

Finally: The Truth about Job! (In Defense of The Almighty)

By Scott Nelson

Introduction

As the title of this article suggests, I believe there has been only misunderstanding and confusion concerning the book and story of Job. The questions that Job's story naturally generate, such as: "*How can a loving God treat so badly a good man who loved Him?*", and "*Why do bad things happen to good people?*" have been offered answers that are very intellectually and morally unsatisfying. What is worse, not only have the answers been unsatisfying, they have *all* left the character of God in question and in a painfully bad light. This sad truth is evidenced even in the title of a well-known book on the subject, "*When God Doesn't Make Sense*". This title effectively calls God's character into question as if He is the problemwhen He most certainly is not! So I have subtitled this work, "*In Defense of The Almighty*" because it is first and foremost an address to what is by far the worst casualty in the debate over Job ...the credibility of God's character.

Some will probably want to know how or why God might need defending. The answer is because there is no being in existence who has been misrepresented and lied about more than God. It has been Satan's primary objective since the creation of man to lie about God's character to deceive man, and thereby make it *impossible* for man to love God ...the very reason for which God created man in the first place. God had a longing desire to be loved by someone who knew Him and understood Him and chose to set their hearts on Him by an act of their own free will. We know it is God's desire that we come to love Him because the greatest commandment is, "*Love YHVH your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.*" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Matthew 22:37,38). It is Satan's spiteful goal to rob God of this His greatest desire, and Satan knows something about the human psyche that we seem to have missed. He knows that it simply is not possible for a man to truly love another being they don't understand or can't identify with. He knows people are incapable of truly loving someone they deep down believe is unjust or unfair. Only to the extent that someone understands the yearnings and desires that motivate another person to do what they do, and to the extent that he identifies with those character traits, can that person be fond of another and truly be able to love him.

If Satan can convince people to believe God's character allows Him to act in ways that they would never consider acting themselves, the damage is done. Such a person will never have any fondness for God or have any real desire to be anywhere near Him. This truth is as natural as gravity. The love of those who claim to love a God whose character they can't identify with is merely lip-service and no true love at all. It is a confession that comes from the head and not from the heart.

So let me ask: Would *you* ever destroy and nearly kill someone who loves you? Would you ever consider tormenting someone you knew was a good person and didn't deserve that kind of abuse just to make a point to another really evil person? Any decent person would say: "Of course not!" Now let me ask: Is that what you believe God did to Job? If you say yes, there is no way around it, you have a gaping hole in your heart for God and you don't know what it means to truly love Him.

The time is long overdue to expose Satan's lies and man's misunderstandings for what they are and mount a defense of the Almighty and His righteous judgements. When the truth of the matter of Job is finally exposed, those who have instinctively known God's character, that He would never torment a man for no good reason, their hearts be filled with joy and they will likely say to themselves; "I knew it, I knew it, I knew it!" and fall even further in love with the Almighty.

Then there will also be those on the other side ...where there is great self-interest and motive to continue believing and promulgating the downright blasphemous lies that have dominated the theological landscape for so long. We will deal with that issue as well a little later.

History and facts about the book of Job

First, let's look at some facts concerning the book of Job.

I firmly believe the book of Job is a *true* story that occurred to a *real* man. Some Bible teachers believe Job's story is a form of ancient fiction written as some sort of play to dramatize issues like *why the righteous suffer*. The evidence for this they say is in the cohesive and dramatic storyline, much of which is written in poetic form, and the fact that some scenes were set in heaven where supposedly no man could have been there to record the proceedings. As compelling as these observations might first appear, they are far from a lock on the issue. We don't know the identity of the author of Job. We can only speculate. It almost certainly wasn't Job himself. I personally have believed for some time the most likely candidate for the author of Job is Elihu, because he was there for the entire discourse that occurred between Job and the others. As you will see, Elihu

was the hero who spoke the truth on God's behalf! He was also the youngest and most likely to have lived long enough to record Job's additional age at death, but there is little reason to believe from the text of Job that Elihu might have had special insight into the proceedings in heaven that occurred between God and Satan. However, there was one man alive at that time known for his righteousness who was a priest of priests, and was also a great king who might well have been given insight into the proceedings in heaven. He was also the second oldest person on earth at that time. It was Noah's first son Shem who was also known as *Melchizedek*. He was the righteous king of Salem, a city that later became known as *Jerusalem*. At times I entertain the possibility that he might be the recorder of Job's story, but the fact is we just don't know.

The book of Job itself is one of the oldest if not *the* oldest book in the Bible. Job lived at a time not long after the flood when man's life expectancy at birth was over 200 years. At the end of the book of Job (42:16) it is recorded that Job lived another 140 years *after* his troubles befell him ...and he was evidently not a young man when that happened. He had a number of children who were full grown adults at that time. This suggests a lifespan at the least, approaching 200 years. Depending upon how old he was when his troubles befell him, he could have lived will over 200 years!

