

A man was thinking and he wondered ...

why Job suffered so much ...

when he was clearly such a good man?

It was NOT because he was self-righteous!

Why Job Suffered:
The Real Story

By

Job S. Friend

Attribution Page

Copyright 2013 by:

Christian Thinkers Publishing
C/O Barnabas Ministries
P.O. Box 3393
Farmington Hills, Michigan 48333
USA

Creative Commons License granted: CC BY-NC-ND

Explanation of Creative Commons License grant:

CC: Please refer to creativecommons.org

By: The user must acknowledge the author and copyright holder as follows:

Author: Job S. Friend

Copyright holder:

Christian Thinkers Publishing
C/O Barnabas Ministries
P.O. Box 3393
Farmington Hills, Michigan 48333
USA

NC: The user may not use this book for commercial purposes. However, the user may place a downloadable copy of this complete book onto a website for free downloading even though the website itself has banner and other ads. In other words there must be no charge for this book itself.

ND: The creative commons license grant only allows the user to use the original unmodified work. The user may not make a derivative from the original work, or any part of it. In other words, fair use quoting is allowed, but the user may not transform this book, or any part of it, into a derivative work.

Table Of Contents

Introduction	1
Job's Personal Characteristics And The Historical Setting	3
Spiritual Warfare – The Attack On Job	13
Job's Three Friends And Elihu	22
Job's Point Of View	37
God's Answer	54
Why Job Suffered	68
Appendix A: Other Interesting Items	86

To Job

Thank you for taking the horrific beating.
And thank you for retaining your mind,
your character, and your faith in God -
while suffering alone amidst the
uncomprehending.

Introduction

When one thinks of extreme examples of human suffering one usually ends up thinking about Job. Why did Job suffer so much? The most common modern explanation, from various Bible scholars and critics, is that Job was self-righteous and so he needed to be corrected. This superficial explanation, which is not true, misses the real reason Job suffered.

It seems that almost everyone has, or has had, or has heard of, a point of view as to why Job suffered. This would include Job's three friends, young Elihu, Job's wife, Job, and, of course, God himself. However, God did not really answer Job directly. God, for a reason, answered Job indirectly and so this left a gap in Job's story. This book will attempt to give the real reason Job suffered and to thereby fill in this gap.

Job's story is so ancient that it almost seems mythological, but it was dreadfully real. The suffering that Job endured is very nearly beyond comprehension. To your author, the main question that needs to be asked and answered is, "Is there some central truth behind Job's suffering that could help us understand God's

greatness and range of vision?" In fact there is and this book will provide an explanation for why Job really suffered and why God did not answer Job directly. This book will attempt to explain what really happened and why. Some of the reasons for my conclusions are Biblical, some are historical, and some are based on logical reasoning and life experiences.

As a housekeeping point, any emphasis, in the scriptural or other quotations, is mine throughout this book. In this book I will quote frequently, for ease of reading sake, from *Today's English Version*, TEV, formerly known as the Good News Bible, as well as the Modern King James Version, MKJV, and the King James Version, KJV.

As an additional important note, I have sometimes chosen to write the pages that follow in a conversational style. Having said that, let's get started. I offer for your serious consideration and hopeful edification what I have learned below.

Job's Personal Characteristics And The Historical Setting

Job is perplexing in that he was such an unusually good man, but then suffered so much. What was the historical setting in which he lived his life and, more importantly, who was he? Taking a look at these questions is the purpose of this section of the book. For the most part, I will let *The Book Of Job* speak for itself and then draw some inferences.

“There was a man named Job, living in the land of Uz, who worshiped God and was faithful to him. He was a good man, careful not to do anything evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, one thousand head of cattle, and five hundred donkeys. He also had a large number of servants and was the richest man in the East.” Job 1:1-3 TEV

Job worshipped God and was faithful to God and was very careful not to do anything evil. He had a large family, many possessions, and was the richest man in the East. He had many servants (employees). To be both righteous and the richest man in the East says that Job obtained his wealth honestly, which is to say

through his ability, his smart and hard work, and also by God's blessing of his efforts. Job must have been very capable and an excellent manager, with very good entrepreneurial instincts. As the richest man in the East, Job would have been the modern day equivalent of a righteous billionaire. Your author says billionaire because a modern "richest man in the East" would be a billionaire, not just a millionaire. Job knew how to get things done, in particular in the agrarian society in which he lived. He managed a vast enterprise and he managed it well.

Strong's says Job's name means hated. Bullinger says it means afflicted. In either case, the name says a lot about what this unique character in human history would have to endure.

Bullinger further identifies Uz as being named for one of the sons of Nahor (Genesis 22:21 [Huz being Uz]) and the land of Uz as being South of Edom and West of Arabia. Your author does not know for certain if this is so, but finds it interesting. What is more relevant than where Uz was, or who it was named after, is the story of Job himself and why he really suffered.

Job was careful to make sure his family was right with God and the Bible mentions that he even got up early and sacrificed for his children after they had a party in case one of them sinned (Job 1:4-5). It goes without saying that Job would sacrifice for himself, if and when he sinned, if he would go so far as to sacrifice for his children in case they sinned.

“You have taught many people and given strength to feeble hands. When someone stumbled, weak and tired, your words encouraged him to stand.” Job 4:3-4 TEV

Job taught many people, obviously not only his family and servants. Further, Job was charitable and helped others so they could then stand on their own two feet. And he also encouraged others. Job tried to help elevate those around him. He taught, encouraged, and helped in the human development of others. Job knew that even though he was righteous and capable and financially well to do, it would be a better world if others were also of good character, educated, and productive. So Job took actions to help make this happen.

Chapter 29 of *The Book Of Job* reveals a lot about who Job was:

“Whenever the city elders met and I took my place among them, young men stepped aside as soon as they saw me, and old men stood up to show me respect. [At that time the elders of the society judged cases of disputes arising among the people.] The leaders of the people would stop talking; even the most important men kept silent. [Job was the elder of elders and that likely meant he was probably like their Supreme Court Chief Justice.] Everyone who saw me or heard of me had good things to say about what I had done. [Job had a very good name in the community.] When the poor cried out, I helped them; I gave help to orphans who had nowhere to turn. People who were in deepest misery praised me, and I helped widows find security. I have always acted justly and fairly. I was eyes for the blind, and feet for the lame. [In addition to helping those who could not help themselves, your author believes that “eyes for the blind” is also metaphorical and that Job was likely the main Philosopher in his society.] I was like a father to the poor and took the side of strangers in trouble. [Job actively engaged in wise charity helping his fellow man in need.] I destroyed the power of cruel men and rescued their victims. [It is

possible that Job provided some type of law enforcement or other sheriff-type functions.]

I always expected to live a long life and to die at home in comfort. I was like a tree whose roots always have water and whose branches are wet with dew. Everyone was always praising me, and my strength never failed me. [Again, Job had a very good name and was very capable and industrious.] **When I gave advice, people were silent and listened carefully to what I said; they had nothing to add when I had finished.** My words sank in like drops of rain; everyone welcomed them just as farmers welcome rain in spring. I smiled on them when they had lost confidence; my cheerful face encouraged them. [Job encouraged those less capable and treated others well, realizing that though other men may be less capable, their hopes and dreams were important to them and that they, too, were made in the image of God.] **I took charge and made the decisions; I led them as a king leads his troops,** and gave them comfort in their despair. [Job clearly was the leader of his society and might very well have been the equivalent of some kind of de facto all-in-one Supreme Court Chief Justice, Governor/Sheriff, largest employer, religious elder, philosopher,

teacher, etc. And he was righteous, respected, charitable, encouraging, and kind.]”
Job 29:7-25 TEV

Job 30:25 mentions Job weeping for people in trouble and feeling sorry for those in need.

Job 31:1 speaks of Job making a covenant with his eyes to avoid committing adultery.

Job 31:5 mentions that Job never tried to deceive others. He told the truth in context. Job did not earn his riches, or his leadership position in society, dishonestly.

Job 31:13-15 reveals that Job recognized the fact that other men are also made in God’s image and that they have hopes and dreams which are important to them:

“When any of my servants complained against me, I would listen and treat them fairly. If I did not, how could I then face God? What could I say when God came to judge me? The same God who created me created my servants also.” Job 31:13-15 TEV

Job 31:16-20 again shows that Job helped the poor, including widows and orphans.

Job 31:21-23 shows that Job did not take advantage of his position as the main elder of his society to subvert the justice system:

"If I have ever cheated an orphan, knowing I could win in court, then may my arms be broken; may they be torn from my shoulders. Because I fear God's punishment, I could never do such a thing." Job 31:21-23 TEV

Some people mistakenly believe Job was punished because he somehow trusted in his riches or wealth. However, Job was in no way this foolish.

"I have never trusted in riches or taken pride in my wealth." Job 31:24-25 TEV

Job never got involved with pagan religions or their practices.

"I have never worshiped the sun in its brightness or the moon in all its beauty. I have not been led astray to honor them by kissing my hand in reverence to them. Such a sin should be punished by death; it denies Almighty God." Job 31:26-28 TEV

Job did not root against other people, even any enemies he might have.

“I have never been glad when my enemies suffered, or pleased when they met with disaster; I never sinned by praying for their death.” Job 31:29-30 TEV

Job trained his workers to welcome strangers and to be hospitable to them (Job 31:31-32). Job did not let traveling strangers sleep on the streets.

Job did not particularly care what other people thought. Your author believes having this trait is a gift, as many others are almost consumed by worrying about what other people think. He obviously did care a lot about what God thought and also about what was, in fact, correct - which is to say the truth.

“I have never feared what people would say;
I have never kept quiet or stayed indoors because I feared their scorn.” Job 31:34 TEV

Job did not steal the land he farmed. He earned his riches honestly.

