

Job Revisited - The Saviour Sources and Sorrow

BI761 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH OLD TESTAMENT BOOK STUDY
JOB THE WRITTEN REPORT (Revised)

A Written Report Presented to the Faculty
of Louisiana Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for
Doctorate of Philosophy in Theological Studies

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Scope of BI761

BI761 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH Old Testament Book Study

TEXT: As an Independent Research course, there is no specified textbook. The student is to select books and other materials which will assist in the research necessary to present a 25-30 page (minimum) scholarly paper commensurate with doctoral level study.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this course is to allow the student to demonstrate the research skills he has developed while also allowing him to explore a subject of interest in the process of employing those skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

(1) Select an Old Testament passage or short Old Testament book and do a thorough exegetical analysis of the passage:

A. Outline the passage

B. Provide historical, geographical and/or cultural background and context of the passage as much as is relevant.

C. Examine the original language of the passage for significant words and/or phrases that have nuances of meaning that might have been lost or skewed in translation.

D. Also explain cultural idioms that might be relevant, but also might not necessarily translate well cross-culturally to a contemporary audience, i.e. Abraham married his half-sister, Sarah (see Gen 12 & 20)—something that is not only unnatural but also illegal in the U.S.. His son, Isaac (Gen 24) and grandson Jacob (Gen 29) also married women who were close relatives.

E. Examine theological issues presented in the biblical text.

F. Make contemporary application(s) of the common theme(s) found in the passage.

(2) As with all other written assignments, be sure to follow the format requirements set forth in A Manual for Writers of Term papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th Edition by Kate Turabian ISBN: 10:0-226-82337-7

(3) After completing the above assignments of this course forward your material to LBTS for grading.

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Job – A Philosophy Book from God

“There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil” (Job 1:1). The Bible student with the Old Testament book of Job in his lap is to become a student of God, of man, of philosophy, and of himself. This study guide is intended to push one into the deeper recesses of that learning experience, it is not intended to answer all the questions that are found there. Perhaps more than any other Bible book, Job is staged to teach what questions to ask rather than to reveal to us the “thus saith the LORD” revelations of God.

If that is the case it is appropriate to pose some large looming questions at the onset of such a study. Number one, “Who wrote the book?” The Bible student must first contend that God himself authored all scripture for “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2Tim 3:16-17). But God explained by the hand of Peter, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2Pet 1:19-21). Our question, more particularly then, is, “Who was the holy man of God who spoke, in writing down the forty two chapters of the Bible book called Job?”

It takes no student of the Bible to glance at the note of a bygone Bible scholar and

retort “Job wrote Job.” It is the lazy student that allows someone else to do his thinking for him, and it is the gullible man who deems predigested facts always accurate. One need not reinvent the wheel here, but think of the ramifications if Job himself penned the book. Understand that it was Job who said, “O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book!” (Job 19:23). And consider that the author had a private glimpse into the courts of heaven where God staged this contest with Satan. Indeed ask the question, “Who wrote the book of Job?”

In the larger consideration of the book of Job, a second question is “What is the overriding theme of the book?” i.e. What is the question it poses? What is the answer it gives? God put no shoddy literature in his Bible. Every book has a structure, a purpose, a direction. Job is a forty two chapter epic Hebrew poem. No greater literature has ere been written, than what God writes in his sixty-six books penned by forty men over a period of 1,600 years. Job is a profound piece of literature and begs the literature student's question, “What is the theme of the work?”

A third question to ask is, “When was Job written?” Again the sincere Bible student should forgo the temptation of letting another student do his thinking for him with this question. The most foreknown Bible scholar is entitled to his opinion, but he is, after all, just another Bible student. It is likely that he had fewer tools at his disposal than what today's student has at his fingertips; and the logic it takes to suppose a reasonable answer to these questions is not beyond us.

Job was written in Hebrew, and is collected with the Hebrew books we call the Holy Bible. Eber was Abraham's great, great, great, great grand father.

The sons of Eber spoke the tongue of Eber, and when Abram left the land of his

fathers and passes over into God's promised land the name for his descendants was rounded out to “the Hebrews.” It literally means “the sons of Eber that passed over.” Job actually wrote in an old dialect of Hebrew, which makes him at least a son of Eber, and possibly even a closer kin to Abraham.

In the book of Job no patriarch is mentioned, and no law or Scripture is quoted. The law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai in 1492 BC. A relatively easy date to remember. Four things began at Sinai: the giving of the law, the building of the Hebrew Tabernacle, the five types of sacrificial offerings¹ and the writing of the Pentateuch². None of these are mentioned or alluded to in the book of Job; and none of the Pentateuch mentions or alludes to the book of Job. That is curious.

All these facts lend important insights into when Job may have lived, written, and died, but none of them nail down any specific dates. Too much credence is given to the by-gone Bible student who wrote his opinion in the margin of a Bible. Too little thought is generally given to these insights when a current Bible student ponders, “When was the book of Job written?” One should not rob oneself of such pondering.

Alas, a fourth question would follow in the aged sequence: who, what, when, and where; indeed, “Where was the land of Uz?” Once again the Bible student who has gone before us and written an opinion in the margin of his Bible might rob us of the necessary and beneficial pondering of the question. As the narrative unfolds, as the friends level their opinions, don't just set aside the wonder.

Where did the greatest man of all men of the east grow up? Where did he now dwell? Where was the land of Uz located, what stars did they sit under? What seasons did

¹ Lev 1-5 define these five types of offerings, as Burnt, Peace, Meal, Sin, and Trespass offerings.

² The first five books of the Holy Bible are called the Pentateuch .

they experience?