In the genealogical records of Genesis, Noah had a great, great, great, great grandson named *Jobab* (Genesis 10:25-29). The name Jobab, as spelled in Hebrew, has at its core the same three Hebrew letters (yod, vav, and bet), that make up the name Job. The name *Job* could very easily be, and likely is, a contracted version of the name Jobab. Just as it is today, it was a common practice to shorten names in ancient Semitic languages. It would make perfect sense then at that time, when writing space was at a premium, the author of Job's story would have used the shorter version of Job's name since he had to write it many times, and Job's full official name was used in the genealogical record where his name is only written once. If our Job is this Jobab as I believe he is, there are some other very interesting facts that accompany him which snap perfectly into place like puzzle pieces. Along with the fact that the length of Job's life matched perfectly the life expectancy of others born at the same time, Job would have lived at a time when all of his fathers before him back to Shem and Noah still lived! He would have been born somewhere around 150 years after the flood when the earth was yet sparsely populated, and he would have died somewhere in the first half of Abraham's life. This can all be deduced from the genealogical records in Genesis. (See Life-span chart link at end of this article)

There are also passages in the book of Job that are very compelling in their appearance to have alluded to Noah and Shem as living contemporaries! In Job 15:10, Eliphaz said:

“Both the gray haired and the aged are among us, **much older** than your father.”

And Bildad exhorted Job to consult certain individuals the apparent identity of whom has been completely missed by scholars. Bildad said to Job:

“For inquire, please, of **the former age**, and consider the things discovered by **their fathers**; for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days on earth are a shadow. **Will they not teach you and tell you, and utter words from their hearts?**” Job 8:8-10 NKJV

It certainly appears that Bildad is referring to Noah and Shem who lived in “*the former age*” before the flood. When Elihu speaks in chapter 23, in verse 6 he said to Bildad and his two friends, “you are very old”, yet Bildad likened the length of his life to “*a shadow*”, as though he had been born only “*yesterday*” compared to the age of those he wanted Job to consult! The implication is clear. These men from the former age were very old, alive and *able* to be consulted! Noah would have been over 800 years old and Shem would have been well over 300. Shem alone would have known and had memories of his grandfather Lamech and his great grandfather Methuselah, while Noah would have known and had memories of his great, great, grandfather Jared, the father of his great, grandfather Enoch who “walked with God”. Enoch went for a walk with God and just up and left the earth with God before Noah was even born. Noah would have had memories of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech telling him stories of what they knew about Enoch. Now read the passage above again and ask yourself if it’s not obvious that Bildad was exhorting Job to tap into this ancient source of wisdom available through Noah and Shem.

Another very interesting thing about this passage is the rhetorical question that Bildad asks: “*Will they not teach you and tell you, and utter words from their hearts?*” The obvious answer to the question is; *Of course they will!* If Bildad was referring to Noah and Shem, Noah and Shem must have been well known for doing that very thing... teaching and speaking to others from their heart!

Another interesting fact about the book of Job is that except for the first two chapters and part of the very last chapter, the style of writing is a form of ancient Shemitic poetry. It is considered a book of poetry by the Jews which is why it is located as the first of the books of poetry right before Psalms in the Tanakh (“Old Testament”). David, and other contributors to the Psalms would have undoubtedly known about and read the book of Job. Elihu’s words “...God my Maker, Who gives songs in the night,” in Job 35:10 might well have been the inspiration for David and Asaph to make mention of *night songs* in Psalms 42:8, 77:6, and 149:5.

Inherent problems in the translation of Job.

When it comes to translating an ancient Hebrew text like the book of Job, it is not a simple matter of exchanging one English word for one Hebrew word because there were far fewer words in the vocabulary of the ancient writer than there are available for us in English. Many of the ancient words covered a much broader spectrum of possible meanings and it was assumed by the writer that the reader would have the ability to determine the correct meaning of the word from two factors. First and foremost, it was assumed the reader would understand the meaning of a word based on the context in which it was used ... and not just in the immediate context of the sentence, but also from the larger contexts of paragraph, and even entire book! Secondly, it was also assumed by the writer that the reader would have the knowledge to eliminate possible meanings of a word that implicated something everyone knew wasn't true! This point is self-evident and should go without saying. But alas, we have a couple passages from Job that have been very poorly translated, and one in particular has been translated in such a fashion as to render it downright blasphemous in its implications against God's character. The author of Job assumed his readers would know the simple fact that God is righteous, and a righteous being would never torment an innocent person! However, most of today's discourse on Job hinges on that one terribly mistranslated passage that renders God as having admitted He did just that to Job. We will get to that passage shortly as well, but first, there is another fact concerning the book of Job that I would like to mention.

We are missing a portion of the book of Job!

I fully realize that an argument from absence can be very tenuous. The operative word here is "can". However, many arguments from absence are *excellent* arguments! Here is the rule: To the extent an expectation can be established that something *should* be found ...will be the degree to which an argument based on its absence will be credible. Even though my case in defense of God is solidly based on what we *do* have of Job, it is evident that what is missing would undoubtedly shed more light on the situation and help to clear the air and end the confusion.