“If I have stolen the land I farm and taken it from its rightful owners - if I have eaten the food that grew there but let the farmers that grew it starve - then instead of wheat and barley, may weeds and thistles grow.”
Job 31:38-40 TEV

As to Job’s righteous character please notice the direct quotes from God himself below:

“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it [the land that sins], they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.”
Ezekiel 14:14, KJV

“Did you notice my servant Job?” the LORD asked. “There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil.” Job 1:8 TEV

Contrary to modern accepted opinion, however, **Job was NOT self-righteous.** There are, quite simply, numerous quotes from Job himself where Job knew he was a sinner. The below scriptures throw a monkey-wrench into this common, incorrect, and all-too-easy explanation as to why Job suffered:

“Others try to hide their sins, but I have never concealed mine.” Job 31:33 TEV

“Then you [God] will call, and I will answer, and you will be pleased with me, your creature.

Then you will watch every step I take, but you will not keep track of my sins. You will forgive them and put them away; you will wipe out all the wrongs I have done.”
Job 14:15-17 TEV

“For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.” Job 13:26, KJV

“You [God] were watching to see if I would sin, so that you could refuse to forgive me. [Job obviously spoke this in frustration and anger, but there is no hint that Job thinks he never sinned.] As soon as I sin, I’m in trouble with you, but when I do right, I get no credit. I am miserable and covered with shame.”
Job 10:14-15 TEV

“Can’t you [God] ever forgive my sin? Can’t you pardon the wrong I do? Soon I will be in my grave, and I’ll be gone when you look for me.” Job 7:21 TEV

“If I smile and try to forget my pain, all my suffering comes back to haunt me; I know that God does hold me guilty. Since I am held guilty, why should I bother? No soap can wash away my sins.” Job 9:27-30 TEV

Your author could go on and on about Job’s excellent character, ability, and deeds, but it is time to get to the attack on Job and to the rest of his amazing story.

Spiritual Warfare–The Attack On Job

Job, the richest man in the East, and the most righteous man on earth at the time, was busy building a life. And it was quite a life. He believed God was with him and that God’s blessing and protection would continue. Things were good. Why would things not stay as they were and perhaps even get better?

“I always expected to live a long life and to die at home in comfort.” Job 29:18 TEV

“When the day came for the heavenly beings to appear before the LORD, Satan was there among them. The LORD asked him, “What have you been doing?” Satan answered, “I have been

walking here and there, roaming around the earth.” “Did you notice my servant Job?” the LORD asked. “There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil.” Satan replied, “Would Job worship you if he got nothing out of it? You have always protected him and his family and everything he owns. You bless everything he does, and you have given him enough cattle to fill the whole country. But now suppose you take away everything he has—he will curse you to your face!” “All right,” the LORD said to Satan, “everything he has is in your power, but you must not hurt Job himself.” So Satan left.” Job 1:6-12 TEV

Big things were happening of which Job knew nothing. And, unfortunately, those big things involved a spiritually motivated physical attack on Job and his family and his property. Job’s life was about to never be the same again. Bear in mind that Job was very careful to worship God completely and to be righteous and to be a good and leading man in his community. He was the richest man in the East, was the largest employer, no doubt gave the most to charity in order to help to those in need, etc.

The rest of the first chapter of *The Book Of Job* reveals that Satan then caused all of Job's children and virtually all of his servants to be killed. And Job lost virtually all of his great and vast physical possessions. Only a few servants, who were witnesses to the atrocities, were left alive in order to report to Job his utter devastation. Job's amazing response was immortalized below:

"Then Job got up and tore his clothes in grief. He shaved his head and threw himself face downward on the ground. He said, "I was born with nothing, and I will die with nothing. **The LORD gave, and now he has taken away. May his name be praised!**" In spite of everything that had happened, Job did not sin by blaming God." Job 1:20-22 TEV

The spiritually motivated physical attack on Job then gets worse as Job's health is now attacked. This is detailed in the second chapter of *The Book Of Job*.

"Did you notice my servant Job?" the LORD asked. "There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil. **You persuaded me to let you attack him for no reason at all,** but

Job is still as faithful as ever.” Satan replied, “A person will give up everything in order to stay alive. But now suppose you hurt his body-he will curse you to your face!” So the LORD said to Satan, “All right, he is in your power, but you are not to kill him.”

Then Satan left the LORD’s presence and made sores break out all over Job’s body. Job went and sat by the garbage dump and took a piece of broken pottery to scrape his sores. His wife said to him, “You are still as faithful as ever, aren’t you? Why don’t you curse God and die?” Job answered, “You are talking nonsense! When God sends us something good, we welcome it. How can we complain when he sends us trouble?” Even in all this suffering Job said nothing against God.” Job 2:3-10 TEV

The above passage of scripture helps us understand a couple of important things. One, Job was an extraordinary human being. To go from the top to the very bottom - losing all of your children, all of your possessions, all of your employees (servants), and also your health and to still accept it all, without complaining against God, is almost beyond belief – but he did it. Second, God already knew Job and his character and his ability. This is in evidence by God’s

striking statement that, "**You [Satan] persuaded me [God] to let you attack him [Job] for no reason at all.**"

The above scripture clearly speaks to and refutes those who would say that God chose to allow Job to suffer because he was self-righteous, or because Job needing some suffering to round out his character. The above scripture is a point-blank refutation of both of these incorrect ideas. God already knew Job's character. The permitted attack on Job had nothing to do with Job being self-righteous and nothing to do with Job needing correction or some type of additional suffering in order to be complete. And God already knew this. And yet he permitted Job to go from being healthy to being barely alive and suffering greatly. God permitted Job to go from being the richest man in the East, the largest employer, the elder of elders, the likely equivalent of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the likely equivalent to Governor of the land, to being utterly and completely ruined. Further, it is bad enough for parents to have to bury one child. Job and his wife lost all of their children – at one time. The effect this would have on a wife, who also, no doubt, enjoyed great status, would also have been catastrophic. Job's wife also lost

everything and now she had to experience her husband becoming gravely ill and suffering, too. Her reaction did not make matters better when she advised him to just curse God and die (Job 2:9). To her, life now seemed over. Job's wife was going to be an additional trial for Job in that she was no doubt devastated and ready to give up. Job, the greatest man on earth, was ruined and alone.

One can only imagine if there had been paparazzi at the time. What a field day they would have had. Pictures of Job huddled at the local garbage dump, looking like death warmed over, scraping his sores with a broken piece of pottery would have been on the front pages of all of the tabloids and major newspapers of the world. Reporters from all over the world would have flown in to interview him and he would have been on the television nightly news for weeks. Job's downfall would have been one of the all-time human spectacles for all to see. People would have been riveted in their attention to any news they could get about Job. People would have been talking about Job from one end of the planet to the other. Even so, despite all this attention, Job would have been alone. Job was the human soccer ball, being

kicked all over the field, in a spiritual battle being waged by Satan against God.

From the Bible we know that Job's trial lasted, at the minimum, for months (Job 7:3 quoted below). Back then there were no paparazzi for immediate news distribution. Ergo, the news of Job's trial and suffering would have reached his three friends via men traveling by camel, or by equestrian, or by foot. For the news to travel to his three friends took some time. Then Job's three friends had to decide to travel to see him. They had to meet up and then there was the travel time to get to Job. All of this probably would have taken weeks, at a minimum. But beyond even these considerations there was a time gap between when Job's first trial started - with the death of his children and employees and the loss of his property and the later second attack on Job's health itself. There is an unspecified time gap between Job 1:6-22 (the first attack) and Job 2 (the second attack). This time gap certainly would not seem to be only days, or weeks. At any rate, we know from the Bible itself that the trial lasted for at least some unspecified number of months.

“When the day came for the heavenly beings to appear before the LORD again, Satan was there among them.” Job 2:1 TEV

“Month after month I have nothing to live for; night after night brings me grief.”
Job 7:3 TEV

“When I lie down to sleep, the hours drag; I toss all night and long for dawn. My body is full of worms; it is covered with scabs; pus runs out of my sores. My days pass by without hope, pass faster than a weaver’s shuttle.”
Job 7:4-6 TEV

The blunt truth is that Job suffered greatly for a very long time. He could not even get a good’s night sleep. He tossed and turned and had nightmares. And, in your author’s opinion, he did not understand why to the day he died – see Job 7:16 quoted below. Job not knowing why he was undergoing such a horrific trial might have been almost as bad as the actual trial itself.

“I lie down and try to rest; I look for relief from my pain. But you-you terrify me with dreams; you send me visions and nightmares

until I would rather be strangled than live in this miserable body. I give up; I am tired of living. Leave me alone. My life makes no sense."
Job 7:13-16 TEV

Job's brothers, his wife, his friends, and his servants all distanced themselves from Job.

"God has made my own family [an earlier version of *Today's English Version* has 'brothers' instead of 'family'] forsake me; I am a stranger to those who knew me; my relatives and friends are gone. Those who were guests in my house have forgotten me; my servant women treat me like a stranger and a foreigner. When I call a servant, he doesn't answer— even when I beg him to help me. **My wife can't stand the smell of my breath**, and my own brothers won't come near me. Children despise me and laugh when they see me. My closest friends look at me with disgust; those I loved most have turned against me. My skin hangs loose on my bones; I have barely escaped with my life." Job 19:13-20 TEV

The above passage reveals how far Job had fallen. Job was shunned by his own family and was now a laughingstock. The greatest, most righteous, and richest man in the East was

alone, suffering greatly, and barely alive. His own wife wished she had never married him.

And now Job was about to have to deal with something perhaps even worse – the apologists for God.