Also, for the fifth “W” type question, ponder the “why” question. Why did God incorporate the book of Job into the Holy Bible? “Why bad things happen to good people” is a book title published in 1983 by Harold S. Kushner, in 2006 by Melvin Tinker, in 2008 by David Arnold, and in 2001 by Randy Crawford.³ It is common to ask and answer this question from the book of Job. Our larger question of “why” dare not swallow up that lesser question without due benevolence, but one dare not get hung up on the lesser, and not even address the larger. This book has some tremendous potential for unfolding into a much larger picture than has previously been portrayed. Every book in the Bible portrays the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the redeemer of man. To suppose that Job only teaches us why bad things happen to good people is shortsighted.

To miss its revelation about the LORD God, about the rational mind of man, and about the needed redeemer, the daysman of all time, well, missing all that would miss why God carefully preserved this book, word perfect, for over thirty-five-hundred years.

The five “W”s of inquiring minds may need to be augmented by an “H.” How did the book of Job get accurately recorded, incorporated into God's Holy Bible, and passed on with such care that the Lord Jesus Christ authenticated it as Holy Scripture? What mechanisms were involved in getting such an epic poem from the land Uz to the land of promise? How did it become the first book of the Bible's poetry section?⁴

³ Thank you Amazon.com for such a wealth of input.

⁴ In the Hebrew Bible, called the Tennach, or the written Torah, the book ordering differs from the canonical order that we are used to. There Job is the third book of the Kethuvim”, or “the writings”, following Psalms and Proverbs. The reasoning of book orders is well documented in “The order of the books in the Hebrew Bible,” by Greg Gaswell, Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society (JETS) 51/4 (Dec 2008) 673-88, www.etsjets.org accessed 02/2/2016

Researching such questions might take the Bible student through many avenues of thought concerning the miracle of inspiration and preservation, to ponder how we got our Bible. Such wonder is more appropriate for the book of Job than other books because of its setting, its content, and its theme. How God orchestrated the inclusion of Job in his Bible is an intriguing question.

A seventh question always fitting when undertaking a book study is, “What is that to me?” Making a current application to Biblical truths and principles should always be a priority for a preacher. It should herein be a priority for the Bible student studying Job. Even pondering the most basic application of “Why bad things happen to good people,” drives one into profound consideration about contests between God and Satan, about the person of Satan and the person of God. Such considerations have deep reaching applications in how we live our lives with enlightened consciousness of the bigger picture.

Such is a very basic application because the book of Job has tentacles of mans philosophy that reach far deeper than that one application. Does evil always get its judgment? Do the righteous always get a fair shake? Do I need a daysman that can lay his hand on God and lay his hand on man and be an intercessor? Do I “know that my redeemer liveth?” Do I know “that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth?” Am I assured that “though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God?” Am I assured of a Saviour “Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me?” (Job 19:25-27).

Indeed every question in this introduction couples with that basic question and can find an application in the study of the book of Job. But those applications will be shallow

and limited if we do not see the LORD God, know his person, and meet his only Begotten Son, the Redeemer of man. Consider the far reaching list of applications that the Bible student might draw from an in depth study of the Book of Job. Consider it, and prepare to be that student.

The seven questions staged in this introduction are meant to whet the appetite of the Bible student. If it has wholly accomplished its purpose there is little need to delve into a detailed analysis of the Book of Job. The industrious student is already well on his way in discovering the new richness in this poetic philosophy dissertation called Job. There are, however, some insights that should be briefly examined from this epic Hebrew poem. Three of these observations are explored below.

Considering the Redeemer

Even Job needed a Redeemer, and he clearly called out this great need and documented this dependence. “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil” (Job 1:1). Was Job righteous? Could Job be perfect and upright but not righteous? Was Eliphaz's first rebuke correct? He said, “Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off?” (Job 4:7). Our Bible tells us clearly, “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:10-12, 23). Even though Job stood before God as perfect and upright, he needed to be redeemed, and he needed a redeemer. It is subtle but brilliant how this truth is interwoven into this epic Hebrew poem. It is well worth a moment of our consideration.

When considering the righteousness of man five Old Testament individuals stand out. Abraham is of course the hallmark for obtaining righteousness. Abram believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness:⁵ both James and Paul spend time analyzing that truth for us. King David, who was called a man after God's own heart⁶, is considered as a man who had righteousness, and walked perfectly⁷. But the next three

⁵ Ro 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Jas 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

⁶ 1Sa 13:14 ... the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people... Ac 13:22 And when he had removed (Saul), he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

⁷ 1Kings 15:5 Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the

men are not normally in the running for consideration as God's most righteous men:

“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in (the land that sinneth against God), they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek 14:14). The Prophet Ezekiel further emphasizes and clarifies the “righteousness” of these three a few verses later, “Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness” (14:20). In its context these two verses might draw a noteworthy discussion, but in our context it is only observed that Job had his own righteousness. Further examination of this trio, and their righteousness, must be the subject of another treatise. One must consider the righteousness which Job had. Exactly what was it? and where did he get it? Man cannot be righteous apart from the our Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. This is a clear principle of Holy Scripture. Does Job acknowledge his need of mankind's Saviour and Redeemer?

The whole argument undertaken in the book of Job reverberates around what it means to be justified and righteous before God. Discerning the necessity and the work of the redeemer in the book is essential. At times Job goes deep enough into this issue to make the argument tense. “Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live” (Job 27:5b-6). Just as the Apostle James and the Apostle Paul use different aspects of the word “justify,” here it must be discerned that different aspects of the word “righteous” are being bantered about.

The words translated righteous provide a little clarification. Twenty one times the

Hittite.

word “righteous” is used in Job. Two times the word comes from the same Hebrew word normally translated “upright” (4:7, 23:7). That Hebrew word is #03477 יָשָׁר, yashar, as used in God's initial description of Job. Seven times in Job that word is translated “upright” and it means “right” but not necessarily “righteous.”⁸ Thus, God says Job was “right” (1:1) and Eliphaz says, “Where ever were the 'right' cut off?” (4:7). The Hebrew for “righteous” is another word altogether, #06663 צַדִּיק tsadaq, meaning just, justified or righteous. It is important to distinguish these two words in the Holy Bible. They are generally distinguishable in English from their context, but at times, like in Job 4:7, it is good to be able to check the Hebrew and clarify which “righteous” the translators had in mind. This is all the more important for those who do not distinguish between the saving righteousness of the Christ and the man made righteousness of man. All “Christianity” tainted by Roman religionists and confusing “penance” with “repentance” confuse the principle of man made righteousness with the purity of Christ endowed righteousness. All Protestant denominations in general confuse this essential truth about “so great salvation” and end up including some works, or baptism or man-made-righteousness in its formula. This produces error and apostasy.