There is an obvious gap and a portion of material missing that has evidently gone unnoticed by scholars between the end of chapter 37 and the beginning of chapter 38. The proof is that in every other instance, the author of the book of Job very courteously and properly introduces the reader to every new scene and every new speaker. However, at the beginning of chapter 38, the reader is abruptly thrust into a new scene to which he was not properly introduced! To further establish the fact that something is

missing, the new speaker, God, addresses Job as the one who was last speaking, when it wasn't Job who was speaking at the end of chapter 37! I might not have noticed this gap myself had I not decided one day to sit down and read the whole book of Job in one sitting just to get the feel and flow of the entire book, and the particular Bible I had chosen to read it in just happened to end chapter 37 at the bottom of the right page and start chapter 38 at the top of the next page. Have you ever been reading a book and turned the page to continue and found yourself thrown into a scene that doesn't flow from the page before? Everyone who reads has. You immediately realize that you have mistakenly turned more than one page! Then, just as surely as you rub your thumb and index finger together on the turned page, it separates and there you find the missing material. That's exactly what I did, but the page wouldn't separate! I had been reading Elihu's discourse against Job ...where he was making his case well and appeared to be building to a summary when I turned the page and read;

Then the Lord replied to Job out of the whirlwind and said: "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" Job 38:1 NKJV

My first thought was, "What whirlwind?!" I wasn't introduced to any whirlwind scene!" Can you imagine the storyline of Moses and the burning bush in Exodus 3 going something like this?

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Lord God spoke to Moses from the burning bush and said...

No! Because you'd immediately say: "What burning bush? I wasn't introduced to any burning bush!" But the record in this account does exactly what any reader would expect. It introduces us to the burning bush.

And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. Exodus 3:2 NKJV

There's your introduction to the burning bush! The author of Job had properly done the very same in every other instance in his story.

If the lack of a proper introduction to a whirlwind scene wasn't evidence enough that something was missing, to make matters worse, the very first words of chapter 38 were, "Then God answered Job..." clearly indicating it was Job who had been speaking last, when it was Elihu I had left off with at the bottom of the previous page! I seriously tried to separate one page into two for several seconds! When I saw there was no separating

out new pages I immediately assumed something had gone wrong with the printing of that particular Bible. It wasn't until I consulted other Bibles and even my interlinear Hebrew Bible that I had to finally accept the fact that we have all there is of the book Job! When and where these parts were lost is anyone's guess. Apparently they were lost very early, possibly from the original record itself. There is good reason to believe as some scholars do, that the original writing of the book of Job was imprinted by the author on clay cuneiform tablets and it was Moses who obtained access to what was left of the Joban tablets and copied them for Israel. If this is true, it would appear there was a tablet missing at that time. Maybe someone dropped one and it shattered or something. Who knows? Scholars who study ancient cuneiform tablets tell us that tablets in a series were never numbered. The authors used a method of key words and thoughts called *colophon phrases* to connect the end of one tablet with the beginning of the next. An introduction to a whirlwind scene at the end of one tablet would have been a perfect and classic example of a connecting colophon phrase to a next tablet that began with, "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind..."

Whatever the case may be, we are certainly missing two things, and probably a third thing in this gap.

1. We are *probably* missing *Elihu's summary* which, in a nutshell, stated his case against Job and on behalf of God's righteousness.
2. We are *certainly* missing *Job's typical rebuttal* to everyone who spoke to him. There's no reason to believe Job would have made an exception for Elihu. This fits together perfectly with the fact that Job had to have been speaking just before God came on the scene because God addressed Job as the one who had been speaking last!
3. And we are certainly missing *an introduction to a whirlwind scene!* This introduction could have been longer and quite dramatic in its description of what happened, but it would not have had to be any longer than something like:

"And while Job was yet speaking, there arose a great whirlwind."

One more quick note before getting to the doctrinal substance of the book of Job. Some teachers have tried to use the argument that God was offhandedly referring to Elihu as the one who didn't know what he was talking about, because after verse one where it says, "*Then the Lord replied to Job out of the whirlwind and said,*" it continues to say in verse 2:

"Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" Job 38:2 NKJV

This argument is proffered by those who don't like what Elihu had to say and want to paint him as the bad guy in the story. It is evident to even the casual reader that God is referring to Job in this verse because God says in the very next verse:

“Now prepare yourself like a man: I will question you, and you shall answer ME! Where were YOU when I laid the foundations of the earth?” Job 38:3-4a NKJV

It is obvious that God was angry with Job, and He was addressing *him* as the one who was out of line. The proof of this shows up a little later. At the end of God's rebuke of Job, Job himself stated those words had been addressed to him and no one else. Job speaks to God and says:

“You asked, ‘**Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge:**’ Therefore have I uttered what I did not understand, things too far from me which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak: You said, ‘**I will question you, and you shall answer Me.**’” Job 42:3-6 NKJV

So much for the theory that God's words were addressed to Elihu!

Another very important take that follows from the fact that God spoke to Job when He said, “Who is this who darkens *counsel* with words without knowledge.” is the realization that God just referred to someone's words as “counsel”! It was Job who had been rebutting and *darkening* something that God called *counsel*. It should go without saying that what God calls counsel is indeed counsel. So who had given Job “counsel?” In light of the facts that God later reprimanded Job's other three friends for not saying what they should have, and it had been Elihu who had been speaking most recently in the record before God came on the scene, the only conclusion we can come to is that it was Elihu's words that God had called “counsel”. Since this is the case, should we not give special consideration to what Elihu had to say to Job?