Job's Three Friends And Elihu

The introduction to *Today's English Version for The Book Of Job* mentions the standard ancient Middle Eastern version of why some men are blessed and others cursed:

"The friends of Job explain his suffering in traditional religious terms. Since God, so they assume, always rewards good and punishes evil, the sufferings of Job can only mean that he has sinned." Introduction To *The Book Of Job* TEV

"Eliphaz: Job, will you be annoyed if I speak? I can't keep quiet any longer. You have taught many people and given strength to feeble hands. When someone stumbled, weak and tired, your words encouraged him to stand. Now it's your turn to be in trouble, and you are too stunned to face it. You worshiped God, and your life was blameless; and so you should have confidence and hope.

Think back now. Name a single case where someone righteous met with disaster. I have seen people plow fields of evil and plant wickedness like seed; now they harvest wickedness and evil. Like a storm, God destroys them in his anger." Job 4:1-9 TEV

There are a number of observations that can be made regarding the above. It is true that Job was stunned. Who wouldn't be? It is further true that worshipping God, living a righteous life, and being confident and optimistic are all good things. But then Eliphaz misses an obvious point when he asks for a single case where a righteous man met with disaster. Abel met with disaster. Your author concedes that he has the benefit of the entire Bible, which Eliphaz did not have, but many righteous men are tested via disastrous things happening in their lives, e.g., the death of a loved one, or illness, or the effects of war, etc. That is how it is. Eliphaz further lumps all who are punished into one bucket – a bucket where God, of a certainty, inflicts punishment upon them. A little bit of reflection by Eliphaz would have shown him that sometimes evil men get away with their evil deeds and live a nice physical life and then they die. Job points this out to him,

e.g., in Chapter 21, which will be quoted, later, in another section of this book.

The reader can read Eliphaz's complete words for themselves. Eliphaz's point of view is further illustrated by the below scriptures:

"Evil does not grow in the soil, nor does trouble grow out of the ground. No indeed! We bring trouble on ourselves, as surely as sparks fly up from a fire." Job 5:6-7 TEV

"He [God] upsets the plans of cunning people, and traps the wise in their own schemes, so that nothing they do succeeds." Job 5:12-13 TEV

"Happy is the person whom God corrects! Do not resent it when he rebukes you." Job 5:17 TEV

"Job, we have learned this by long study. **It is true, so now accept it.**" Job 5:27 TEV

"Your wickedness is evident by what you say; you are trying to hide behind clever words." Job 15:5 TEV

“God offers you comfort; why still reject it?
We have spoken for him with calm, even
words.” Job 15:11 TEV

Eliphaz actually thought, quite sincerely, that he was speaking for God when criticizing Job and reciting to Job the standard ancient religious paradigm. We shall later see that Eliphaz was not only wrong about Job, but he was also wrong in his contention that he was speaking for God. He was not. We can also see, from the below passage of scripture, that Eliphaz was wrong on many other things and was likely envious of Job.

“Is there anyone, even the wisest, who could ever be of use to God? [Yes, many men are of use to God, e.g., Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc.] Does your doing right benefit God, or does your being good help him at all? [Yes, the same way in which it is easier on a father if his children cooperate with him when the father is trying to get something done.] It is not because you stand in awe of God that he reprimands you and brings you to trial.

No, it’s because you have sinned so much; it’s because of all the evil you do. To make a brother repay you the money he owed, you took

away his clothes and left him nothing to wear. You refused water to those who were tired, and refused to feed those who were hungry. [These charges are false as other places in Job point out.] You used your power and your position to take over the whole land." Job 22:2-8 TEV

The last sentence above appears to be motivated by pure envy. Eliphaz has gone beyond being an apologist for God and he is now functioning as Job's critic and judge. He was operating from the ancient religious paradigm playbook and believed that Job was a great sinner who was being punished only as Job actually deserved.

As bad as dealing with Eliphaz might have been, dealing with Bildad might have been even worse. Once again, the reader is encouraged to read Bildad's complete comments.

"Your children must have sinned against God, and so he punished them as they deserved. [To say this to a man who had just lost all of his children at one time is so insensitive and cruel as to be almost beyond belief. Even if it were true, which we do not know one way or the other, it would be cruel to say it.] But turn now and plead with Almighty

God; if you are so honest and pure, then God will come and help you and restore your household as your reward. All the wealth you lost will be nothing compared with what God will give you then.

Look for a moment at ancient wisdom; consider the truths our ancestors learned. Our life is short, we know nothing at all; we pass like shadows across the earth. But let the ancient wise people teach you; listen to what they had to say: "Reeds can't grow where there is no water; they are never found outside a swamp. If the water dries up, they are the first to wither, while still too small to be cut and used. Godless people are like those reeds; their hope is gone, once God is forgotten.""
Job 8:4-13 TEV

Bildad implies that Job is a godless person who forgot God and now Job is being afflicted for forgetting God. Bildad also calls out the ancient religious paradigm of obey and worship God and you are blessed, but sin and disregard God and you will be cursed.

"Evil people sprout like weeds in the sun, like weeds that spread all through the garden. Their roots wrap around the stones and hold fast to

every rock. But then pull them up— no one will ever know they were there. Yes, that's all the joy evil people have; others now come and take their places. [Bildad might just as well have said, "Job you were great once, but because you were evil you have come to nothing and no matter. Very soon someone else will come along and take your place." Bildad's harsh, cruel, heartless criticisms are stunning.] But God will never abandon the faithful or ever give help to evil people. [Again, this is the ancient religious paradigm.] He will let you laugh and shout again, but he will bring disgrace on those who hate you, and the homes of the wicked will vanish." [Job just lost a home with all his children in it. To say this to a man that just had this happen to him is incredible.]
Job 8:16-22 TEV

"Job, can't people like you ever be quiet? If you stopped to listen, we could talk to you. What makes you think we are as stupid as cattle?" [Again, the above smacks of envy of Job's intelligence and ability – this time from Bildad.] Job 18:2-3 TEV

Bildad further shows a harsh, unsympathetic, callous cruelty with the below comments:

“They [the wicked] used to be rich, but now they go hungry; disaster stands and waits at their side. A deadly disease spreads over their bodies and causes their arms and legs to rot. [This is what had happened to Job and Job was still physically suffering while he had to listen to Bildad.] They are torn from the tents where they lived secure, and are dragged off to face King Death. Now anyone may live in their tents - after sulfur is sprinkled to disinfect them! [It is almost like Bildad was saying, “After you die we will have to disinfect anything you touched, Job.”] Their roots and branches are withered and dry. [Again, Job just lost all of his children.] Their fame is ended at home and abroad; no one remembers them any more. [Bildad might just as well said, “Job, you are nothing now and will soon be completely forgotten.”] They will be driven out of the land of the living, driven from light into darkness. They have no descendants, no survivors. From east to west, all who hear of their fate shudder and tremble with fear. That is the fate of evil people, the fate of those who care nothing for God.” Job 18:12-21 TEV

Zophar is not much different. Again, you can read his complete comments for yourself, but they fall into the ancient religious paradigm

where God blesses the righteous and curses sinners and Job was obviously a sinner to have this much evil happen to him.

“ ... God is punishing you less than you deserve.” Job 11:6 TEV

“Put your heart right, Job. Reach out to God. Put away evil and wrong from your home. Then face the world again, firm and courageous. Then all your troubles will fade from your memory, like floods that are past and remembered no more. Your life will be brighter than sunshine at noon, and life’s darkest hours will shine like the dawn. You will live secure and full of hope; God will protect you and give you rest. You won’t be afraid of your enemies; many people will ask you for help. But the wicked will look around in despair and find that there is no way to escape. Their one hope is that death will come.” Job 11:13-20 TEV

Part of Zophar’s recital, above, included the point that if Job would just repent and turn to God, things would be fine again.

“Surely you know that from ancient times, when we humans were first placed on earth, no wicked people have been happy for long. They

may grow great, towering to the sky, so great that their heads reach the clouds, but they will be blown away like dust. Those who used to know them will wonder where they have gone. They will vanish like a dream, like a vision at night, and never be seen again. The wicked will disappear from the place where they used to live; and their children will make good what they stole from the poor." Job 20:4-10 TEV

Zophar implies that Job's children were destroyed because they stole from the poor. Zophar further implies, see below, that Job, a great man, has been reduced to nothing because he was wicked.

"At the height of their [the wicked] success all the weight of misery will crush them. Let them eat all they want! God will punish them in fury and anger. When they try to escape from an iron sword, a bronze bow will shoot them down. Arrows stick through their bodies; the shiny points drip with their blood, and terror grips their hearts. Everything they have saved is destroyed; a fire not lit by human hands burns them and all their family. **Heaven reveals their sin, and the earth gives testimony against them.** All their wealth will be destroyed in the flood of God's anger. This is

the fate of wicked people, the fate that God assigns to them.” Job 20:22-29 TEV

“This is how Almighty God punishes wicked, violent people. The wicked build houses like a spider’s web or like the hut of a slave guarding the fields. One last time they will lie down rich, and when they wake up, they will find their wealth gone. Terror will strike like a sudden flood; a wind in the night will blow them away; the east wind will sweep them from their homes; it will blow down on them without pity while they try their best to escape.”
Job 27:13, 18-22 TEV

Elihu hears the discussion between Job and his three friends, waits until the discussion is basically at an impasse, and then Elihu jumps into the conversation himself. Elihu is slightly different from the three friends, in his point of view, but largely the same. Again, you can read all of Elihu’s words for yourself.

“Because Job was convinced of his own innocence, the three men gave up trying to answer him. But a bystander named Elihu could not control his anger any longer, because Job was justifying himself and blaming God. ... He was also angry with Job’s three friends. They

could not find any way to answer Job, and this made it appear that God was in the wrong. ...