Job needed a redeemer to be justified and righteous before God, and the book of Job states that truth. There is evidence that Job strayed from that truth, perhaps being to reliant on his own righteousness, and forgetting its true source, but God's unprecedented answer to Job cinches that truth. There is a youngster, Elihu by name, who steps in and exposes three chapters of profound insight; he is unrefuted by Job; he is unrefuted by God. The narrative introduction of Elihu provides an eloquent perspective: “So these

⁸ See Hebrew Word Study Appendix at the end of this report.

three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job” (Job 32:1-3). Job had “spoken of God the thing that is right” (42:7), but he had clearly crossed a line when he “justified himself,” and became “righteous in his own eyes” (32:1,2). A keen interest in the study of Job is to distinguish that line more clearly. In this effort, at this time, only the enunciation of the Redeemer is in view.

The theme of the Holy Bible should show up in some measure in every book of the Bible and Job cannot be exempt. The theme of the Holy Bible from Genesis to maps is this, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Implied in that verse, and in the Bible's theme, is the lost, depraved condition of man and his deserve of perishing into everlasting death. Secondly that verse, and the Bible's theme, show the Only Begotten Son of God as the Saviour and the Messiah (Greek Christ). And lastly that verse, and the Bible's theme, has the means and results of the salvation process; belief via faith, and everlasting life instead of everlasting death. The overriding theme presented in most of the Old Testament books is this depravity of man and mankind; they are disobedient, rebellious, stiff-necked and laden with iniquity. God's choosing and singling out one particular nation reveals how rebellious and depraved even especially blessed man can be, but it also shows God's miraculous provision to provide the promised Messiah through a promised seedline. Job explores the rational man, his lack of righteousness and his deserve of judgment in a profound manner.

There are also some profound glimpses into Job's acknowledgment of his need for a redeemer. In his first argument (ch 6-7), the one made to Eliphaz the Temanite (ch 4-5), Job acknowledges sin and need for a pardon. "I have sinned... And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust" (Job 7:20,21). The Bible declares that every man has this knowledge of their sin and their need for a pardon embedded in their soul. Individuals come up with a soothing of this consciousness but it is present just the same. God puts it thus, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be know of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them... so that they are without excuse" (Rom 1:18, 19, 20b) This consciousness of ones just dessert is rehearsed by Job and more than rehearsed by his three friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

In Job's second argument (ch 9-10), the one made to Bildad the Shuhite (ch 8), he goes even further. "For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both" (Job 9:32-33). This insight to the role of our Redeemer explores the need that a Saviour be both God and man; as a perfect and impartial intercessor. It provides a profound revelation from God when it calls out that our Lord Jesus Christ must be a *Daysman*, both God and man, and one who lays his hand on the condemned and the LORD God of heaven. It is an awesome revelation of how the promised Messiah is to operate.

In Job's third argument (ch 12-14), the one made to Zophar the Naamathite (ch 11), he goes to more depth to reveal his need of a Saviour; "Though he slay me, yet will I trust

in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him” (13:15-16). The “he” that would slay him, is the “He” that shall be his salvation. Any Bible student must be a careful student of pronouns; that can, at times, be challenging in English; it is such a slovenly inexact language. (God's original languages of Hebrew, and then Greek are always the more exacting languages. Any language that carefully differentiates masculine, feminine and neuter nouns, and plural and singular person are far more exact than English. Anyone who wants to remove English's 'thee's and 'thou's, 'hath's and 'liveth's does not understand this inexactness dilemma. If it starts with a “t” like thy, thou, or thine, it is second person singular; if it starts with a “y” like ye, you, or yours, it is second person plural and rhymes with “youall.”) Notice how this revelation corresponds exactly with what God's only begotten Son is to do and be in Psalm 2. There it says, “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him” (Psalm 2:12). Job trusted God to save him; that pleases God.

In Job's fourth argument (ch 16-17), the one made to Eliphaz the Temanite's second discourse (ch 15), he calls out, again, the role of an intercessor. “O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor!” (16:21). An emphasis often missed in the analysis of Job is his repeated desire for an intercessor/mediator. He has already mentioned a God-man Daysman (Job 9) and here, again he rehearses the need for one that might plead for man. Second Timothy 2:5 comes to mind here, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Job's three friends thought he was trying to make himself “righteous” instead of “upright.” Before the young

unrefuted lad, Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, railed on Job the Bible says Job was righteous in his own eyes (Job 32:1) and Elihu was angered because Job justified himself rather than God (32:2) but Job repeatedly acknowledged this need for a mediator. Such a theme is, of course, the principle carried throughout the Bible, God's only begotten son, the promised Messiah, and Saviour of mankind was to be the God-man Daysman the only mediator between God and man.

In Job's fifth argument (ch 19), the one made to Bildad the Shuhite's second discourse (ch 18), he calls out with unprecedented confidence, “Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me” (Job 19:23-27). When describing an assurance of the coming Redeemer, no stronger Scripture can be quoted than Job's affirmation. In it his Redeemer is his God, and when his Redeemer physically stands on the earth, Job will be present with a physical resurrected body. Everything implied in Job's affirmation aligns exactly with the revelation of God. It all unfolds in God's written Scripture over the next sixteen hundred years. This is the crescendo of Job's revelation about the Messiah. Likely written parallel with God's 1492 BC revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai, Job provides an unparalleled insight to God's plan for man's redemption. Awesome.