We will take a look at those words shortly, but let us first take a look at some of the doctrinal aspects of the book of Job.

So why do bad things happen to good people?

Almost without exception, Bible teachers say the book of Job was given to us to answer the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” The subject of Job's suffering and why it was brought upon him is indeed the main storyline and subject matter of the book, but the ironic thing is, it appears that nobody is ever able to answer

the million dollar question! Not one of the many books and discourses on the book of Job that I have consulted have offered an answer. They all come to the conclusion we simply *don't know* why bad things happen to good people! It is eventually stated in one way or another that the answer is beyond our ability to understand and in God's hands. So how much sense does that make? Why would we be given a book to answer a question that can't be answered? In my younger days at Bible College--a time in my life when I didn't know much--my class took an entire semester to study the story of Job to try and answer the question of why good people suffer. At the end, the professor stated that the simple answer to the question is, "We just don't know!" My first thought even then was, "What a waste of time *that was!*" That was 40 years ago and my understanding has changed and grown dramatically since.

Much of the problem with trying to answer the question of why bad things happen to good people stems from the faulty presuppositions both inherent in the question and those we tend to laminate on top of it. We might see the question for what it is if we just ask the inverted version... "Why do **good** things happen to **bad** people?" You see, the question presupposes that justice *should* be done in real time on this earth. Does it not? This presupposition stems from the fundamental presupposition which suggests that everything that happens on earth is part of God's sovereign plan. In other words, God is in absolute control. Therefore, if God is fair, just, and righteous, these things should not be happening. Can you see the error in this line of logic that is the problem? Those of a more Calvinistic-like persuasion will be perfectly blind to it ...and, sad to say, that includes nearly all of Christianity to one degree or another. The error is in the foundational belief everything that happens in a person's life is part of a sovereign preordained plan of God. It is not! Much has been written and on this subject that space won't allow for here. There are links to my other work on this matter at the end of this article, but for the remainder of this work, I will refer to this kind of worldview and mindset where God is seen as being in absolute control as *Calvinistic*.

The other presupposition that gets *laminated* on the question of why bad things happen to good people when considering it in light of Job's story is the assumption that God works in every person's life the same way He did in Job's life. This is not true. Not only does God deal differently with people in that to whom He has given much He requires much, I don't believe God is as directly involved with man at this time as He has been in the past. This truth should be self-evident. I believe that will change again in the near future, but throughout the Biblical record it is obvious that God has been steadily distancing Himself from man due to man's ever increasing evil. At one time God appeared regularly to Adam and his wife and walked with both of them in the Garden of Eden before they sinned. Even after they sinned He still appeared occasionally, but it became less and less. When God had all but stopped showing Himself to man around

the time Enosh was born to Seth, it says “men began to call on the name of the Lord.” (Genesis 4:26). I believe they were saying, “YHVH, where are You?” ...the reverse of God’s earlier call to Adam, “Adam, where are you?” (Genesis 3:9). Man continued in his descent. After a time, God only showed Himself to very few people. Enoch and Noah were said to have been privileged enough to have gone for a *walk with God*. (When it says someone “walked with God” I don’t believe it was meant figuratively. People were often given names and titles from the things they had done.) But it finally came to the point where man became so evil that God actually said He regretted making man on the earth (Genesis 6:5-7). This cannot be interpreted as anything other than an admission by God, that, had He *known* beforehand that man was going to become as evil as he did, He would not have created him!

After the flood, God would occasionally appear to certain men again, but those appearances were becoming less and less frequent. The last three men to have seen God’s face were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It’s interesting, and maybe even heartbreaking to know, that in the burning bush story, God told Moses He wanted to be known by a name that included the names of the last three men to have seen His face! God told Moses to tell Israel He was, “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”! Then He said, “This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.” (Exodus 3:15) By the time of Moses several centuries after Jacob, even a man like Moses wasn’t permitted to see God’s face anymore! Moses and other prophets continued to hear God’s voice, but God continued to be heard less and less as man continued to turn on Him and kill His prophets. When man finally murdered Yeshua, His anointed son, it was like the last straw, and God not only removed His presence from the Temple, less than 40 years later the Temple itself was completely destroyed. There were a few followers of Yeshua who continued to house the Spirit of God and worked miracles for a time, but that also ended around the time of the Temple’s destruction. I believe God all but completely removed His Spirit from the earth at that time, and left man to fulfill his evil and be his own god as he so desperately wanted to be. In the book of Hosea, God said these words: “I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense.” (Hosea 5:15). This is proof that God *does* back off from man and his evil. However, I also believe God has left His angels here to do what they can on behalf of those who do love Him and seek Him. I firmly believe this is the situation in which we live today. Any honest observation of the current situation makes it painfully obvious God does not move in the world like He did in times past. The point I make is that God is not directly involving Himself in man’s affairs today the way He was at the time of Job. Therefore, when it comes to understanding the reasons for the suffering that people endure today, I believe people are fooling themselves if they think God is directly involving Himself with them as He did with Job. It is my conviction that the vast majority of suffering which occurs in the world today is due to nothing more than the fact that we

live in a God-forsaken evil world where suffering is a natural byproduct of evil and God's absence. There is no need to find a *divine* purpose for every case, nor is there reason to condemn those who suffer.