I listened patiently while you were speaking and waited while you searched for wise phrases. I paid close attention and heard you fail; you have not disproved what Job has said. How can you claim you have discovered wisdom? God must answer Job, for you have failed.”
Job 32:1-3, 11-13 TEV

“Although God speaks again and again, no one pays attention to what he says. [Elihu has a point here.] At night when people are asleep, God speaks in dreams and visions. He makes them listen to what he says, and they are frightened at his warnings. God speaks to make them stop their sinning and to save them from becoming proud. He will not let them be destroyed; he saves them from death itself.

God corrects us by sending sickness and filling our bodies with pain.” Job 33:14-19 TEV

“Their bodies [the sinners who repent and stop sinning] will grow young and strong again; when they pray, God will answer; they will worship God with joy; God will set things right for them again. Each one will say in public, “I

have sinned. I have not done right, but God spared me. He kept me from going to the world of the dead, and I am still alive.”

Job 33:25-28 TEV

“Listen to me, you men who understand! Will Almighty God do what is wrong? **He rewards people for what they do and treats them as they deserve.** [Elihu is advocating the ancient religious paradigm here.]”

Job 34:10-11 TEV

“He punishes sinners where all can see it, because they have stopped following him and ignored all his commands.” Job 34:26-27 TEV

“Job, have you confessed your sins to God and promised not to sin again? Have you asked God to show you your faults, and have you agreed to stop doing evil? **Since you object to what God does, can you expect him to do what you want?** The decision is yours, not mine; tell us now what you think. Any sensible person will surely agree; and the wise who hear me will say that Job is speaking from ignorance and that nothing he says makes sense. Think through everything that Job says; you will see that he talks like an evil man. **To his sins he**

adds rebellion; in front of us all he mocks God.” Job 34:31-37 TEV

Elihu also incorrectly thought he was speaking for God on this matter.

“Be patient and listen a little longer to what I am saying on God’s behalf.” Job 36:1-2 TEV

Elihu defaults back to the ancient religious paradigm below:

“He does not let sinners live on, and he always treats the poor with justice. He protects those who are righteous; he allows them to rule like kings and lets them be honored forever. But if people are bound in chains, suffering for what they have done, God shows them their sins and their pride. He makes them listen to his warning to turn away from evil. If they obey God and serve him, they live out their lives in peace and prosperity.” Job 36:6-11 TEV

“But God teaches people through suffering and uses distress to open their eyes. God brought you out of trouble, and let you enjoy security; your table was piled high with food. **But now you are being punished as you deserve.** [Again, Job experiences harsh and

critical judgment.] Be careful not to let bribes deceive you, or riches lead you astray. [This implies that Job took bribes and trusted in his riches.] It will do you no good to cry out for help; all your strength can't help you now. Don't wish for night to come, the time when nations will perish. Be careful not to turn to evil; your suffering was sent to keep you from it." Job 36:15-21 TEV

Elihu was correct when he made the point that not very many people listen to what God says. He was also correct in that sometimes God does send, or allow, sickness and trials to come upon a man in order to humble and to correct him. What Elihu did not know, and unfortunately incorrectly assumed, was that this was the reason Job suffered. Elihu was wrong here. He, like Job's three friends, was also wrong in being so very harsh and critical in his judgment of Job. The reason that Job suffered so much was not because God wanted to humble and correct him so Job would stop sinning and stop being proud. God admitted to Satan in Job 2:3 that, "You [Satan] persuaded me to let you attack him [Job] for no reason at all." Unfortunately, Elihu also devolved back to the ancient religious paradigm, which Job's three friends had advocated. To the extent

Elihu also accepts this ancient religious paradigm he, too, was wrong.

Job's three friends and Elihu were ultimately wrong about why Job suffered. They were also wrong about speaking for God. And they certainly were not sympathetic, or encouraging to Job. The discussions Job had with all of them only made Job's trials worse. Job, in the middle of people talking to him and about him, was all alone amidst the uncomprehending.

Job's Point Of View

Job was not the richest man in the East for no reason (Job 1:3). He had an unusually high level of integrity. His personal character was the best on earth (Job 1:1,8). He was intelligent, as evidenced by the quote, earlier in this book, whereby after Job finished speaking others had nothing to add (Job 29:21-22). Job was not just intelligent he was also hard working. You cannot manage an operation the size of Job's without working both smart and hard. He probably had thousands of employees (Job 1:3). His flocks and herds would have taken up thousands of acres of land (Job 1:3, 22:8). Any time a large area of geography is involved there are logistics challenges that have

to be solved. Job solved them. Job was no doubt a successful trader and was likely known throughout the world, or at the minimum, at least throughout his region. It is very clear to your author that Job was hard-wired to care. He cared about God. He cared about his family. He cared about his workers (Job 31:13-15). He cared about the community. He cared about widows and orphans and poor people (Job 31:16-20). He did not have to be one of the judges or elders but he volunteered the time and performed the task (Job 29:7-10, 25). Job was one of the most remarkable men to ever walk the earth. And now, through what appears to be no fault of his own, he was reduced to no children, minimal possessions, intense health problems with great suffering, a wife who likely wished she never married him (your author's opinion), and the abandonment of family and friends. He also lost his honor, reputation, and standing in the community. And Job's suffering, at the minimum, lasted for months (Job 7:3). A normal man would have either dropped dead from the stress of it all, or cracked and gone insane. Job was not a normal man. And Job's point of view needs to be heard more clearly than it has been heard before, which is the purpose of this section of the book.

The introduction to *The Book Of Job* in *Today's English Version* of the Bible explains:

"The friends of Job explain his suffering in traditional religious terms. Since God, so they assume, always rewards good and punishes evil, the sufferings of Job can only mean that he has sinned. But for Job this is too simple; he does not deserve such cruel punishment, because he has been an unusually good and righteous man. He cannot understand how God can let so much evil happen to one like himself, and he boldly challenges God. Job does not lose his faith, but he longs to be justified before God and to regain his honor as a good man."

Your author thinks the above quoted paragraph does a pretty good job of explaining the traditional viewpoint regarding Job's suffering – which, as we shall see later, is false.

Job was hurting and alone. To put it in the modern vernacular, Job had become radioactive. No one wanted anything to do with him. It appears that Job's main social interaction, for a time, was for his three friends and Elihu to be incredibly critical of Job and to subject him to their negative judgment. And all of the negative criticism and judgment, which was heaped upon

Job, was done in a tone of arrogant condescending self-assuredness. At the time Job needed a real friend, the most, he did not have one.

"God has made my own family forsake me; I am a stranger to those who knew me; my relatives and friends are gone. Those who were guests in my house have forgotten me; my servant women treat me like a stranger and a foreigner. When I call a servant, he doesn't answer - even when I beg him to help me. My wife can't stand the smell of my breath, and my own brothers won't come near me. Children despise me and laugh when they see me. My closest friends look at me with disgust; those I loved most have turned against me. My skin hangs loose on my bones; I have barely escaped with my life." Job 19:13-20 TEV

Job made many good points in sharing his feelings about what he was going through. And it is difficult to list all of them, as *The Book Of Job* is 42 chapters, filled with information. Your author thinks one of Job's most central points would be along the lines of the following: I am the same guy, before and after this trial, so how could it be possible that I was blessed before and now am cursed? I have lived my life the

same consistent way for years, so I have not changed. Something else changed, but it wasn't me. There must be something else going on here that is the reason for my suffering because I have been largely consistent in how I have lived my entire life.

"Though I am innocent, all I can do is beg for mercy from God my judge. ... I am innocent and faithful, but my words sound guilty, and everything I say seems to condemn me. I am innocent, but I no longer care. I am sick of living. Nothing matters; innocent or guilty, God will destroy us. ...

I am not afraid. I am going to talk because I know my own heart." Job 9:15, 20-21, 35 TEV

"You [the three friends] think you are better than I am, and **regard my troubles as proof of my guilt.** Can't you see it is God who has done this? ... " Job 19:5-6 TEV

Job believes he has been the same guy, before and after the trial, and that it was God who has changed for some reason.

"You [God] changed to be cruel to me;

with Your mighty hand You assault me.”
Job 30:21, MKJV

When Job says I have done nothing wrong and maintain my integrity (“I am innocent.”) he is NOT saying he has never sinned and does not need repentance. That is a mischaracterization of Job’s meaning, which has been grabbed onto and then this mischaracterization has been used as a faulty explanation for Job’s trials. In other words, that Job was self-righteous so God had to break Job down and show Job the error of his ways. This mischaracterization is both incredulous and also ridiculous. An honest reading of Job, where he points out his sins, or alludes to his sins, make this common explanation of Job’s sufferings an unfair farce. As quoted earlier in this book, there are many places where Job acknowledges he is a sinner needing forgiveness: Job 7:21, 9:27-30, 10:14-15, 13:26, 14:15-17, and 31:33 quoted again below:

“Others try to hide their sins, but I have never concealed mine.” Job 31:33 TEV

Job was concerned enough about his own sins that he evidently thought that perhaps God

had not forgiven him and this was then a possible reason for his calamity.

“Can’t you ever forgive my sin? Can’t you pardon the wrong I do? Soon I will be in my grave, and I’ll be gone when you look for me.”
Job 7:21 TEV

“I know that God does hold me guilty. Since I am held guilty, why should I bother? No soap can wash away my sins.”
Job 9:28-30 TEV

Job looked through all of the physical circumstances and also looked through any evil spirit influences and held God directly responsible.

“Almighty God has shot me with arrows, and their poison spreads through my body. God has lined up his terrors against me.” Job 6:4 TEV

Job knew if God did not answer his prayers and did not forgive his sins that he was as good as dead. And if that were the case then Job would just accept death. Evidently, God went silent on Job as part of the test.