In Job's sixth argument (ch 21), the one made to Zophar the Naamathite's second discourse (ch 20), he points out the upcoming resurrection of the dead, “That the wicked

is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath” (Job 21:30). Again this is confirmed in the truths of the Scriptures which will follow. It is a truth that escapes Job's three friends, but Revelation 20 supports the assertion completely, “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death” (20:12-15). If one has not accepted a God-man, daysman, redeemer as the Saviour of their soul they do not have their name written in the book of life. If they do have the Only Begotten Son of God as their Lord Jesus Christ, then they can call him Father, even Abba Father, and “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom 8:15-16).

In Job's seventh argument (ch 23-24), the one made to Eliphaz the Temanite's third discourse (ch 22), he has come to a point where he sternly trusts his judge will find him righteous. “I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge” (Job 23:5-7) Job shows a real assurance of his righteousness. One must recognize by this point, that the “righteousness” referenced here is not a man-made, works righteousness, but the righteousness of his redeemer attributed to him by faith. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2Cor 5:21). Anyone, Old Testament, or New Testament,

who is trusting in man-made, penance-earned, pious-produced righteousness will be crushed when standing before the Judge of all the earth. It should be noted here, that Job knew the LORD and his Redeemer as God. The New Testament born-again believer has this profound difference, we call our LORD God, “our Father” (Matt 6:9), with the endearing term Abba Father. “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Rom 8:15). No where in the Old Testament will one see an Old Testament saint, Abraham, Moses, David, Noah, Job or Daniel, call God “Father.” A profound, under appreciated truth is that when we pray we pray “Our Father, who art in heaven...” It is good to know the Judge, and it is even grander to be able to call him “Our Father!”

In Job's eighth argument (ch 26-31), the one made to Bildad the Shuhite's third discourse (ch 25), he points out a universal Bible truth, “And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28). Such a statement shows that Job knew what he was talking about at this point. Such a knowledge of God and his ways helps to solidify that Job was not presuming his own righteousness, but relying on the righteousness and salvation of his Redeemer. It seems obvious in these eight affirmations that Job was indeed justified, Justified in Christ, the Messiah, the Redeemer and Daysman which God, from the beginning promised to mankind.

If Job encroaches on presumption, and that is the big “if,” it is captured in this final argument, where he says, “My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach

me so long as I live” (Job 27:4-6). There is a significant count of “me”s and “I”s in this statement, but a self assurance of Christ's righteousness applied to ones life can secure such confidence with no hypocrisy.

Job trusted in a Redeemer and Daysman. He knew he would be resurrected to see such a one. He held his own in refuting his three friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. The narrator now addresses the issue of Job being righteous in his own eyes, and justifying himself. “So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.” (Job 32:1-2) Notice that these charges are leveled on Job to explain the wrath of Elihu, not to clarify any presumptuous sin of Job. Even though Elihu's rant goes unanswered by Job and is never addressed by God, his wrath against Job seems to be unjustified; Job was justified and he indeed spoke the thing that was right.

Considering the Sources

God only included so many philosophy books in his sixty-six books of revelation. There is some depth in the Old Testament book of Job that is not found in its casual reading. It is adequate to know that God had the book penned through inspiration, that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, but Job's penning of the work is still a curiosity. The introduction has glimpses into heavenly operations and positions that escape man's natural purview. Job is not a prophet. There is not a single "Thus saith the LORD" to be found in Job, so it is curious where these men get their profound insights. Reaching deep into the rational thought and drawing profound

conclusions is called philosophy. It is an avenue for deriving truth, but it is a dangerous avenue when left unattended; reference Mary Baker Glover Eddy's hellish Christian Science Philosophy. God's mainstay of truth is his revelation of himself through the written Word of God. There is little evidence in the book of Job that they had any written record to shape their philosophy. One should not study God and Godly things with out some philosophy, but one should never hang truth from philosophy alone. Job's three friends tried such a feat, and God points out that their error was great.

Modernist scholars spend much time attempting to do *source criticism* of Scripture. This is not that. A major difference being that here God is recognized as the source of Scripture. Modernists scholars consider the Bible a man made book, and spend all their resources pondering how man wrote this book. That is at the core of *source criticism*, and is essentially at the core of all *Biblical Criticism*. Avoid it outright. Here the sources of insight for Job's three friends is being examined because it lends depth to our study, and because God says that they did not speak the thing that is right.

Eliphaz Chapter 4 - 5, Job Chapter 6 - 7

Consider the source for the insight of Eliphaz, the first of Job's three friends to speak out, "Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made my bones to shake." Thus, a manifestation of a passing spirit, an image not discerned, had a voice saying, "Shall mortal man be more just than God" (4:12-21)? Job attacks Eliphaz's source, "Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions" (7:14): It is therefore, insightful and helpful to analyze where one gets their philosophy. Job was not a stand-on-a-box, "Thus saith the

LORD" kind of a prophet. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and all the minor prophets could say, "The Word of the LORD came unto me saying..." Job says only, "For I have not concealed the words of the Holy One" (6:10b). Thus, Job did have the Words of the Holy One, and the principles drawn from this Hebrew poetry carry the weight of "Thus saith the LORD." Job addresses the aged question "What is truth?" Job is one of the grandest philosophy books because it reveals the horrid shortfalls of philosophy.

Bildad Chapter 8 Job Chapter 9 - 10

Bildad the Shuhite's opening argument sites his source, "For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers" (8:8). History is a great teacher, but alas Job points out a leading shortfall, "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God" (9:1)? What man has always believed about God, what man has always assimilated about a relationship with his Supreme Maker, has always come short. Job focuses on that shortfall when he states, "For (God) is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both" (9:32-33). The *daysman* that Job inquires about is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ the righteous. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1Tim 2:5-6).