Yeshua had something to say about this issue of condemning those who suffer:

There were present at that season some who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Yeshua answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." Luke 13:1-5 NKJV

From these words it would appear Yeshua is indicating there is protection and deliverance from bad things available to those who repent, but he also made it very clear that no one is in a position to condemn those who do suffer. There's no doubt Yeshua was simply saying "stuff happens." At this point in time, all we are able to do is *humbly* pray and petition God whose character we know, love, and miss, and hope angels are commissioned to intervene on our behalf and deliver us from "stuff."

So the book and story of Job was *not* written to show us how God operates in every individual's life, *nor* was it written to answer the question of why bad things happen to good people. As you will see, it was written to teach certain principles and show us what God thinks of issues like pride and humility!

Job's story

The book and story of Job begins like any good story and properly introduces us to the main character. "There (once) was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job." We are then told about Job, and the first thing we learn about him is that he was a "blameless and upright" man (Job 1:1). The Hebrew word that was translated "blameless" would be better understood in the sense of being outwardly "pious". The Old King James version actually translates the word as "perfect". This rendering has led to much of the misunderstanding of Job in that people think Job was flawless in every way, when, as you will see, he was not. Nevertheless, Job had done what was right for a long time and God had blessed him with much because of it. Job was a very wealthy man in his day. He was married and had seven sons and three daughters ...all of whom were grown and had left home. We are given an example of how *pious and*

upright Job was in that he would regularly offer sacrifices to God on behalf for each of his children just in case they might have sinned against God (Job 1:4-5). He was just that err-on-the-side-of-caution pious kind of man.

The next scene takes place in heaven:

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the Lord said to Satan "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless (pious) and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Job 1:6-12 NKJV

There are many things to be gleaned from this passage, but there are just a few that we need to focus on here. First, notice who it is that brings up the subject of Job. It wasn't Satan. It was God. Take special notice that right from the start, God is the one controlling where this discussion goes. He intentionally taunts Satan with Job's uprightness, and He knew full well the kind of response it would elicit from him. Most people read this and picture in their minds a fair give and take between God and Satan where Satan unexpectedly presents a challenge to God that God just can't resist and now the bet is on ...too bad for Job! **Nothing** could be further from the truth! God is never manipulated by anyone! God is the one doing all the manipulating here ...and He has a purpose in mind. He *wanted* to draw Satan's attention to Job to take notice of something that had *already* occurred but he hadn't noticed yet. Satan had no doubt tried to get at Job in the past but couldn't because of the "hedge" of protection around him. This "hedge" was no doubt comprised of angels God had stationed around Job, his family, and his possessions to protect him *from* Satan. That's why Satan mentioned it and whined about it. Satan had obviously left Job alone for some time looking for more exposed targets knowing it was a waste of time trying to get at him. What Satan didn't know is that while he was busy elsewhere, the hedge of protection around Job had come down! There was a *reason* for why it had vanished, and there was a *reason* why God wanted Satan to notice it that we will get to shortly, but it was this *new* exposure to Job that Satan had not noticed that God *wanted* him to notice! God said, "Behold" which

means, “notice something!” “All that he has *is* in your hand...” God never said anything remotely like, “O.K. We’ll see. As of now I grant you special permission...” Yet that is what people have continually tried to read into this story! Moreover, did you notice that nowhere in this exchange did God disagree with Satan and indicate in any way that He thought Job would **not** curse Him to His face? God probably thought to Himself, “Yes, Job might do just that!” because, as you will see, Job did in fact effectively come to curse God! How then could this exchange between God and Satan possibly be construed to be a challenge or a bet if one side doesn’t even take a position on the matter? God does not need to prove anything to Satan. God had a purpose in mind for Job and Satan was just His unwitting tool. At this point, God draws the line and forbids Satan from touching Job’s body. This alone should tell us who’s controlling the situation.

Satan leaves the presence of God and destroys everything Job has and kills his children. Job holds fast to his faith in God and makes the famous statement:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord.”
Job 1:21 NKJV

Then it says;

In all **this** Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong. Job 1:22 NKJV

At this point, Job did not sin or charge God with wrong. The operative word in this passage is “this”. But things are about to escalate and change. The purpose for which God had drawn Satan’s attention to Job had not been met.

The second attack: “without cause?”

Now comes scene two in heaven. In this section is found the horrendously translated sentence that I mentioned earlier. It is one that everyone should have instinctively known there is something terribly wrong with it. I have highlighted it in bold print and will address it afterwards.