“Why won’t God give me what I ask? Why won’t he answer my prayer? If only he would go ahead and kill me! If I knew he would, I would leap for joy, no matter how great my pain. I know that God is holy; I have never opposed what he commands. What strength do I have to keep on living? Why go on living when I have no hope?” Job 6:8-11 TEV

“I call to you, O God, but you never answer; and when I pray, you pay no attention.”
Job 30:20 TEV

Job was an honest man (Job 23:7) and told his three friends that he would not lie to them, nor had he done anything worthy of what he was going through. But Job’s three friends thought that he was either lying or had lost it.

“Look me in the face. I won’t lie. You have gone far enough. Stop being unjust. Don’t condemn me. I’m in the right [I am the same guy before and after this trial started]. But you think I am lying - you think I can’t tell right from wrong.” Job 6:28-30 TEV

The brutality of the savage trial, the alienation from his family and friends, the harsh criticism and negative judgment from Eliphaz,

Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu, and God's silence were enough already for Job. Job could not even get a good night's sleep. Job had had it and lashed out - even calling out God as his jailer.

"No! I can't be quiet! I am angry and bitter. I have to speak. Why do you keep me under guard? Do you think I am a sea monster? [Job was basically accusing God of treating Job like he was Satan and therefore needing to be kept under guard.] I lie down and try to rest; I look for relief from my pain [Job was in pain]. But you [God] - you terrify me with dreams; you send me visions and nightmares until I would rather be strangled than live in this miserable body. I give up; I am tired of living. Leave me alone. My life makes no sense. ...

Are you harmed by my sin, you jailer? Why use me for your target practice? Am I so great a burden to you?" Job 7:11-16, 20 TEV

When Job said, "My life makes no sense," Job admitted he did not understand the reason for his trial. All Job knew was that the explanation offered by his three friends was false, as was Elihu's. Job had listened to his three friends and knew they were wrong, even

though they appeared to be apologists for God. Job also felt God was being cruel and unreasonable. Job's quarrel, as it were, was ultimately with God.

"Everything you [the three friends] say, I have heard before. I understand it all; I know as much as you do. I'm not your inferior [Job was tired of being condescended to by men who were his intellectual inferior and who, though they thought they were speaking for God, were actually uncomprehending]. But my dispute is with God, not you; I want to argue my case with him. You cover up your ignorance with lies; you are like doctors who can't heal anyone [In this case they were philosophers who could not correctly reason or dispense wisdom]. Say nothing, and someone may think you are wise! [Job is frustrated with their condescension and pushes them back.] Listen while I state my case. Why are you lying? Do you think your lies will benefit God? [Job knows their argument, of the ancient religious paradigm, is wrong and when they speak it in God's name they actually hurt God in the ears of any thinking men listening to their discussion.] Are you trying to defend him? Are you going to argue his case in court?" Job 13:1-8 TEV

“Should I try force? Try force on God?
Should I take him to court? Could anyone make
him go? ...

If God were human, I could answer him; we
could go to court to decide our quarrel. But
there is no one to step between us - no one to
judge both God and me. Stop punishing me,
God! Keep your terrors away!”
Job 9:19, 32-34 TEV

Job is frustrated and would like to take God
to court and get a decision binding on both of
them. However, that is not an option here.
Further, Job is not young any more and knows
what it takes to build up a life from nothing. He
had done this once before. He is concerned that
even if he and God reconcile that Job’s life, his
time, is running out. It feels very late in the
game to Job and this worries him.

“Can’t you see it is God who has done this?
He has set a trap to catch me. I protest his
violence, but no one is listening; no one hears
my cry for justice.

God has blocked the way, and I can’t get
through; he has hidden my path in darkness.
He has taken away all my wealth and destroyed

my reputation. He batters me from every side. He uproots my hope and leaves me to wither and die." Job 19:6-10 TEV

"Isn't my life almost over? Leave me alone! Let me enjoy the time I have left." Job 10:20 TEV

... "I sit here in the dust defeated. ...

My years are passing now, and I walk the road of no return." Job 16:15, 22 TEV

"The end of my life is near. I can hardly breathe; there is nothing left for me but the grave." Job 17:1 TEV

In one of the most touching and heart-breaking scriptures in the Bible, note Job's humility and despair in this lament:

"My days have passed; my plans have failed; my hope is gone." Job 17:11 TEV

Even in all this Job still has some spirit left, along with a brilliant mind, and he was not afraid to die. Note how he reminds God of the big picture, almost telling God that Job's death would be God's loss.

“Can’t you ever forgive my sin? Can’t you pardon the wrong I do? Soon I will be in my grave, and I’ll be gone when you look for me.”
Job 7:21 TEV

“I am ready to risk my life. I’ve lost all hope, so what if God kills me? I am going to state my case to him. It may even be that my boldness will save me, since no wicked person would dare to face God. ... I am ready to state my case, because I know I am in the right. Are you coming to accuse me, God? If you do, I am ready to be silent and die.” Job 13:14-16, 18-19 TEV

Job got so down about the viciousness of his trial that he held God to be cruel. Job was also discouraged about God going silent on him and not answering his prayers.

“Is it right for you to be so cruel? To despise what you yourself have made? And then to smile on the schemes of wicked people?”
Job 10:3 TEV

“Though I am innocent, all I can do is beg for mercy from God my judge. Yet even then, if he

lets me speak, I can't believe he would listen to me." Job 9:15-16

Job laments: " ... there was a time when God answered my prayers." Job 12:4 TEV

To be blunt, Job wanted to know why God was treating him like an enemy, or like trash, especially because Job knew he had already been reduced to virtually nothing.

"Why do you avoid me? Why do you treat me like an enemy? Are you trying to frighten me? I'm nothing but a leaf; you are attacking a piece of dry straw." Job 13:24-25 TEV

"But nothing I say helps, and being silent does not calm my pain. [Whether Job prays to God, or talks to men, or stays silent, nothing helps. He is in pain.] You have worn me out, God; you have let my family be killed. You have seized me; you are my enemy. **I am skin and bones, and people take that as proof of my guilt.**" Job 16:6-8 TEV

"Behold, I cry out, Violence! And I am not answered. I cry aloud, but there is no justice." Job 19:7, MKJV

Again, the people around Job took his trial as proof of his guilt. And Job, looking through it all, held God responsible.

“God has handed me over to evil people. I was living in peace, but God took me by the throat and battered me and crushed me. God uses me for target practice and shoots arrows at me from every side - arrows that pierce and wound me; and even then he shows no pity. He wounds me again and again; he attacks like a soldier gone mad with hate.” Job 16:11-14 TEV

Job felt that those around him had closed their minds to reason. Your author believes Job was a great thinker and philosopher and there is almost nothing worse to a great philosopher than to have no one to talk to, who understands. Job was intellectually alone and this added to his suffering.

“Will no one listen to what I am saying?”
Job 31:35 TEV

“I am being honest, God. Accept my word. There is no one else to support what I say. You have closed their minds to reason; don't let them triumph over me now.” Job 17:3-4 TEV

“Those who claim to be respectable are more and more convinced they are right. But if all of them came and stood before me, I would not find even one of them wise.” Job 17:9-10 TEV

In an ironic answer to one of Job’s laments the words of Job were recorded in a book – for our benefit. And Job was correct in that there was someone in heaven who would at last come to his defense.

“How I wish that someone would remember my words and record them in a book! Or with a chisel carve my words in stone and write them so that they would last forever. But I know there is someone in heaven who will come at last to my defense.” Job 19:23-25 TEV

Job was stunned, knew his quarrel was with God, and knew the ancient religious paradigm was nonsense. All this is found in Job 21.

“My quarrel is not with mortals; I have good reason to be impatient. Look at me. Isn’t that enough to make you stare in shocked silence? **When I think of what has happened to me, I am stunned,** and I tremble and shake.

Why does God let evil people live, let them grow old and prosper? They have children and grandchildren, and live to watch them all grow up. God does not bring disaster on their homes; they never have to live in terror. Yes, all their cattle breed and give birth without trouble. Their children run and play like lambs and dance to the music of harps and flutes. They live out their lives in peace and quietly die without suffering. The wicked tell God to leave them alone; they don't want to know his will for their lives. They think there is no need to serve God nor any advantage in praying to him. They claim they succeed by their own strength, but their way of thinking I can't accept.

Was a wicked person's light ever put out? Did one of them ever meet with disaster? Did God ever punish the wicked in anger and blow them away like straw in the wind, or like dust carried away in a storm?" Job 21:4-18 TEV

There is no way an honest man can explain and sustain the ancient religious paradigm that God, without exception and automatically, and in real-time, blesses the righteous and curses the wicked. The facts of our human experience just do not bear this out. And Job knew it. He also knew he was the same guy before and after

his trial - so his experience alone would invalidate the ancient paradigm.

Quite naturally Job longed for the good old days and for his life to make sense to him again.

“If only my life could once again be as it was when God watched over me. God was always with me then and gave me light as I walked through the darkness. Those were the days when I was prosperous, and the friendship of God protected my home. Almighty God was with me then, and I was surrounded by all my children. My cows and goats gave plenty of milk, and my olive trees grew in the rockiest soil.” Job 29:2-6 TEV

Job just wanted it all to be over, but now he had to meet God himself.

God's Answer

God responded to Job out of a storm - but not in the way Job had hoped for. Job wanted an answer as to why God had allowed him to experience so much suffering. Instead, he got a divine shout-down. **God did not answer Job.** Rather, God asserted his authority and his wisdom and then asked Job a lot of questions

that Job could not answer. No man could. You can read God's complete words for yourselves. Below are some of the questions that God asked Job.