In only two short stabs into philosophy, the use of deductive reasoning to discern the truths about life, it is revealed that man needs revelation from God, and man needs a daysman, an intercessor, an advocate. Eliphaz thought visions from spirits in the night might suffice, Bildad thought study of our fathers and forefathers would. Job eloquently points out that mere reasoning about God will not suffice for figuring out the plights of

this world, it requires a relationship with God. This theme also unfolds in Zophar's argument.

Zophar Chapter 11, Job Chapter 12 - 14

Zophar the Naamathite suggests, "Oh that (God) would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!" (11:6a) Zophar bases his philosophy lesson on the inner wisdom of man. Endowed with this great wisdom he puts forth his opinion, "Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth" (11:6b). Job responds to this level of philosophy, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you" (12:2). Job provides a profound insight in his answer to Zophar, "Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?" (9:1). For the first and only time in his arguments Job references the powerful, personal name of God, Jehovah.⁹ In Hebrew that name is written and used with only the greatest reverence, and in the Holy Bible it is used only by those who personally knew God by name. Watch that development in Job, where his friends did not know God personally, and Job came to know him very, very personally. Note the many references to the LORD in the prologue and epilogue of Job, with only two references in the book proper. This is awesome literature and truth, it has a depth that is often overlooked.

Knowledge, understanding and wisdom are the trichotomy¹⁰ of intellect. In Job their intertwining begins with great care, until in 28:28 their revelation comes to full

⁹ The personal and powerful name of God, "Jehovah" in proper English, "LORD", with all caps in occurrences in your King James Bible, is used by Job in only 1:21 and 12:9, and is not used by his four friends at all. Other occurrences of the God's personal name are from the courts of heaven, or in God's answer to Job. In the Holy Bible there is much in a name. See "The Scofield Reference Bible, Summary Names of God," 983.

¹⁰ American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. trichotomy (tri·chot·o·my) n., pl. tri·chot·o·mies. 1. Division into three parts or elements. 2. A system based on three parts or elements. [New Latin trichotomia : Greek trikha, in three parts]

bloom, "And unto man (God) said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." Proverbs chapter 8 had not yet been penned by Solomon, but it beautifully expands on Job's answer to Zophar, that the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Solomon quotes Job on many occasions, he seems to have been a real student of Job, and he more fully develops some of the thoughts seeded in Job's epic poem. That could make for an avenue of additional study, and it would add a dimension of depth to the book of Job for sure.

Bildad looked to the forefathers for wisdom, and Zophar looked deep into man's mind for it, and Job refutes them both. Job knew some things about the LORD God and showed a knowledge of what God would have Isaiah the prophet write down 900 years later, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:8-9).

The premise of our thesis here is that looking at the sources of their arguments reveals an inner depth to the book of Job, yea, an inner depth appealed to in all human reasoning. Eliphaz appeals to spiritualism, Bildad to culture and ancestry, and Zophar to the pure rational wisdom of man. Job answers these three respectively with the words of the Holy One, man's need for the promised Daysman, and the fear of the LORD being the beginning of wisdom. These three themes are indeed a mirror for the theme of the Bible. The Word of God, mans need of a Redeemer, and the fear of God are the themes repeated in Job.

Eliphaz II Chapter 15, Job Chapter 16 - 17

After the first round of arguments are complete it is interesting to see how Job's three friends settle more staunchly into their arguments and how the three pit themselves against Job as brazen arguers, but our thesis here is to focus on the sources for their information. Eliphaz opened his case for Job's suffering by citing visions in the night and conversations in the spirit world. In this second round of arguments one can see Eliphaz has recoiled from Job's harsh rebuke of such nonsense, but Eliphaz subtly remains a spiritualist in this his second round of argument. He does not say "Thank your lucky stars," but he might as well have. "Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?" (vr11) Eliphaz gives a concerted argument about the smallness and insignificance of man, and the greater spiritual powers of the universe. He even accuses Job of restraining prayer (vr4) and turning his spirit against God. (vr13)

Job's response to Eliphaz is astounding. After accusing them of being miserable comforters, he prophetically depicts the crucifixion of Jesus the Christ. "They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me. God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked" (16:10-11). This is an answer that touches the spirit world for certain. The spirits stand in trembling awe at the cross on Calvary, it is possible that the evil spirits at first rejoiced at the cross, thinking that it might represent a great victory. Today, because of the resurrection of Christ, those spirits tremble at the cross of Calvary.

Bildad II Chapter 18, Job Chapter 19

As much as Eliphaz focuses his argument from a spiritual plain, Bildad's focus

comes from the physical. "Yea the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him" (18:5,6). Bildad's first argument addresses an inquiry to the former ages, and a search of their fathers. In this his second argument he addresses the frailty and brevity of ones life. The terrors of death are as sure as the earth or a rock, they are as plainly seen as light and dark. Again Bildad focuses on the physical and draws his insight from only the physical world know by the fathers, history, and the way it has always been done. He says,

Terrors make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet...
It shall devour the strength of his skin: even the firstborn of death shall devour his strength. His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors. It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation. His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off (Job 18:11,13-16).

Bildad contends that death and punishment are the inevitable facts of life; it is known in the soul. It is interesting how he recites the principle in Romans 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."

Look here at the response of Job to such a terror of death and punishment. Penned by Job over fifteen-hundred years before penned by the the Apostle Paul, Job says, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27). Do not miss the clarity and exactness of Job's assurance. Job knew the one who would bring victory over death, the one who would be

the first fruit of life. Completely out of this dispensation of grace Job knew,

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor 15:53-57).

No commentator, thinking Job wrote about why good people suffer, includes a comment on what Job knew about our Lord Jesus Christ. Don't miss this theme in Job.

Zophar II Chapter 20, Job Chapter 21

Zophar's continual plea towards man's wisdom comes to bear in his second argument, as he rebuts Job with inputs like "my thoughts cause me to answer," "the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer," and "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth" (20:2, 3, 4). Again Zophar's main source of input is the knowledge that is built up deep inside of a person, knowledge from old, knowledge of elders, and facts from our fathers. One should give these sources due consideration for sure, but they are not a pure source for Godly truth. There needs to be a revelation from God, not just a drawing out of one's inner knowledge; recall the general definition of philosophy.