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said to Satan, “From where do you come?” So Satan answered the Lord and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.” Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless (pious) and upright man, one

who fears God and shuns evil? And still he hold fast to his integrity **although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.**” Job 2:1-3 NKJV

To date, I know of no Bible teacher who interprets this passage to mean anything other than God was essentially bragging to Satan and saying: “I’m winning this bet even though you got Me to destroy Job when he really didn’t deserve it”. One would have thought the prospect of God doing something like that to an innocent man would cause people’s stomachs to turn. Yet that’s the way it’s read and interpreted by nearly everyone! Is God really admitting here that Job didn’t deserve it? What stretch of the concept of righteousness is capable of administering that which isn’t deserved? Administering that which isn’t deserved is the very definition of UN-righteousness. Is God really admitting to being unrighteous toward Job here ...and doing it just to settle a stupid bet with the devil?

Words and time fail me to adequately express the literal hatred I have for that lying picture. It is a lie from lowest bowels of hell. It has caused incalculable damage to man’s ability to truly love God. Who would want to get anywhere near a capricious being like that ...knowing that no matter how well you behaved yourself, you might be next? That is exactly how the most evil tyrants on earth have always behaved. They keep everyone around them guessing and in a state of terror. Hell would love to have you believe God is that way!

Don’t even try going down the road that some Bible teachers go when they say God made it all right and adequately compensated Job after settling His bet with the devil by giving him twice as much as he had before. All the blessings in heaven cannot make an unrighteous act a righteous one. Adequate compensation might be able to make the trouble worthwhile from the person’s point of view, but it can never make an unrighteous act by God righteous. It’s like the abusive man who beats his wife and then tries to make it up to her afterwards. She still knows full well it could, and probably will happen again! God has never, and *will* never, perform even one act of unrighteousness!

In no way shape or form did God admit to being unrighteous toward Job. Nor did He admit to having been manipulated or moved by Satan. This passage is undoubtedly the worst translated passage in the Bible for all the damage it has done to God’s reputation. Everyone should have instinctively known there is something wrong with it ...especially when there are other possible translations and interpretations available! So what’s with this apparent desire by so many to want to believe God could or would ever act in such a manner, and where does it come from? More on this later.

There happens to be one translation that does a far better job of painting the right picture. This translation is not necessarily known for getting it right, but in this case it nailed it. It comes from the relatively obscure Moffat's translation, which reads:

"It was idle of you to entice Me to undo him." Job 2:3 Moffat's

The Hebrew word that was translated "without cause" in the other translations **primarily** means "*gratis*", "*gratuitously*", "*for nothing*", "*in vain*", in other words, "effectless", or "idle". (See Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament, Strong's 2600) "*Without cause*" is listed as only a third possibility! So which interpretation do you suppose the author of Job assumed his readers would automatically know was the right interpretation? The one that makes God out to be an unrighteous, capricious, psychopath? Or the interpretation that simply portrays God as taunting the devil with: "You're getting nowhere with him or Me!"?

God was taunting the devil again because he wasn't done using him to get to the problem He wanted to address in Job because the first round didn't do the trick! Remember, God is the one who keeps bringing up the subject of Job. Then Satan said to God:

"Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life."
Job 2:4-6 NKJV

Again notice that God said "behold", which means "*notice something*". "Behold" does not mean; *I give you special permission*. What God wanted Satan to notice was that Job himself was now exposed. In His mercy and desire to see Job come to his senses with as little pain as possible, God had previously drawn the line for the devil at Job's person. It didn't work. Now God is forced to redraw the line at Job's life. But, as you will see, it was Job who was ultimately responsible for exposing himself. He would have been a dead man right from the start had God not mercifully drawn these lines for the devil. It was God's mercy and desire to see Job come to repentance of a very serious problem that kept him alive.

At this point Satan goes out and strikes Job with a painful boils. Job's wife then counsels him to "curse God and die" ...no doubt getting the idea to suggest it from the devil. Job refuses to curse God, and then it says, "In all this Job did not sin with his lips." (Job 2:10) The operative words here again are, "In all **this**." Up to *this* point, Job refuses to curse God or charge Him with wrong. But things are about to change.

Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar then come to him and mourn with him for seven days. After this Job opens his mouth and begins to curse. He started by cursing the day he was born. Eliphaz replied to Job's complaint, challenging his observations and gets nowhere trying to convince him he's wrong. Job speaks again, then Bildad replies and gets nowhere. This exchange of discourses continues between Job and his three friends for some time. Many interesting things are said by each of them, some of which I have mentioned earlier. This back-and-forth exchange goes on until Job's friends run out of things to say. What they said essentially amounted to accusing Job of having committed some terrible hidden sin. Job vehemently denies having done anything of the sort each time. Job's three friends rightly portray God as righteous and one who would never do something like this to Job if he were perfectly innocent, but they are unable to name the sin when it was right in front of them! They were looking for external sins like theft, adultery, etc. and again, after each accusation, Job would emphatically declare his innocence of the crime.

Job accuses God of wrongdoing and challenges Him

Then, Job started doing something he didn't do before. He began to "charge God with wrong"! Job began to accuse God of unrighteousness. This is exactly where God wanted to get Job that Job hadn't come to after the first attack. Now the pus from the boil on his heart was starting to show. Listen to some of his complaining and accusations toward God. Note: Words bracketed in blue are my interpretations of what Job was saying.

