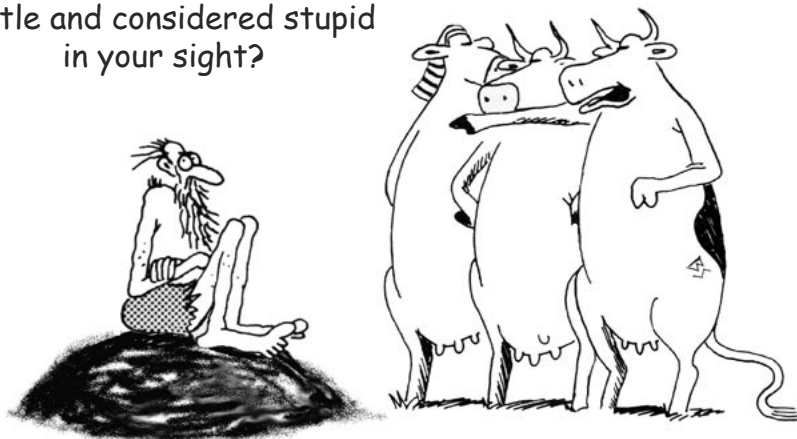
- **JOB 05.27 [CONFIDENCE OR ARROGANCE?]:** Job’s “friends” steadily gain confidence in their suspicions, accusations and advice. Eliphaz expresses it first by saying, essentially, “I know I’m right, so you’d better take what I’m telling you and apply it to yourself.” How often we see the application of a sermon to those around us, but fail to see its application to ourselves!
- **JOB 06.14-20 [INCONSISTENT FRIENDS]:** Job accuses his friends of allowing their devotion to dry up, now that hard times have come. A true friend will not turn suddenly judgmental when catastrophe falls upon someone. Remember the unmerited blindness of the man in John 9, and don’t jump to the conclusion that tragedy in a person’s life is a judgment from God.
- **JOB 08.04 [SPIRIT OF ACCUSATION (C)]:** The consensus grows that Job and his family had hypocritically lived double lives. Shocking though it was to the unsuspecting community, some of Job’s family were secretly sinning in a manner deserving of death. Bildad declares this verdict against Job’s children. 
- **JOB 09 [THE TEMPTATION TO DESPAIR]:** Job’s attitude slips badly. He feels he is already condemned (v. 29) though he has done nothing wrong (v.21). What hope does he have of ever regaining God’s favor (v. 2)? Job begins to think of God as arbitrary and capricious (vv. 22-24). He sees God as inattentive (vv. 16,17), rather than the infinite God who gives every person His undivided attention.
- **JOB 09.13 [THE MYSTERIOUS RAHAB]:** See note at Job 26.12.
- **JOB 09.32-35 [LEGAL PRINCIPLES]:** Job begins to think in terms of legal arbitration. He longs for an advocate. This is a proper yearning, for we all need an advocate and God desires that we realize it (1 John 2.1). However, Job himself now labors under the false fear that God is judging him.
- **JOB 12.02 [DRIPPING SARCASM]:** Wouldn’t it be fun to deliver this line in a dramatic presentation of Job’s story? *What on earth will we poor morons do after you die and there is no one left with any brains?* 
- **JOB 14.14 [AFTERLIFE IN JOB]:** The book of Job assumes an incorporeal component of human existence (32.8). The implication of that reality is that existence does not end at bodily (physical) death. Job envisions people resting in death rather than ceasing to exist (3.13-19). Job asks, “If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait for my renewal to come.” He knows that a person who dies will not live on earth again in the present age, but he also knows that a “renewal” is coming. It is marvelous to realize, contrary to the guffaws of liberal scholars, that as early as the patriarchal age there was the hope of resurrection. Job’s expresses confidence of his own resurrection in



chapter 19: “And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes — I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” Job not only expects to see God after death, but expects to see Him with his own eyes, reclined in his own flesh!