"Then out of the storm the LORD spoke to Job. Who are you to question my wisdom with your ignorant, empty words? Now stand up straight and answer the questions I ask you.

Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much, tell me about it. Who decided how large it would be? Who stretched the measuring line over it? Do you know all the answers? What holds up the pillars that support the earth? Who laid the cornerstone of the world? In the dawn of that day the stars [angels] sang together, and the heavenly beings shouted for joy. Who closed the gates to hold back the sea when it burst from the womb of the earth? It was I who covered the sea with clouds and wrapped it in darkness. I marked a boundary for the sea and kept it behind bolted gates. I told it, "So far and no farther! Here your powerful waves must stop."

Job, have you ever in all your life commanded a day to dawn? Have you ordered the dawn to seize the earth and shake the

wicked from their hiding places?" Job 38:1-13
TEV

"Has anyone ever shown you the gates that
guard the dark world of the dead?"
Job 38:17 TEV

"Do you know the laws that govern the skies,
and can you make them apply to the earth?"
Job 38:33 TEV

God then asked his summary question to
Job.

"Job, you challenged Almighty God; will you
give up now, or will you answer?"
Job 40:1-2 TEV

Job, realizing that dealing with God in person
was not so easy as complaining from a distance,
was overwhelmed and caved in to God.

"I spoke foolishly, LORD. What can I
answer? I will not try to say anything else. I
have already said more than I should."
Job 40:4-5 TEV

"Then out of the storm the LORD spoke to
Job once again. Now stand up straight, and

answer my questions. Are you trying to prove that I am unjust - to put me in the wrong and yourself in the right? Are you as strong as I am? Can your voice thunder as loud as mine?" Job 40:6-9 TEV

Your author believes that God, throughout *The Book Of Job*, wanted to establish, or do, a number of key things. First, God actually had a plan for Job's life, which was being worked out, even without Job's complete knowledge of it. Job knew there must be some kind of plan concerning him, but evidently did not know what it was.

"He [God] will fulfill what he has planned for me [Job]; that plan is just one of the many he has;" Job 23:14 TEV

"I give up; I am tired of living. Leave me alone. My life makes no sense." Job 7:16 TEV

Second, God asserted his authority and superior wisdom in coming up with the plans he has for his creation, his plan for Job's life, and all of his other plans. God basically told Job that Job was not in a position to know all of God's plans (Job 38:2). This is not to say that Job knew nothing about God, or some of God's

plans, **but God has some really deep plans he is working on and some of them are private unto him.** Fortunately, or unfortunately for Job, one of those plans concerned Job and his life. God characterized Job's words, about the plan he had for Job's life, as ignorant and empty (Job 38:2). We will discuss more of God's plan for Job, and what it means for all mankind, in the next section of this book.

Third, God wanted to make sure Job knew and acknowledged that God was still in the right and just. This was even though he allowed Job to basically be crushed. Job acknowledging this point was important to God and God called it out in no uncertain terms (Job 40:8). While Job might not understand exactly what had happened to him, or why it happened to him, Job did need to understand and acknowledge that God was still in the right and just. For someone in Job's tortured position, this was not such an easy task. To Job's credit, he agreed with God. God, despite what had happened to Job, was still in the right and just.

Fourth, God decided to put a divine shout-down onto Job, instead of directly answering him. In your author's opinion it is not because

God could not have answered Job's question as to why he allowed Job to suffer so greatly. It was because God had already chosen, for his own private reasons, not to directly answer this question. Since some dialogue with Job was needed to make Job's story complete, God instead chose to assert his authority, ask Job questions Job could not answer, and then shout Job down ("Are you as strong as I am?" Job 40:9 TEV). Asking someone, "Are you as strong as I am?" is not an intellectual response. It is a brute force, might-makes-right, shout-down response. It was not because God did not have an argument that would carry the day. He just chose not to employ it here. He chose to keep his real plan for Job private.

To summarize God's dialogue with Job so far, God basically asserted that he is "The Big Entrepreneur In The Sky" and he has far-reaching plans he is carrying out. One of those plans involved Job's life – even though Job was not privy to it. Job was going to have to accept that God, with his divine authority and superior wisdom, knows what he is doing. Job also had to acknowledge that God was in the right and just. And since Job was not privy to all of God's divine plans he was going to have to trust that God knows what he is doing and would make it

right some day. Some day Job will know why he suffered. But not today – not even after meeting God face-to-face and talking with him.

Poor Job. Would it ever get better for him? Actually, yes it would, in several surprising ways. Those surprising ways are detailed in Job 42. Before that, Job 41 is a chapter where God, in your author's opinion, is bragging that he can catch Leviathan (a type of Satan) on a hook and hold him up like a fisherman would hold up a giant prize-winning fish (Job 41:1-3).

One of the surprising things about Job 42 is God's affirming that Job was correct and Job's three friends (and by implication Elihu) were incorrect. God said this twice.

"After the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz, "**I am angry with you and your two friends, because you did not speak the truth about me, the way my servant Job did.** Now take seven bulls and seven rams to Job and offer them as a sacrifice for yourselves. Job will pray for you, and I will answer his prayer and not disgrace you the way you deserve. **You did not speak the truth about me as he did.**" Eliphaz, Bildad, and

Zophar did what the LORD had told them to do,
and the LORD answered Job's prayer."
Job 42:7-9 TEV

Since basically everything that Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar had said about Job and his trial and God was a recital of the ancient religious paradigm that God blesses those who obey him and curses those who do not, this ancient religious paradigm was hereby, once and for all, refuted by God himself.

Further, since Elihu also recited the ancient religious paradigm he, too, was wrong. Elihu did listen to what Job said, but unfortunately he heard wrong (Job 33:8). Further, Elihu was wrong in asserting the added argument that Job was a sinner and God was doing Job a favor by punishing him in order to correct him and to humble him so that Job would repent and be saved from death (Job 33). This is a favorite criticism of those harsh, narrow-minded, judgmental critics of others of which Elihu was one. God contradicts this argument, of Elihu, in Job 2. In your author's opinion, Elihu, perhaps being young, or being, in essence, lumped in with the three friends, was fortunate to escape also being directly criticized by God.

“Did you notice my servant Job?” the LORD asked. “There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil. **You persuaded me to let you attack him for no reason at all**, but Job is still as faithful as ever.” Job 2:3 TEV

Job was not attacked because he was a sinner needing correction, nor because he was self-righteous and proud and needed humbling. God point-blank says it was not so. God, in his interaction with Job, makes sure that Job acknowledges God as in the right and just and that God has plans and methods Job knows nothing about. God never acknowledges the three friends other than to say they were wrong and Job was right. God never acknowledges the young Elihu at all.

Since God himself said that Job was right, about what he said pertaining to God, why then did Job repent? It is a good question, especially since God just said that Job was correct. If Job was correct and Job did not need special humbling, or to repent of some overt or hidden sin, why would Job repent?

“Then Job answered the LORD. I know, LORD, that you are all-powerful; that you can do

everything you want. You ask how I dare question your wisdom when I am so very ignorant. I talked about things I did not understand, about marvels too great for me to know. You told me to listen while you spoke and to try to answer your questions. In the past I knew only what others had told me, but now I have seen you with my own eyes. So I am ashamed of all I have said and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:1-6 TEV

Job was the same man before and after the trial. To put it in mathematical terms, he was the constant, not the variable, in the equation. For his own reasons God allowed Satan to attack Job and almost kill him. Job, beyond just being hurt, was deeply wounded. Job was deeply wounded in just about every way a man could be deeply wounded. He was wounded physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and financially. His trial went on for month after month. And God, his comforter, went silent on him. Job's family and friends largely abandoned him. Job was alone. He was alone in just about every way that a man could be alone. His words defending himself and attacking God were the truth - at least from Job's point of view. And God acknowledged this, while maintaining that he, God, had a larger and more far-reaching

point of view and plan. Job's words, though true, were spoken harshly. Further, Job had implied that God was not in the right and just. Job, at the end of his rope, deeply wounded and near death, had lashed out at God. And Job, when he met God, was humbled by God's questions and realized that God was truly great and working out something big. Amazingly, that something big included Job and Job's life. Job repented of his words harshly spoken, of implying that God was not in the right and just, and of not being aware and mindful that God, with his divine authority and wisdom, is at work, and that he has many plans under way. And all of those divine plans will produce good results in the long run, if not the short run. Further, it must be remembered that Job was the kind of man who was so concerned about staying in God's favor that he would sacrifice for his children in case they did anything wrong. Job offered contingent sacrifices to God to make extra sure that God knew Job cared about what he and his family did. A man with this frame of mind could only have been humbled to meet God and it would have been almost second nature for Job to humble himself and repent before God as God is so great and Job, though great for a man, was only a man. And so Job repented. God accepted Job again. It was over.

God, though working on many great plans, including one concerning Job himself, acknowledged Job's point of view, and forgave him. And then God did something amazing - something that would be easy to overlook. God gave Job double what he had before, in terms of physical possessions. And Job's family and friends were restored to him. Further, God gave him ten more children, including the most beautiful daughters in the land.

"Then, after Job had prayed for his three friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had had before. All Job's brothers and sisters and former friends came to visit him and feasted with him in his house. They expressed their sympathy and comforted him **for all the troubles the LORD had brought on him**. Each of them gave him some money and a gold ring. The LORD blessed the last part of Job's life even more than he had blessed the first. Job owned fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, two thousand head of cattle, and one thousand donkeys. He was the father of seven sons and three daughters. He called the oldest daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the youngest Keren Happuch. There were no other women in the

whole world as beautiful as Job's daughters. Their father gave them a share of the inheritance along with their brothers. Job lived a hundred and forty years after this, long enough to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And then he died at a very great age." Job 42:10-17 TEV

There are two points that your author does not want to be missed about the above passage. First, there is an acknowledgement that God brought the troubles on Job. Job was correct, in looking through the physical, and even through Satan, to know that it was God himself who was behind it all. And he was. Second, though God did nothing wrong, God knew that Job regarded what had happened to him as being unfair. And even though Job, after meeting with God, repented as himself being in the wrong, God wanted to restore the relationship. So he gave Job double what he had before (excepting his children). Please remember that Job, before meeting God, had previously wanted to take God to court, but knew no one could force God to go.