Job rebukes this "*inward knowledge*." He says of it, "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out... Shall any teach God knowledge? Seeing he judgeth those that are high" (21:17a, 22) What the depraved heart of man knows intuitively or instinctively, is not a good source for truth. "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov 14:12, 16:25, cf 18:17). Never trust the inner gut alone. The common sense for spiritual things, is commonly wrong.

Eliphaz III Chapter 22, Job Chapter 23 - 24

Eliphaz's third discourse sounds like the TV Preacher Jimmy Baker, Jimmy Swagert, Benny Hin, or any other name-it-and -claim-it, blab-it-and-grab-it kind-of preacher. “Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.” Eliphaz began the input about Job's plight with an appeal to what he overheard from the spirit world, followed by an appeal to his lucky stars, in so many words, and now in his third appeal he sounds like a modern TV preacher. Eliphaz, the spiritualist, advises “If thou return to the almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.” (22:23-24)

Elsewhere in the Bible, recorded well after Eliphaz gives his shallow ideas about the spirit of man, it is written “The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.” (Pr 20:27) and “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Ec 3:21) and again “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.” (Zec 12:1) and lastly “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”(1Co 2:11) In these four quotations about the spirit of man we have input from the wisdom of Solomon, with the spirit being the candle of God, and the vanity of Solomon, with the spirit separating from the body at death. We see in Zechariah an assurance that God formed the spirit of man as sure as he formed the heaven and earth. In the New Testament we see the grand division about what the spirit of man cannot see. It

sees the things of man, but only when the Spirit of God is in man, can he see the things of God. Eliphaz, and the TV preacher give the same input from the spirit of man, but clearly in the Bible man's ways are not God's ways, and God's ways are not man's ways. As a spiritualist Eliphaz appeals very logically to the spirit of man. But he does not begin to capture the situation of Job.

It needs also mentioned here that the Roman Catholic Church framed its doctrine in the same spirit of error. They gave more weight to the philosopher than to the prophet. For example the philosopher considers man to be only material and immaterial, a dichotomy. The word of God clearly portrays man as body, soul, and spirit, a trichotomy. The Bible often differentiates between soul and spirit. For example when Christ died on Calvary his body went to the tomb (Matt 27:57-60), his soul went to hell (Ps 16:10, Acts 2:27-31), and he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father (Luke 23:46). Body, soul, and spirit is a trichotomy. It is not meaningless, nor is it trivial, that the Roman Catholic Religion, and each of its protestant descendants rely on the philosopher and refuse to recognize the trichotomy of man. They have this doctrine eternally wrong.

It behooves one to be conscious that in the book of Job, the three friends make accusations using only human resources, and Job answers what is right, just like other holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. So what does Job use in answer to Eliphaz's appeal to the spirit of man? “ Even to day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me” (Job 23:2-5). It is more important to hear what the LORD God says

than to hear what the spirit of man has to say.

Bildad III Chapter 25, Job Chapter 26-31

In Bildad's third argument to Job he is unmovable and self assured. His knowledge of history and his logic of how things always have unfolded locked him into a stiff necked, stubborn assurance, but he is wrong, God said so. Perhaps one has heard it said, “We have always done it 'this' way!” Job retorts to Bildad's self assurance, “How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is? To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?” (26:3-4). Job then mocks what Bildad knows from the long history of mankind by giving him some of God's “prehistoric¹¹” data, “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof” (Job 26:7-11).

This is Job's eighth answer to his friends and it continues on for six chapters. We have walked through the positions of Job's three friends with emphasis on where they may have gotten their reasoning from. Eliphaz leaned on the spirit world and astrology; Bildad more on the history of man and what our fathers have always known; Zophar leaned on man's inner wisdom, logic and sound reasoning. Their sources are good, but taken as a sole source they lead into error, perfectly logical error, but error just the same. Philosophy is the art of reaching deep down into the inner reasoning and pulling out truth. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar were so locked into their single source truths that they could

¹¹ For a Bible believer there is no such thing as pre-historic.

not be persuaded to abandon them. The forty two chapters of Job make up an epic Hebrew poem that reveals this tendency in man. They were wrong, Job was right. One can be assured that man has a tenacity in holding on to their own reasoned out error.

There is more to be done in this vein. Elihu's source and reasoning have not even been explored in this effort. Further, one aspect of exploring Job's source comes in exploring Job 38:1, "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said..." What's with the whirlwind? Was it an audible voice? Did Eliphaz hear God's challenge to Job? (Notice that it was not really an answer to Job's questions, but a challenge of all the sources.) All this might be considered in examining the sources used in the book of Job. The examination is really only baited in this paper.

Considering the Forgiveness

Forgiveness is not a lesson that is regularly drawn out of the book of Job, but the closing chapter, where God concludes Job's situation, resonates a chord which rings with the harmony of forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. This insight is not original with me; one Pastor Doug Fisher, a retired Marine, pastoring in San Diego, California, developed and preached the theme with finesse and vitality. But it was not likely original with Pastor Fisher either. It resonates without words in the last chapter of Job's epic poem, and it needs our focus in the close of this brief examination.

Eliphaz makes three arguments against Job and progressively gets more hostile towards his troubled friend. He starts with an implication that Job is getting just what he deserves, because that is what God does, his well known *modus operandi*, as it were. Eliphaz says, “Lo this, we have searched it, so it is, hear it, and know thou it for thy good” (Job 5:27). In his next argument Eliphaz accuses that Job has uttered vain knowledge, filled his belly with the east wind and unprofitable talk, and that he makes speeches wherewith he can do no good (15:2-3). He does not outright call him a liar as his friends do, but tells him, “thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty” (15:5).

Finally, Eliphaz's closing slam comes, “Is not thy wickedness great? And thine iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for naught, and stripped the naked of their clothing” (22:5-6).

