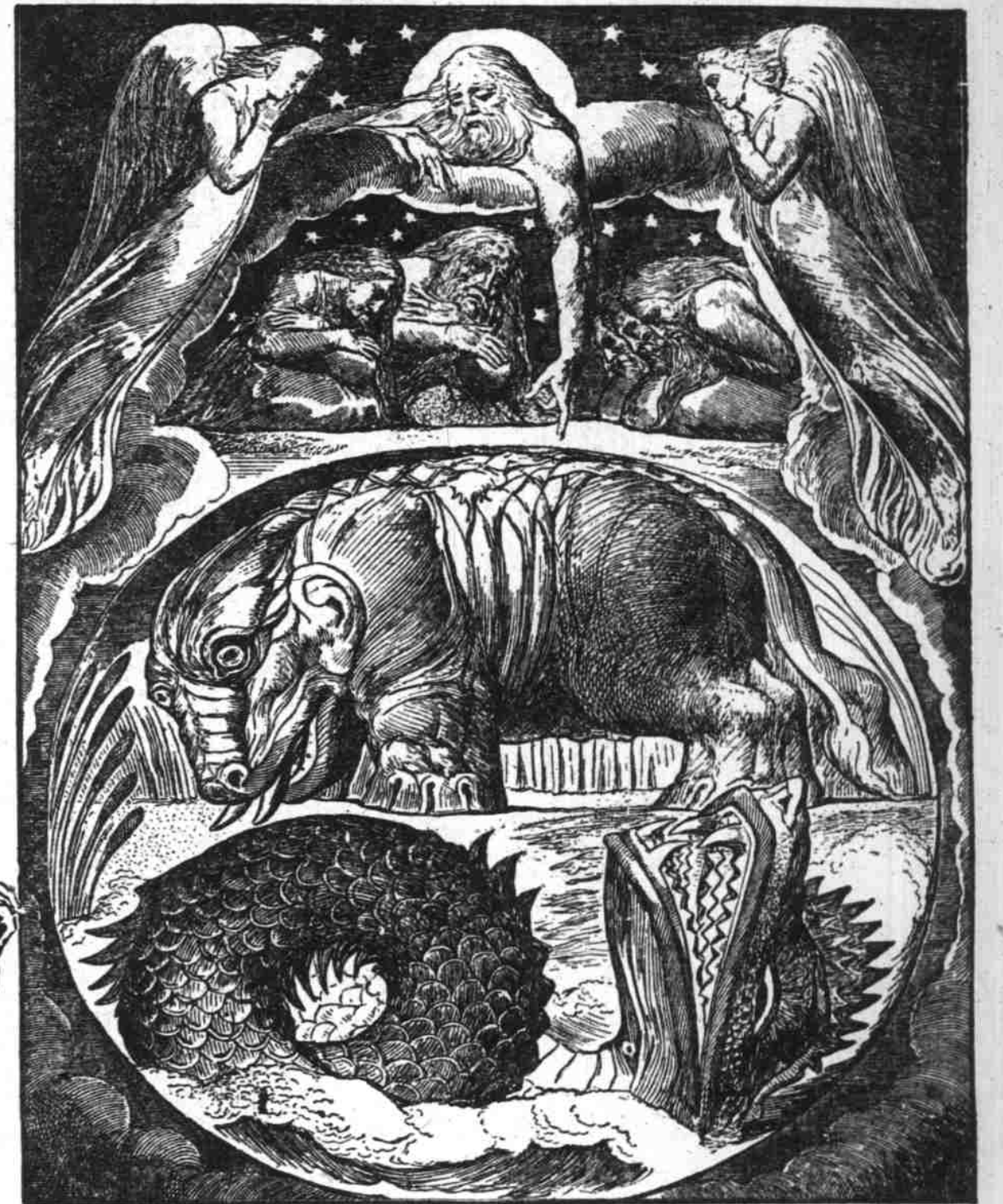


# Job NOT the Most Patient But Most Rebellious of Men?

**Laboratory Tests by a Famous Biblical Scholar Reveal, He Says, How the Old Testament Leaders Scissored, Blue-Penciled and Added to a Shockingly Cynical Story to Make It Safe for Their People to Read**



"Then Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord," Reads the Authorized Version of Job. Prof. Jastrow Says That Editors Added the Pious Explanation in Chapter II. That Satan Came in at God's Service and Not as an Independent Being.



"Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee," (Job, Chapter 40, 15). Prof. Jastrow Says This Should Read: "Behold, the great beast as compared to thee," and That It Clearly Refers to the Hippopotamus, and Not to an Unknown Monster as Imagined by This Artist.

"PATIENT as Job" and the "Patience of Job" have long been popular phrases, denoting utter submission to misfortune and resignation under the most terrible sufferings. Not only in Christian literature, but in the Hebrew legends, and even in the Mohammedan Koran, Job has been held up as a model whose exemplary conduct in sorrow or adversity all should emulate.

But now Dr. Morris Jastrow, who holds the chair of Semitic languages in the University of Pennsylvania, and is perhaps the most distinguished authority on the Old Testament literature and history, says this is not so.

Instead of being the most patient of men, Job was, in fact, the most rebellious.

Dr. Jastrow has taken the Book of Job and subjected it to laboratory methods in much the same way that one would strip a piece of stone of the various foreign growths which had encrusted it through the ages. Dr. Jastrow has, he believes, succeeded in uncovering the story of Job as it was originally written, and the outburst of audacious rebellion which forms the main and central portion of the book, from the mass of emendations, interpolations and modifications which various religious leaders of the time, shocked by Job's impiety, wrote into the original.

The original story, with all its rebellious protests against what was termed the injustice of God, attained wide popularity. The religious leaders of the day were appalled to see their people seizing so eagerly upon something so entirely contrary in spirit to the religious teachings. They did not have the courage to try to suppress it entirely, as some modern "blue law" censors might have done, but they did alter the story and add to it in such a way as to obscure all its original spirit and leave Job pictured as a man of infinite patience and piety.

The original story, says Dr. Jastrow, was a bit of folk lore. It was taken and elaborated by a group of bold and cynical thinkers. Their Job was an audacious skeptic who questioned the assertion that a Deity of goodness and justice ruled the world, and who wanted to know why the righteous should suffer while the wicked were often permitted to flourish. The present Book of Job represents the later efforts to bring this conception into harmony with an orthodox theology which asserted the existence of a just and merciful Creator.

In Dr. Jastrow's very interesting comments, which are to be found in full in his work upon this subject, "The Book of Job," published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., he says:

"There are not ten consecutive verses in the symposium between Job and his friends, or in the speeches of Elihu, or in the magnificent closing chapters placed as speeches in the mouth of Yahweh, the text of which can be regarded as correct. The text of a poetic composition is more liable to corruption than that of a prose narrative.

"With the possible single exception of the Book of Esther, which is a propagandist romance that may not be earlier than 100 B. C., there is not a book of the Old Testament that can be assigned to any individual author, as none represents in its present form a genuine literary unity. Literary unity is not to be found even in so late a book as that of Daniel, written circa 160 B. C., when individual authorship among the Hebrews had already come to the fore, for even in this book it is recognized by scholars that the last chapters are not by the same writer as the one to whom we owe the earlier ones."

Job, according to Professor Jastrow, is a work of anonymous and composite authorship. It is full of most glaring contradictions, the most obvious of which is the irreconcilability of the Job of the folk tale—a model of piety and silent resignation to the divine will—with Job as he is pictured in the symposium, voluble in his denunciation of the divine injustice under which he languishes.

"The Job of the folk tale—the man of Uz"—is a very ancient Asiatic story, familiar long before the Bible book was composed, on which the problems were hung.

Besides the later chapters completely added by orthodox editors, there are in the main story as given in the Bible very many interpolations inserted to modify its rebellious, impious tone to suit orthodoxy. For instance, these defiant words represent the original story:

"Lo, he goeth by me and I see him not; he passeth on also, but I perceive him not." (Chapter ix., verse 9.)

Pious editors, according to Professor Jastrow, have inserted before this the famous lines glorifying the Almighty:

"Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and the Pleiades and the chambers of the south."

Where the original Job said, "There is security for those who provoke God," the pious commentator has inserted "whom God holds in his power."

Perhaps the most famous speech of Job in our traditional rendering reads:

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Chapter xlii., 15.)

The author shows that this should read: "Aye, though he slay me I tremble not."

Some commentator could not reconcile himself to the idea that the pious model Job could utter such defiance of God and changed it to our familiar form.



"And Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown," Says the Book of Job. Commentators Inserted After This Many Lines Explaining That Job Never Sinned in Spite of His Afflictions.