"Yes, I've heard all that before. But how can a human being win a case against God? ...

Should I try force? Try force on God?
Should I take him to court? Could anyone make
him go? I am innocent and faithful, but my
words sound guilty, and everything I say seems
to condemn me. ...

If God were human, I could answer him; we
could go to court to decide our quarrel. But
there is no one to step between us - no one to
judge both God and me." Job 9:1-2, 19-20, 32-
33 TEV

While it is true that no one can force God to
go to court, it is almost like God took himself to
court, judged in favor of Job (at the human
level), and then paid double, per the below
scripture. Your author realizes there is some
conjecture here and the reader can take it or
leave it, but finds it interesting. And your
author is not saying, by pointing out the below,
that God was guilty. He is saying that God is
the bigger party in the dispute than Job, and
that God wanted to restore the relationship with
Job, and that God wanted Job's life to continue
to be an example to others the way it was
before. As a final note, regarding the below
scripture, your author knows the dispute was
about much more than property. Nevertheless,

the below scripture, and God's actions toward Job, are noteworthy.

"In every case of a dispute about property, whether it involves cattle, donkeys, sheep, clothing, or any other lost object, the two people claiming the property shall be taken to the place of worship. The one whom God declares to be guilty shall pay double to the other one."
Exodus 22:9 TEV

Job had met God, learned a lot, repented, and their relationship was restored - but he did not learn why he suffered. Neither had anyone else.

Why Job Suffered

Job was not someone who trusted in riches, or took pride in his wealth (Job 31:24-25).

Job was not someone who needed to be humbled, because he was too proud, or corrected because he was a sinner. God made a point-blank statement to Satan concerning Job, "... You persuaded me to let you attack him for no reason at all ..." (Job 2:3 TEV). This demolishes one of Elihu's contentions that God was correcting Job and humbling him in order to

save him. In Job's case, it just was not so. Elihu had a judgmental, critical, and traditional religious point of view that God sends or allows correction on those who need it – in this case, Job. However, God himself said this was not the case with Job. Job was an unusually righteous man who had already chosen God's values as the values he was going to live his life by and Job was consistent in practicing those values.

As previously mentioned, there was an ancient and long-standing religious paradigm that God would bless those who served him and curse those who did not. This ancient religious paradigm is the explanation that Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, gave for his trials. Job intellectually demolished this ancient religious paradigm by correctly pointing out that wicked men sometimes live out their lives happy and then die (Job 21). This is despite the wrong way they acquired their wealth and the wrong way they treated others. In answering his three friends Job pointed out that he was the same guy before and after his trial – so why would he be blessed before and cursed now? Job knew he had not changed; something else had. His three friends were wrong. To the extent Elihu also asserted this ancient religious paradigm he, too, was wrong. God point-blank said that Job spoke

the truth about him, unlike his three friends. God said this in two places, Job 42:7 and again in Job 42:8. To further make the point, that this ancient religious paradigm was incorrect, God was so angry with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar that God insisted on a sacrifice from them and for Job to pray for them, otherwise God would disgrace them, as they deserved. The three friends were humbled and shown wrong in their ancient religious paradigm assertion toward Job and they were further humbled in their incorrect assertion that they were speaking for God (Job 15:11). They were not. Eiihu also incorrectly thought he was speaking for God (Job 36:2). He was not.

It has been your author's observation that some people are attracted to religion because of the forgiveness they can receive from God. They love God for giving them life, including life's blessings, and also for forgiving them. Another category of people, who are attracted to religion, have "found their way to God" by following certain aspects of whatever truth they can apprehend. Actually, no one can come to God, by whatever means, unless God the Father draws him (John 6:44). This does not change the fact that there are a large number of people who are attracted to religion because they are

on a quest for truth. It has been your author's further observation that some of these truth-seekers have a tendency to sometimes be unsympathetic critics of other people when trials come upon them. They, the truth-seeker, always prefer a concrete reason, that is to say a black and white cause for some trial, or problem they have observed. And they are sometimes quick to offer their critical evaluation of why the trial came upon a fellow believer. And, like Job's three friends and Elihu, they usually believe they are speaking for God in offering their evaluation of the situation. Many times their comments are caustic and hurtful. They presume a lot, as no human can see into the spiritual dimension and no human can fully understand all of God's plans – unless God himself chooses to reveal them.

In the case of Job, God did not choose to reveal his plan for Job on a real-time basis (Job 23:14). In your author's opinion Job died not knowing exactly why he had to endure his trial (Job 7:16). The ancient religious paradigm was false. Job needing to be humbled and corrected because he was a sinner was false. And so now a fairly modern religious paradigm has been put forth in an attempt to explain God's plan for Job's life and why Job suffered. And this fairly

modern religious paradigm is that Job was so righteous he was also somehow self-righteous and, ergo, needed to be humbled and corrected. Ergo, God let Satan attack Job, for Job's own good, so that Job would repent of being self-righteous and become a more completely converted and successful man.

Your author is amazed that such an explanation could be put forth, in that it ignores numerous scriptures whereby Job clearly knows he is a sinner needing to be forgiven. In case there is any doubt as to this point please be reminded of the following scriptures: Job 31:33, 14:15-17, 13:26, 10:14-15, 7:21, and 9:27-30.

"Others try to hide their sins, but I have never concealed mine." Job 31:33 TEV

How a modern religious paradigm could spring up that Job was self-righteous is mind-boggling. It is not just the above scriptures, but also that God said, in Job 2:3, TEV, " ... You [Satan] persuaded me [God] to let you [Satan] attack him [Job] for no reason at all, but Job is still as faithful as ever." In light of God's direct statement, and all of the scriptures in *The Book Of Job* where Job point-blank admits he is a

sinner, **this modern religious paradigm is intellectually dead on arrival.**

God did have a plan for Job's life. So far, however, no one has adequately explained it – either in ancient or modern times.

Your author surmises that God likely picked Job because he was unusually righteous and also because he had other remarkable personal qualities, including maturity, ability, experience, caring for and raising a family, caring for others, providing leadership to the community, etc. God already knew Job's character, which is why he was picked for the job. And Job had something else that was extremely important for what he was about to go through:

Job could take the beating while retaining his mind, his character, and his faith in God, while being alone amidst "the uncomprehending."

Great minds think years in advance and make

long-range plans with the confidence and conviction that those plans, successfully implemented, can and will change things for the better. God has a great mind. And God has very long-range plans he has been executing, and that he is going to execute, that will ultimately lead to a large expansion of his family. There are numerous places in the New Testament, e.g., Romans 8, where Jesus Christ is described as the firstborn and true believers are regarded as his brothers waiting to be resurrected to eternal life, as Jesus Christ was. This describes a family type relationship, not that any resurrected human would ever be equal to God the Father, or Jesus Christ, but that there would be a special family type relationship. Hebrews 2 is very plain on this topic:

“How, then, shall we escape if we pay no attention to such a great salvation? The Lord himself first announced this salvation, and those who heard him proved to us that it is true. At the same time God added his witness to theirs by performing all kinds of miracles and wonders and by distributing the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will.

God has not placed the angels as rulers over the new world to come - the world of which we speak. Instead, as it is said somewhere in the Scriptures: "What are human beings, O God, that you should think of them; mere human beings, that you should care for them? You made them for a little while lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor, and made them rulers over all things." It says that God made them "rulers over all things"; this clearly includes everything. We do not, however, see human beings ruling over all things now. But we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, so that through God's grace he should die for everyone. We see him now crowned with glory and honor because of the death he suffered.

It was only right that God, who creates and preserves all things, should make Jesus perfect through suffering, in order to bring many children to share his glory. For Jesus is the one who leads them to salvation. He purifies people from their sins, and both he and those who are made pure all have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his family." Hebrews 2:3-11 TEV

In addition to expanding his family, another part of God's long-range plans include a new heavens and a new earth (Revelation 21 and other places).

As a side bar, on the way to explaining why Job suffered, your author thinks it important for the reader to be aware that the being who became Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament. To prove this is beyond the scope of this short book, as there are numerous scriptural proofs of this fact, but a few scriptures showing that Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament are as follows:

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, KJV

"Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are

judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deuteronomy 32:3-4, KJV

"Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." Deuteronomy 32:18, KJV

And so the plot thickens. It turns out the God who allowed Job to suffer was the same being who knew he was going to be coming to the earth to live a sinless life, to suffer torture, and to suffer a brutal undeserved death on the cross. It had to be so in order for Jesus Christ to become the Savior of mankind and the firstborn among many brothers. The sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ was a pivotal event for the future of the human race (I Corinthians 15). And it involved undeserved suffering.