"...He (God) crushes me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause [I didn't do anything to deserve it.] He will not allow me to catch my breath, but fills me with bitterness. If it is a matter of strength, indeed He is strong: And if of justice, who will appoint my day in court? Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me. Though I were blameless, it would prove me perverse. [No matter what I say or how blameless I am, I can't win.] I am blameless, yet I do not know myself; I despise my life. It is all one thing. Therefore I say, '**He destroys the blameless and the wicked.**' **If the scourge slays suddenly, He laughs at the plight of the innocent...**" Job 9:17-23 NKJV

"**He (God) tears me in His wrath, and hates me; He gnashes at me with His teeth; My enemy sharpens His gaze on me.**" ... "God has delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over to the hands of the wicked. I was at ease, but He has shattered me; He also has taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces; He has set me up for His target, His archers surround me. He pierces my heart and does not pity; He pours out my gall on the ground. He breaks me with wound

upon wound; He runs at me like a warrior. I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, and laid my head in the dust. My face is flushed from weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death; **although no violence is in my hands, and my prayer is pure.**" Job 16: 9,11-14,17 NKJV

"Know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net." Job 19:6 NKJV

If God had indeed admitted to Satan that He destroyed Job when he didn't deserve it, Job would have been perfectly justified in leveling these accusations against God ...would he not? Job was accusing God of unrighteousness, and in the process he was making himself out to be more righteous than God! He even goes so far as to challenge God in a court of righteousness where he claims he could beat God at His own game!

"Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come to His seat! I would present my case before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say to me. **Would He contend with me in His great power? No! But He would take note of me. There the upright could reason with Him, and I would be delivered forever from my judge.**" Job 23:3-7 NKJV

Whoa! Are you beginning to see the problem yet? Surprisingly, Job's three friends weren't seeing it yet!

One of the most famous quotes from the book of Job is always interpreted the wrong way and paraded as Job's wonderful steadfast confession of faithfulness when in fact his words should be seen as the arrogant, defiant, nonsense that they are:

"Though He slay me, yet will I serve Him." Job 13:15 NKJV

This is nothing short of a boast in an ability to beat God at His own game of righteousness, effectively making his own righteousness greater than God's! He could as well have said, "Take your best shot God, I'll still beat you hands down!"

Then Job accuses God of being capricious, a behavior where someone does what they want when they want with no consistency or rational justification for their actions. It is a particularly nasty kind of unrighteousness. Since Job really believes this about God, notice the effect it has on Job's love for God and any desire to be near Him.

“But He is unique, and who can make Him change? And whatever His soul desires, that He does. For He performs what is appointed for me, and many such things are with Him. Therefore I am terrified at His presence; when I consider this I am afraid of Him.” Job 23:13-15 NKJV

Job wasn't done. Now listen to these words and try to tell me Job doesn't effectively curse God!

“As God lives, who has taken away my justice, and the Almighty who has made my soul bitter, as long as my breath is in me, and the breath of God in my nostrils, my lips will not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. Far be it from me that I should say you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. **My righteousness I hold fast and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live. May my enemy be like the wicked, and He who rises up against me like the unrighteous.**” Job 27:2-7 NKJV

In Job 16:9 quoted above, Job referred to God as “my enemy”. The context of this passage makes no allowances for some *other* enemy. Who else could Job be speaking of here?

Job's incredible pride

Then Job launches into a long defense of his pious, upright life. Finally, he lets us see into his frame of mind and how he saw himself before his troubles befell him. He spends all of what is chapter 29 reminiscing about *the good old days*. Listen to how he thought of himself and notice the pronoun usage.

“Oh, that **I** were as in months past, as in the days when God watched over **me**. When His lamp shone upon **my** head, and when by His light **I** walked through darkness; Just as **I** was in the days of my prime, when the friendly counsel of God was over **my** tent; when the Almighty was yet with **me**, when **my** children were around **me**; when **my** steps were bathed with cream, and the rock poured out rivers of oil for **me**! When **I** went out to the gate by the city, when **I** took **my** seat in the open square, the young men saw **me** and hid, and the aged arose and stood. The princes refrained from talking, and put their hand on their mouth. The voice of nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard, then it blessed **me**, and when the eye saw then it approved **me**. Because **I** delivered the poor who cried out, and the fatherless and he who had no helper. The blessing of a perishing man came upon **me**, and **I** caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. **I** put on righteousness, and it clothed

me. My justice was like a robe and a turban. **I** was eyes to the blind, and **I** was feet to the lame. **I** was a father to the poor, and **I** searched out the case that **I** did not know. **I** broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the victim from his teeth. Then **I** said, 'I shall die in **my** nest, and multiply **my** days as the sand. **My** root is spread out to the waters, and the dew lies all night on **my** branch. **My** glory is fresh within **me**, and **my** bow is renewed in **my** hand.' Men listened to **me** and waited, and kept silence for **my** counsel. After **my** words they did not speak again, and **my** speech settled on them as dew. They waited for **me** as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide as for the spring rain. **I mocked them** when they did not believe, and the light of **my** countenance they did not cast down. **I** chose the way for them, and sat as ruler; so **I** dwelt as a king in the army, as one who comforts mourners. But now **they mock me**, men younger than **I** whose fathers **I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock.**" Job 29:2-25, 30:1 NKJV

Sounds like Job was pretty full of himself before his troubles befell him doesn't it? Notice how humiliated he is at having to now suffer being mocked by who? "...*men younger than I whose fathers I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock*". Job despised and disdained certain people and actually placed their value beneath that of his dogs! What incredible arrogance and pride!