- **JOB 16.02 [MISERABLE COMFORTERS]:** Though God works all things together for good in the final tapestry, the rips and tears and stains of the present are *real* calamities. Job understood the principle of Romans 12.15. “Have I not wept for those in trouble? Has not my soul grieved for the poor?” he asks in 30.25. Job’s friends had started out well, for “When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads” (02.12). Their compassion soon gave way to judgment, however, and they began to suggest, even insist upon things that were not true about Job. The heart cannot find solace, however, in what the mind rejects as false (and vice versa). Job complains in 21.34, “how can you console me with your nonsense? Nothing is left of your answers but falsehood!” What Job desperately needed was a shot of truth to help him make sense of his life’s sudden meltdown. Little did he know that he was about to see the Truth with his own eyes.
- **JOB 16.12 [SHATTERED BY GOD]:** Job complains that God has, “shattered me; he seized me by the neck and crushed me.” But this is God’s program for the person He will use. As Jesus said, “Everyone who falls on that stone [i.e., on Christ] will be broken to pieces...” (Luke 20.18) This breaking is required because of our fallen, fleshly state. The purpose of the breaking is conformity to the character of Christ. As we fall on that stone in faith and are shattered, we are conformed to its contours — we become more Christ-like. This is what happens to Job, though he does not understand the process as he’s going through it
- **JOB 19.25A [THE REDEEMER]:** In Hebrew the word *goel* can translate as *redeemer* or as *avenger*. The reason for this is that the verb *gaal* fundamentally means *to act as a kinsman*. It is the kinsman in middle-eastern cultures who is responsible to do both the redeeming and the avenging. Job no doubt has both in mind as he contemplates his *goel*. For the word *redeemer*, the LXX substitutes the phrase *the one about to release me*.



Why are we regarded as
cattle and considered stupid
in your sight?

Job 18.3




- **JOB 19.25B [THE LIVING ONE]:** In our English translations, Job says, “I know that my Redeemer lives,” but in the Hebrew, the *life* word is actually an adjective. It’s not so much that Job’s Redeemer lives, but that He is *the Living One*, the One with life in Himself (John 5.26). The LXX renders it, *everlasting*, again connoting more than simple *aliveness*, but inherent life.
- **JOB 19.25C [THE FINAL WORD]:** The words translated “in the end” or “at the last” are actually a Heb. adjective that stands parallel to “Redeemer.” It is the adjective YHWH applies to Himself in Isaiah 44.6 and 48.11 when He calls Himself the “First and the Last.” Job’s Redeemer is the “one coming after,” i.e., “the Last.” When Job has disintegrated in the dust, the Lord will stand upon that very dust and declare that Job was indeed righteous, contrary to the innuendo of his friends.
- **JOB 22 [SPIRIT OF ACCUSATION (D)]:** Eliphaz continues relentless in his attack upon Job. “God is not benefited by righteousness,” he says, “but God does punish sin.” Eliphaz suggests some specific ways that Job may have sinned. He rebukes Job for implying that God may be ignorant of the facts. He reminds Job that though God seems to bless evil men for a while, He destroys them before their time. Eliphaz urges Job to repent and be restored. 
- **JOB 24.18-25 [SLOW JUSTICE]:** Job recognizes that the exaltation of the wicked is only for a season, but he wants that season to be shortened by regular intervals of God meting out justice. If God would mete out justice more regularly, then the wicked would soon be condemned, *and* Job would soon be vindicated.
- **JOB 26.01-04 [MY, YOU ARE SO SPIRIT-FILLED!]:** In one of Job’s great sardonic rejoinders, with tongue in cheek he praises his talkative friends. Job insightfully asks them, “whose spirit spoke from your mouth?” They of course would claim unction from God, but another spirit has been at work in them. 
- **JOB 26.12 [RAHAB = SATAN?]:** If Job 26, verses 12 and 13 are a couplet, then Rahab is “the gliding serpent.” Indeed, the LXX renders it, “the apostate serpent” (*drakonta apostatin*). In Isaiah 51.9,10 Rahab is a serpent or dragon, which in turn serves as a metaphor for Egypt (cf., Isaiah 30.7). In Job, however, Rahab is someone other than Egypt, and appears to be the primordial serpent, the devil. God is pictured as victorious over this Rahab (Cf. Psa. 89.9,10: “You rule over the surging sea; when its waves mount up, you still them. You crushed Rahab like one of the slain; with your strong arm you scattered your enemies.”) Significantly, this Rahab has helpers (Job 9.13, NIV *cohorts*).
- **JOB 27.13-23 [THE WICKED GET THEIR JUST DESERTS AFTER ALL]:** Job appears to be inconsistent or confused. Here he affirms that the wicked come to an untimely end, while earlier (ch. 21) he complains of how the wicked are spared, live long and “go down to their grave in peace.” Perhaps now Job is reassuring his friends that he does see a bigger picture, but that they must nevertheless recognize the seemingly unjust exceptions to the rule. Perhaps Job is confessing his own frustration over the inconsistencies in God’s