"For then must he [Jesus Christ] often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 9:26, KJV

" ... of the Lamb [Jesus Christ] slain from the foundation of the world."
Revelation 13:8, KJV

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1:1,14, KJV

To bring these long-range plans into effect the God of the Old Testament knew that he must come to the earth, as Jesus Christ, and experience undeserved suffering. But there was a problem with this plan to be overcome. You see, there was this ancient religious paradigm in place whereby a man was thought to be righteous if blessed, but a sufferer was thought to be a sinner needing and experiencing God’s correction and punishment. If someone was suffering, they were clearly a sinner. If they were not an obvious sinner, then they had hidden sins, but those sins were not hidden from God. And so God would send suffering in order to correct the sinner so they would repent of their sins and God could then save them. Without question, in this ancient religious paradigm, a sufferer was equated with being a sinner. But this brilliant and caring God, this long-range thinking God, **knew he was going**

to live a sinless life, as a kinsman redeemer, to save mankind from the death penalty. Jesus Christ was NOT going to be a sinner deserving punishment, or needing correction. This brilliant God knew, in advance, that when the time came for him to suffer and die on the cross, that many of the others on the playing field with him, and many of the critics in the grandstand, would judge against him. They would do so using the ancient religious paradigm as the basis of their guilty verdict and as their basis of their rejection of him. And the Bible says this is exactly what happened.

“The people reply, Who would have believed what we now report? Who could have seen the LORD’s hand in this? [Perhaps someone who understood the real reason Job suffered.] It was the will of the LORD that his servant grow like a plant taking root in dry ground. He had no dignity or beauty to make us take notice of him. There was nothing attractive about him, nothing that would draw us to him. **We despised him and rejected him; he endured suffering and pain.** No one would even look at him - we ignored him as if he were nothing.

But he endured the suffering that should have been ours, the pain that we should have

borne. **All the while we thought that his suffering was punishment sent by God.**

But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the LORD [God the Father] made the punishment fall on him [Jesus Christ], the punishment all of us deserved. He was treated harshly, but endured it humbly; he never said a word. Like a lamb about to be slaughtered, like a sheep about to be sheared, he never said a word. He was arrested and sentenced and led off to die, and no one cared about his fate. **He was put to death for the sins of our people.** He was placed in a grave with those who are evil, he was buried with the rich, even though he had never committed a crime or ever told a lie.

The LORD [God the Father] says, **It was my will that he should suffer; his death was a sacrifice to bring forgiveness.** And so he will see his descendants; he will live a long life, and through him my purpose will succeed. After a life of suffering, he will again have joy; he will know that he did not suffer in vain. My devoted servant, with whom I am pleased, will bear the

punishment of many and for his sake I will forgive them. And so I will give him a place of honor, a place among the great and powerful. He willingly gave his life and shared the fate of evil men. He took the place of many sinners and prayed that they might be forgiven.”
Isaiah 53:1-12 TEV

Wow! God’s plans are not our plans. **The real reason that Job had to undeservedly suffer was for the purpose of smashing the ancient religious paradigm once and for all.** His life story, from God’s point of view, thus helped prepare the way for Jesus Christ to come to the earth to become the Savior of mankind. The unfortunate fact that those present at, and complicit in, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ did not understand the real lesson of *The Book Of Job* will only leave them with even less to say when they have their eyes opened and have to give an account for their actions. This applies to everyone else, too, who rejected Jesus Christ simply because he suffered and died. Of course, since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) all human beings are responsible for the death of Jesus Christ – not just one group of people.

Of course, your author could be asked, "Well, if the above is true and Job's suffering was to break the ancient religious paradigm, thus paving the way for Jesus Christ to be accepted as the Savior of the world, why then did God not make plain the real reason that Job suffered on a real-time basis?" The answer is for the same reason disclosed in I Corinthians 2:6-8 and Micah 4:12. God wanted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to occur and so he hid some things from the powers that be.

"Yet I do proclaim a message of wisdom to those who are spiritually mature. But it is not the wisdom that belongs to this world or to the powers that rule this world - powers that are losing their power. The wisdom I proclaim is God's secret wisdom, which is hidden from human beings, but which he had already chosen for our glory even before the world was made. None of the rulers of this world knew this wisdom. If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
I Corinthians 2:6-8 TEV

"But they [the nations] do not know the plans of the LORD, nor do they understand His counsel. ... " Micah 4:12, MKJV

The tribe of Judah was supposed to provide leadership for the Israelites (Genesis 49:10, 1 Chronicles 5:2, 28:4, Psalm 60:7, 108:8 and other places). And the Israelites were supposed to provide leadership for all mankind. Unfortunately, thus far, the Israelites have failed both God and mankind in this regard. Per Dennis Prager, a famous radio talk show host, based out of the USA, a characteristic of the Jewish people is they regard suffering as bad. This was also true of Job's culture as well:

"You think you are better than I am, and regard my troubles as proof of my guilt. Can't you see it is God who has done this? ..."
Job 19:5-6 TEV

Job's culture could not see the ancient religious paradigm was false and neither could the Jewish culture and religion - which is too bad because *The Book Of Job* is in the Tanakh/Bible for all to read. This is speculation by your author, but perhaps the mass rejection of the real Messiah by the Jewish religion is, at least in part, due to not knowing the real reason Job suffered. The Jewish religion's rejection of Jesus Christ as Messiah might also have been negatively influenced by the below passage of scripture, incorrectly assuming that because

Jesus Christ was hung on a tree that it was God himself who had cursed him.

“And **if** a man have committed a sin worthy of death [which Jesus Christ did not], and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.” Deuteronomy 21:22-23, KJV

Further, the Jews evidently thought that the Messiah would come and live forever – not that he would first come as a human and die for the sins of mankind.

“The crowd answered Him, We have heard out of the law that Christ lives forever. How do you say, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?” John 12:34, MKJV

Both Job and Jesus Christ suffered undeservedly as part of God’s overall plan. Both of them were ultimately stunned by the harshness of the reality of their test and both of them were largely alone, amidst the uncomprehending. There is a very telling

scripture about how tough it was for Jesus Christ to endure his suffering and crucifixion:

“Now **from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Matthew 27:45-46, KJV

At the end of the longest day someone could endure, after all of the beating and the physical suffering, the mocking, the mental and emotional suffering, the pain and public humiliation of the crucifixion, seemingly all alone, **out of the darkness**, Jesus Christ asked God the Father the most heart-rending question that could ever be asked, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” As it turns out, many years prior, Job had asked him the same question.

The End

Appendix A: Other Interesting Items

In addition to the incredible story of Job, *The Book Of Job* has a lot of other interesting information in it. Your author thought it might be fun to point out a few of these additional interesting tidbits.

The first of these was previously mentioned, which is Job's lament that someone would write his words down and put them into a book. God did.

"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!"
Job 19:23, KJV

Way back then, Job knew the earth was round.

"He divided light from darkness by a circle drawn on the face of the sea." Job 26:10 TEV

In philosophy, there is a famous problem called "the mind-body problem." Untold books have been written in an attempt to explain how the logical structure of the mind can comprehend the logical structure of the

universe, if at all. *The Book Of Job* provides a couple of Biblical clues as to what the Creator did to enable man to be able to think logically and to understand various aspects of the logical universe.

“But **there is a spirit in man:** and the inspiration of the Almighty **giveth them understanding.**” Job 32:8, KJV

“Who has put wisdom in the inward parts?
Or who has given understanding to the mind?”
Job 38:36, MKJV

Once more, speaking of philosophy, it has been observed that post-modern philosophy has largely abandoned reason. Job faced the same thing way back then.

“You have closed their minds to reason. ...

Those who claim to be respectable are more and more convinced they are right. But if all of them came and stood before me, I would not find even one of them wise.”
Job 17:4, 9-10 TEV

Many people complain about political gridlock and the lack of solutions via the political

process. When men do not honor and obey God there are consequences, e.g., the abandonment of reason and a multitude of other problems. Do any of the below verses sound familiar?

“God is strong and always victorious; both deceived and deceiver are in his power. He takes away the wisdom of rulers and makes leaders act like fools.” Job 12:16-17 TEV

“God gave the world to the wicked. He made all the judges blind. ...” Job 9:24 TEV

“But thieves and godless people live in peace, though their only god is their own strength.” [These godless men have a “might makes right” operating methodology.] Job 12:6 TEV

“Evil people make slaves of fatherless infants and take the children of the poor in payment for debts.” Job 24:9 TEV

“If God decided to do nothing at all, no one could criticize him. If he hid his face, we would be helpless. There would be nothing that nations could do to keep godless oppressors from ruling them.” Job 34:29-30 TEV

“When people are oppressed, they groan; they cry for someone to save them. But they don’t turn to God, their Creator, who gives them hope in their darkest hours.” Job 35:9-10 TEV

The angels were created before the earth was.

“Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much, tell me about it. Who decided how large it would be? Who stretched the measuring line over it? Do you know all the answers? What holds up the pillars that support the earth? Who laid the cornerstone of the world? In the dawn of that day the stars [angels] sang together, and the heavenly beings [angels] shouted for joy.” Job 38:4-7 TEV

Unfortunately, some of the angels later rebelled (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, Revelation 12 and other places). This created a problem for God, with some ongoing consequences.

“God does not trust his heavenly servants; he finds fault even with his angels.”
Job 4:18 TEV

“God’s anger is constant. He crushed his enemies [the rebellious fallen angels] who

helped Rahab [Satan], the sea monster, oppose him." Job 9:13 TEV

"Why, God does not trust even his angels; even they are not pure in his sight."
Job 15:15 TEV

"In his eyes even the moon is not bright, or the stars [angels] pure." Job 25:5 TEV

Evidently, Jesus Christ, the God of the Old Testament, also sometimes walked on the water back in Job's time, too.

"who [God] alone stretches out the heavens, and walks on the waves of the sea;"
Job 9:8, MKJV

Jesus Christ also, evidently, has walked on the bottom of the ocean floor as well.

"Have you been to the springs in the depths of the sea? Have you walked on the floor of the ocean?" Job 38:16 TEV

Job was accused, as was Jesus Christ, of fraternizing with the wrong kind of men.

“Have you ever seen anyone like this man Job? ... He likes the company of evil people and goes around with sinners.” Job 34:7-8 TEV