"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," Says Job in the Traditional Rendering. Jastrow Says This Should Read: "Aye, though he slay me, I tremble not." Editors Changed It Because It Was Too Daring a Defiance of the Almighty. The Drawings on This Page Are from William Blake's Famous Illustrations of the Book of Job.

tale of Job's life from the poetical composition in which two problems suggested by the story—the reason for innocent suffering in the world and for the frequent escape of the wicked from merited punishment—are discussed.

Then, again, in the poetical composition are three distinct strata in which the two problems involved are viewed from different angles. The first stratum is the conversation between Job and his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar (chapters iii.-xvii.), and constitutes the original book. The trend of this stratum is distinctly skeptical. It emanated from

a circle of bold and independent thinkers who questioned conventional beliefs. Because of this, and because the conversation ended in an unsatisfactory manner, orthodox circles among the Jews took up the book and proceeded to amplify it.

As a result of this sentiment the book of Job contains comments by pious commentators and other additions, and two additional strata represented by the speeches of Elihu (Chapters xxxii., xxxvii.) and the four closing chapters of the book (Chapters xxxviii.-xli.), which represent the endeavor of Jewish orthodoxy to counteract the influence of the original book, and

to furnish more satisfactory answers to the questions raised in the symposium or conversations.

Professor Jastrow asserts that startling as his theories may sound to many, they will prove the real Book of Job an even greater masterpiece than the traditional one.

The original "problem story" of Job built on a still earlier folk-tale arose out of a group of men who questioned that the universe is ruled by justice and mercy and were not content with the conventional answer why the innocent suffer in this world.

Hence the sympathy of the writers of Chapters iii. to xxvii. with Job. The three "friends" introduced as participants in the discourse are merely foils to press home the arguments of Job against the assumptions of orthodoxy.

In Chapters xxxii. to xxxvii. are the discourses of Elihu in defense of orthodoxy, and, finally, in Chapters xxxviii. to xli. the magnificent series of poems put into the mouth of God.

These latter chapters have been accepted by readers as leading the story of Job to a triumphant orthodox conclusion, but according to Professor Jastrow they were late additions.

In the third chapter Job begins by cursing the day on which he was born. To be deprived of family possessions and station and finally to be tortured with loathsome disease would change the pious and God-fearing man into a violent accuser of the Deity. Throughout the conversations Job is represented as protesting against his

pitiful by his bitter outcries. Those who write the speeches which they put into his mouth visualize for us the sufferings of Job beyond human endurance. Ever and again he breaks out in his anguish and indulges in indictments against Divine injustice that know no bounds.

"What an awful Deity," comments Professor Jastrow "to permit a man 'perfect and removed from evil' (Chapters i. and ii.), to be thus wracked on the wheel!"

The introduction of the scene between Yahweh and Satan only enhances the cal-

lousness of the former in heaping misfortunes upon an innocent head just for the satisfaction of winning a wager. What a shocking and immoral story, we can fancy the thinker saying, to tell children and to impress on their elders."

There are really two Jobs in the book—one of the introductory story, the other of the discussion with the three friends. The first Job is the pious, patient, taciturn man, and his story is told in prose; the other Job is impatient, resentful, voluble and blasphemous and is made to speak in poetry.

Professor Jastrow says that these familiar words are the utterance of the first Job:

"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Chapter I., 21.)

These are the words of the second rebellious Job and cannot express the thoughts of the same man:

"Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said there is a man child conceived." (Chapter iii., 3.)

The first Job exclaims with the greatest piety:

"What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this Job did not sin with his lips." (Chapter ii., 10.)

"The sentiments of this Job are entirely in contradiction with those of the skeptical Job accusing God of deliberate injustice in Chapter iii.

"For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause. He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

"This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked."

The conclusion of the story shows evidence of several different and successive additions. One conclusion is represented by the passage in Chapter xlii., 10-17, beginning:

"And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."

A very different conclusion has been added to suit orthodoxy and is represented by the passage in Chapter xl., 4-5, beginning:

"Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth."

The Bible has curiously preserved the fact that the Book of Job once terminated with the thirty-first chapter, for it is there written: "The words of Job are ended."

The poems about animals in Chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. are additions to the original and are not by the same writers. One writer only enlarges the powers of the animals, while another stresses the cruel and senseless habits of the ostrich and stork in deserting her young.

The nature poems were added to teach the overpowering achievements of the Almighty and to neutralize somewhat the denunciations of Job and his friends against the arbitrariness of the divine will.

The author points out that the editors of one Hebrew text of Job, simply out of refinement, has substituted "bless" for "curse" in Chapter I., 5, and other places, although the King James Bible, based mainly on the Greek text, retains "curse."