Bildad the Shuhite sees Job refute Eliphaz and tears into Job with more fervor, “How long wilt thou speak these things? And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?” (8:2). Bildad goes on to say that Job and his children got just what they deserved! In a second rebuttal he says to Job, “How long will it be ere ye make an

end of words? Mark and afterwords we will speak” (18:2). Which is like saying, “Tell me when you are done with your lies so we can give answer,” Then in Bildad's final blast he assures that Job, who is but a worm, cannot be pure!

These blasts against Job, pale in comparison to Zophar's attack. Probably the youngest of the three, because he speaks last, Zophar's opening argument accuses, “Should thy lies make men hold their peace? And when thou mockest shall no man make thee ashamed?” (11:3). In his second and final argument Zophar calls Job wicked, and a hypocrite (20:5).

As these three errantly railed on Job their accusations got strong and more heated until there was a palpable tension between them and Job. We know that their position was wrong in its entirety because of the marvelous closing of the book.

“And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath” (42:7). Reading this causes a ready student of Scripture to want to read back through all of the arguments made by these three, and to realize in that reading that they did not speak that which was right. But at the least, in our purpose here, recognize that every railing accusation they made against God's servant Job was wrong, and uncalled for. When this came to light, and they realized how wrong they had been, their obligation was to go to Job, apologize for their error, and beg his pardon.

Notice how they had wronged God, as well. His wrath was kindled against the three. They needed to make an offering and seek God's forgiveness for their presumptuous sin. This need is profoundly worded by God, “Therefore take unto you

now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering: and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, like my servant Job” (42:8).

This is an amazing, and often overlooked principle in the book of Job. God required a trespass offering from Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, but he would not hear their prayer. Job was to pray “for” them, that is to say, Job was to be their intercessor and word their prayer to God for them.

To capture the full impact of God's instruction to Eliphaz one needs to slip in between the lines of the text of Scripture. We have reviewed the hostile speech they had leveled on Job, and now they needed to approach Job and ask him to be their intercessor. They needed to ask Job to word their apology to the LORD God. Picture that conversation. Experience it wholly.

Eliphaz, and his three friends could not follow God's instruction without a complete and sincere apology to Job. It is unclear how long this adversarial atmosphere had been building up between them, but it was significant. Stepping out, admitting one was wrong, and seeking the forgiveness of a friend takes a godly sorrow. Paul, told the errant Corinthians, “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (2Cor 7:9-10).

When one considers Eliphaz approaching Job, seeking forgiveness, and asking Job to pray “for” him, consider also Job's heart. Job had reacted in kind to the slanderous

attacks that his three friends had made toward him. He retorted to Eliphaz, “You think I cannot taste to discern perverse things? (6:30)... “Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?” (7:12). He told Bildad, “Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress... and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?” (10:3). And he retorted to Zophar, “No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you!” (12:2). Finally, Job calls all three of them “miserable comforters” (16:2). Job had responded as a human would in many of his arguments. Lord, help me to never respond to persecutors as a mere human would respond.

Before Job could acknowledge forgiveness to his three friends he had to seek their forgiveness, and beg their pardon. With only a little imagination one can picture the scene. A scene where Job hugged the necks of all three of his friends, and the fragrance of forgiveness was a sweet smelling savor to the LORD God even before the sacrifices were made. “So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job” (Job 42:9). At the Sermon on the Mount, when Jesus taught the model prayer, the “Amen” had barely resounded before Jesus said, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matt 6:14-15). Previously, while giving the deeper implications of keeping the law, Jesus had said, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift“ (Matt 5:23-24).

The instruction in Job might be subtle and between the lines, but it resonates so

well with the truths which require the Born-again believer to be quick to forgive, and the first to acknowledge his error and need of forgiveness.

Job was made richer after his trial was past. But if all one measures is the physical riches, then they have missed the heart of the book. His substance was seven thousand sheep before but fourteen thousand after, he had three thousand camels before, six thousand after, five hundred yoke of oxen before, and a thousand yoke after; five hundred she asses before and a thousand she asses after (1:3, 42:12). God doubled his possession, but the riches that Job had gained are not numbered in the count of his physical things. Job's wife, who stayed by him through all this whole ordeal, and touched him with her compassion as they buried seven sons and three daughters, now bare him seven more sons and three more daughters. That could not replace the ten they buried, but they now had twenty children.

But Job's twilight years were blessed with a richness, which exceeds all these things because he learned some things about his God, about himself, and about his three friends. Forgiveness is an important theme that unfolds in this epic Hebrew poem. One should not let it slide by without notice.

Consider Why Bad Things Happen to Good People

Why do bad things happen to good people? Some have speculated that Job provides a good answer to that question. This thesis contends that Job's epic poem not only fails to answer that question, but rebukes those who would think to ask it. The whole consideration of this epic poem is Job and his three friends pondering why Job's calamity happened, and God never does clarify a reason in his answer. Indeed the study of God's response shows more of a rebuke than a clarification of their pondering.

God does not answer this question in his appearance to Job. The highlighted question bantered about throughout the human conversation in Job, and outside of Job, is why did this happen? Again, God does not answer the question. What God does tell Job, in so many words (1736 words to be exact), is this, "I am bigger than you are."

Evidently, and eventually, God gave Job enough background information to write down chapter 1 and 2 of his story, but all that God put in his formal answer is a poetic consideration of how infinite our God is and how finite man is. Indeed, that is part of the wonder of this epic poem.

When one considers this question, think of Job, and answer it in two profound thoughts, #1 You are not focused on the larger picture, and #2 you are not God. One means of communicating that insight to a young maturing saint who is struggling in dilemma or circumstance will need more finesse in its wording, but that is really all the answer that is needed. When I was in military leadership school they drilled in three qualities/characters of leadership. They resonated with me because they resonated with principles of God's Word. The first and foremost quality/character of a good leader was the ability to always keep the larger perspective in view, always visualizing the bigger

picture and the larger goal, always keeping the main thing the main thing, etc.. Job is not really a book on leadership, but it does provide this insight, a believer always needs to keep the larger perspective in view¹².