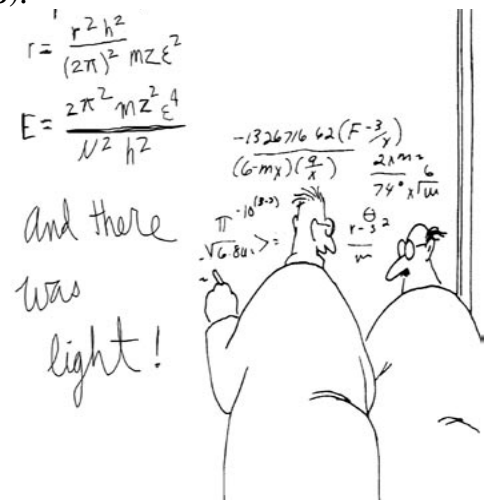
providence, bemoaning the elusiveness of wisdom and admitting that man must simply fear God for mortals will never figure out the depths of God's ways.

- JOB 29.1-30.1 [JOB NEUTRALIZED WITHOUT RECOGNIZING THE ENEMY]:** In this chapter, Job bemoans his loss of influence in the community. Whereas he once “broke the fangs of the wicked,” and men listened to him expectantly waiting in silence for his counsel, now even the dregs of society mock Job. This loss of influence points up a major goal of Satan's: to undermine the influence of the godly. Of course the most direct route to ending a godly person's influence is to kill him (in a non-martyr situation), and Satan would have done that to Job if God had permitted it (ch. 2.6; *viz.* John 8.44). ***If Satan cannot kill a godly person, he will endeavor to discredit him in any way possible.*** It is instructive to note that at this stage, Job gives no indication that he recognizes the hand of Satan in his circumstances. We who have the benefit of retrospect, should discern Satan's work more readily when he endeavors to undermine our influence  for the gospel.
- JOB 30.1-11 [NEANDERTHALS CONTEMPORARY WITH JOB?]:** These were not people rejected by Job so much as outcasts by society; *people who lived in caves*. Could this possibly be a reference to the so-called Neanderthals who have now been shown to have coexisted with Homo Sapiens in places like the Middle East? Is it possible that disease or something else caused a parting of ways between Job's people  and the Neanderthal, but now the children of the outcasts are finding their way back into the mainstream of society and mocking Job, the man who was once the symbol of mainstream success?
- JOB 30.2 [PEOPLE JOB DETESTED]:** Job's words in this verse were probably not as patronizing as they appear in the translations. The Hebrew is spare: “Again, strength of their hands — to what to me?” Job does not seem to be speaking of people he had turned away for their weakness, but perhaps of a brood of people so debased as to not merit charity because of their unwillingness to work.



Job 30.1-11

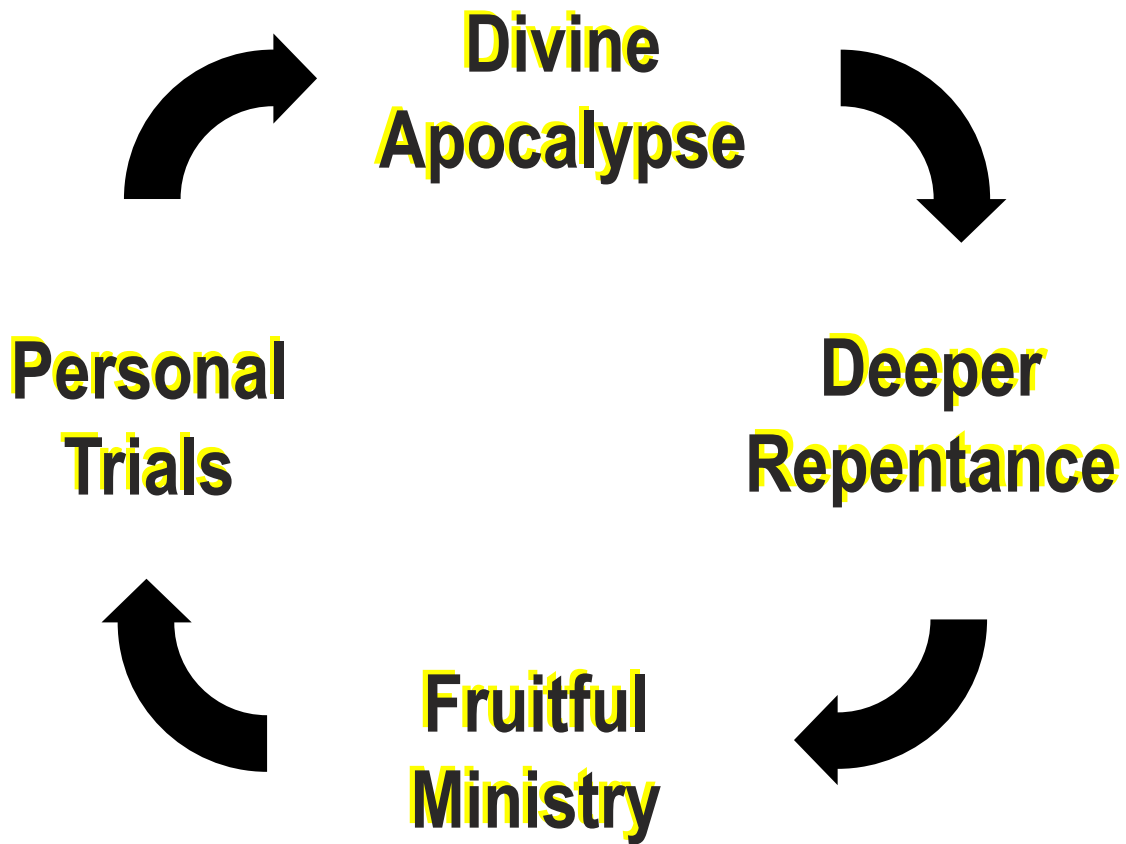


- **JOB 31 [JOB RESTS HIS CASE]:** Returning to legal language, Job signs his brief and ends his words. No one can convict him of harboring known sin. Job *is* perfect in that he had greater integrity than his contemporaries and was at God’s appointed place of personal growth.
- **JOB 32 [ELIHU ENTERS THE DEBATE]:** A member of the audience now throws  in his two cents. Elihu comes forward at the end of the story to stand as the epitome of spiritual arrogance. His mother did not help him learn humility by naming him Elihu. You’d find it hard to be humble too if your name meant, “He is (my) God.” (Just think, whenever anyone asked, “Who’s he?” a person would have to respond, “Him? Oh, ‘He is (my) god.’”) Elihu summarizes Job’s position thusly: “I am without sin but God treats me like an enemy...I am innocent but God denies me justice” (33.8-11; 34.5,6). Elihu implies that Job simply does not see his sin yet, but God will bring conviction through chastening (33.12-33). For Elihu the practical issue is this: Job implies that “it profits a man nothing when he tries to please God”—this can only lead to impiety (34.9; 35.3). Elihu is convinced that Job *is* guilty and that he is adding rebellion to his previous sins (34.33-37). Elihu errs in assuming that Job deserves his disaster, but he is right about this: God is not an oppressor (37.23). So why in God’s name is Elihu beating Job up some more?
- **JOB 36.04 [CAREFUL, ELIHU!]:** Elihu brands Job an ignoramus (34.35; 36.16), and then speaks of his own knowledge in the same terms as God’s (36.4; 37.16). Then he condemns Job in the most complete terms (36.16-21). Red flag, Elihu! You’re walking on dangerous ground!
- **JOB 38.01 [YHWH ANSWERS OUT OF THE STORM]:** God enters the drama to put things into perspective. How? By showing the men their inability to: control nature, control God, fathom God’s purposes, or save themselves. God’s presence arrests everyone’s attention, for its manifestation is as a raging storm (Psalm 50.3).
- **JOB 38.19 [THE ABODE OF LIGHT]:** What can compare to the creation of light when God said, “Let there be light”? “About 1,000 billion (10^{12}) photons of sunlight fall on a pinhead each second; when you look at a faint star, your eye receives a few hundred photons from that star each second.” (Source: Gribbin, John; *Q is for Quantum*) God begins to give Job perspective by parading the mind-boggling wonders of creation.
- **JOB 40.08 [MORE PERSPECTIVE]:** Here is a key question: “Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?” Key perspective: “Everything under heaven belongs to me.” (41.11)