¹² Anyone interested in knowing the other two qualities of leadership that the author memorized should contact the author.

Consider the Conclusion

I set out to write this paper because there were three things I have often seen overlooked in commentary on Job: the Saviour, the Sources and the Sorrow. These have been highlighted in this writing. As I assembled the paper, and researched peoples thoughts on Job I was struck by how little people explore the wonder of God's Word. I trust that the expanded introduction will help the honest Bible student to more fully explore the wonder of this epic Hebrew poem.

The last section considering “Why bad things happen” was added in afterthought because I heard from so many people who were led to believe that the answer was in Job. It trivializes the book and its tremendous depth when one teaches that “why we suffer” is the theme of this tremendous discourse. And yet it goes on and on by those who have not done their homework. Saints are taught that every trial is an overwhelming contest against the devil. That is not the theme of the book.

I expect, indeed I trust and pray, that this short perspective on the book of Job has left us with questions. The Bible has the answers and the finite should always ponder the infinite “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:10). It is even more miraculous to consider the wonder that the infinite also ponders the finite, “For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings” and again, “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts,” and again, “If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?” (Proverbs 5:21, 21:2, 24:12). Remember, the

believer today, in the age of grace, can ponder an even greater relationship with the LORD God than what Job, the Old Testament saint and servant of God, had to work with: ponder this, we can call the LORD God “Our Father.” Job couldn't, we can. May God bless your studies in Job.

Appendix Hebrew Word Studies

21 Verses of Job which use “righteous*”

Job 4:7, 6:29, 8:6, 9:15, 10:15, 15:14, 17:9, 22:3, 22:19, 23:7, 27:6, 29:14, 32:1, 33:26, 34:5, 35:2, 35:7, 35:8, 36:3, 36:7, 40:8

Job 4:7 Remember, I pray thee, who *ever* perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?
Job 6:29 Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness *is* in it.
Job 8:6 If thou *wert* pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
Job 9:15 Whom, though I were righteous, *yet* would I not answer, *but* I would make supplication to my judge.
Job 10:15 If I be wicked, woe unto me; and *if* I be righteous, *yet* will I not lift up my head. *I am* full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction;
Job 15:14 What *is* man, that he should be clean? and *he which is* born of a woman, that he should be righteous?
Job 17:9 The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.
Job 22:3 *Is it* any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it* gain *to him*, that thou makest thy ways perfect?
Job 22:19 The righteous see *it*, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn.
Job 23:7 There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.
Job 27:6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach *me* so long as I live.
Job 29:14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem.
Job 32:1 So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he *was* righteous in his own eyes.
Job 33:26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.
Job 34:5 For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.
Job 35:2 Thinkest thou this to be right, *that* thou saidst, My righteousness *is* more than God's?
Job 35:7 If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?
Job 35:8 Thy wickedness *may hurt* a man as thou *art*; and thy righteousness *may profit* the son of man.
Job 36:3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
Job 36:7 He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings *are they* on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.
Job 40:8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous

Job 4:7, 23:7

03477 יָשָׁר yashar yaw-shawr'

from 03474; adj; {See TWOT on 930 @@ "930a"}

AV-right 53, upright 42, righteous 9, straight 3, convenient 2, Jasher 2, equity 1, just 1, meet 1, meetest 1, upright ones 1, uprightly 1, uprightness 1, well 1; 119

1) straight, upright, correct, right

1a) straight, level

1b) right, pleasing, correct

1c) straightforward, just, upright, fitting, proper

1d) uprightness, righteous, upright

1e) that which is upright (subst)

03477 comes from the root verb

03474 יָשָׁר yashar yaw-shar'

a primitive root; v; {See TWOT on 930}

AV-please 6, straight 5, direct 4, right 3, well 2, fitted 1, good 1, make straight 1, meet 1, upright 1, uprightly 1; 27

1) to be right, be straight, be level, be upright, be just, be lawful, be smooth

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to go straight

1a2) to be pleasing, be agreeable, be right (fig.)

1a3) to be straightforward, be upright

1b) (Piel)

1b1) to make right, make smooth, make straight

1b2) to lead, direct, lead straight along

1b3) to esteem right, approve

1c) (Pual) to be made level, be laid smoothly out

1d) (Hiphil) to make straight, look straight

8 Times 03477 יָשָׁר yashar yaw-shawr', 7 times as “upright”

Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and **upright** <03477>, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Job 1:8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an **upright** <03477> man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Job 2:3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an **upright** <03477> man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

Job 4:7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous <03477> cut off?

Job 8:6 If thou wert pure and **upright** <03477>; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Job 17:8 **Upright** <03477> men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.

Job 23:7 There the righteous <03477> might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.

Job 33:27 He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was **right** <03477>, and it profited me not;

Job 6:29, 8:6, 9:15, 10:15, 15:14, 17:9, 22:3, 22:19, 27:6, 29:14, 32:1, 33:26, 34:5, 35:2, 35:7, 35:8, 36:3, 36:7, 40:8

06663 צָדָק tsadaq tsaw-dak'

a primitive root; v; {See TWOT on 1879}

AV-justify 23, righteous 10, just 3, justice 2, cleansed 1, clear ourselves 1, righteousness 1; 41

1) to be just, be righteous

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to have a just cause, be in the right

1a2) to be justified

1a3) to be just (of God)

- 1a4) to be just, be righteous (in conduct and character)
- 1b) (Niphal) to be put or made right, be justified
- 1c) (Piel) justify, make to appear righteous, make someone righteous
- 1d) (Hiphil)
 - 1d1) to do or bring justice (in administering law)
 - 1d2) to declare righteous, justify
 - 1d3) to justify, vindicate the cause of, save
 - 1d4) to make righteous, turn to righteousness
- 1e) (Hithpael) to justify oneself

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