MAN WOULD LIKE TO THINK HE UNDERSTANDS LIGHT

- **JOB 40.12 [HUMBLING THE PROUD]:** Cf. Zechariah 14.12. The ability to humble the proud is particularly a divine attribute and priority (40.11-14). By this power God judges the wicked and teaches the righteous their dependency upon Him.
- **JOB 42.02 [JOB'S SECOND CONFESSION]:** Job acknowledges the deeper purpose in his trials. Job sees the answer to his questions now. The answer is God Himself. The purpose of Job's trial was to prepare him for a deeper revelation of the relational, self-disclosing God.
- **JOB 42.05-06 [JOB REPENTS]:** What does Job repent of in the end? Probably an array of things, but most of all for thinking that he had understood the big picture and for the resultant creeping doubt regarding God's goodness toward him. God had deeper purposes all along, and Job's patience had given out too soon.
- **JOB 42.07-10A [JOB'S INTERCESSION]:** What's the fruit of a deeper revelation of God? More effective ministry to our friends and neighbors. What a tremendous commendation of one's ministry of intercession to have it said, "and the LORD accepted Job's prayer." Philosophers, theologians and scholars who do not believe in or understand intercessory prayer cannot appreciate that a deeper purpose in Job's trial was to make him a more powerful prayer warrior. Here's the sequence: (1) Go through trials; (2) Learn of God through the fresh revelation of His character occasioned by the trials; (3) Deepen your personal repentance; (4) Intercede for others more effectively because you now have a better understanding of God and His ways. Or more concisely: agony, epiphany, humility and ministry.
- **JOB 42.07-10B [THE HUMBLING OF ELIHU]:** What more stinging rebuke could Elihu have received than to have God simply not acknowledge Elihu's presence! I imagine Elihu went to the justice of the peace the next day to apply for a legal change of name. 
- **JOB 42.17 [JOB'S HEALING]:** It is implicit in the account of the latter part of Job's life that God healed him of his skin disease. This provides an instructive insight on divine healing: Whether or not Satan is involved in our disease, healing comes when God has accomplished His purposes in the trial. It behooves us then, when we pray for healing, to seek God regarding the deeper purposes, if any, in the illness. 



The story of Job reveals a common cycle in the lives of the people whom God uses.

The net result of this cycle is increasing intimacy with the Creator.