Soloman, like his father David, would have read the book of Job. You don't suppose this passage from Job could have been part of the inspiration in the wisdom of his words:

"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Proverbs 16:18

This was the problem with Job that God wanted to bring to an end. It was the very reason He drew the devil's attention to Job in the first place. Job had lifted himself up in his own eyes because of his *outward* righteous that he became *inwardly* unrighteous and began seeing himself through the eyes of others as equal to God. There was no humility in him. There wasn't any humility before men, and there wasn't any humility before God even after his troubles came upon him. Job arrogantly stood against God Himself, challenging Him to a duel of righteousness where he claimed he could beat God at His own game! It was this pride that had to end. God had blessed Job for his earlier righteousness and protected him and his possessions, but Job let it go to his head and started arrogantly treating others with condescending contempt. God could not continue rewarding that kind of behavior and let it appear He was sanctioning it in any way. It had to stop, one way or another. Job was ultimately responsible for the hedge of protection coming down because of his pride. God only drew Satan's attention to the fact for the purpose of bringing Job to his knees.

What is it that God requires of man?

“He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to **walk humbly** with your God.”
Micah 6:8 NKJV

Three things God requires, and Job had completely failed to “walk humbly” with God.

Yeshua’s parable concerning the Pharisee and the Tax collector

Yeshua spoke a parable describing a man just like Job. It could very well have been his indirect commentary on Job. You see, the story of Job is in reality the first record of the Pharisee kind of pride that Yeshua is well known for exposing.

Also he spoke this parable to some who **trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others**: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘**God, I thank You [destiny?]** that I am not like other men-- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week: I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to **me a sinner!**’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; **for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**” Luke 18:9-14 NKJV

Does not this parable fit Job perfectly?

Now compare the two following passages. The first comes from Yeshua speaking of the Pharisees again, and the second from Job’s own mouth, and see if Yeshua wasn’t perfectly describing Job.

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. **For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men.** Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward”.
Matthew 6:5 NKJV

“When **I** went out to the gate by the city, when **I** took **my** seat in the open square, **the young men saw me and hid, and the aged arose and stood. The princes refrained from talking, and put their hand on their mouth. The voice of nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth.**

When the ear heard, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw, then it approved me.” Job 29:7-11 NKJV

Job was so full of himself ...he really thought he was something! The reason men like Job lose all humility and forget to see themselves through God’s eyes and walk humbly with Him but instead begin to see themselves through other’s eyes as something awesome, is because they **“loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”** (John 12:43). It’s an issue of self-centeredness ...a love for one’s self more than a love for one’s Maker.

In comes Elihu

As the story continues in chapter 32, Job’s three friends finally give up trying to figure out which outward act of unrighteousness Job had committed. They couldn’t see the inward problem of pride right in front of their eyes. At this point, a younger man by the name of Elihu has heard enough out of Job and decides to speak. He notices the arrogance with which Job defends himself and condemns God. Here are some of the highlights of what Elihu had to say. Speaking first to Job’s three friends he says:

“I am young in years, and you are very old; therefore I was afraid and dared not declare my opinion to you. I said, ‘Age should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.’ But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding. **Great men are not always wise, nor do the aged always understand justice.**” Job 32:6-9 NKJV

Then Elihu turned his attention to Job:

“Surely you have spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the sound of your words, saying, ‘I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent, and there is no iniquity in me. Yet He finds occasions against me, He counts me as His enemy; He puts my feet in the stocks, He watches all my paths.’ **Look, in this you are not righteous!**” Job 33:8-12 NKJV

“What man is like Job, who drinks up scorn like water, who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men? **For he has said, ‘It profits a man nothing that he should delight in God.’** Therefore listen to me, you men of understanding: **Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to commit iniquity.** For He repays man according to his work, and makes man to find a reward according to his way. **Surely God will never do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert justice.**” Job 34:7-12 NKJV

“Has anyone said to God, ‘I have borne chastening; I will offend no more; **Teach me what I do not see**; If I have done iniquity, I will do no more’? [[The obvious answer to this question is, NO](#)] Job 34:31-32 NKJV

“Oh , that Job were tried to the utmost, **because his answers are like those of wicked men! For he adds rebellion to his sin. He claps his hands among us, and multiplies his words against God.**” Job 34:36-37 NKJV

“Do you think this is right ...that you say, **‘My righteousness is more than God’s’**? For you say, ‘What advantage will it be to one, or what profit shall I have, more than if I had sinned?’” Job 35:2-3 NKJV

“Bear with me a little, and I will show you that there are yet **words to speak on God’s behalf**. I will fetch my knowledge from afar; **I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker**. For truly my words are not false; One who is perfect in knowledge is with you. [[In other words, “I see perfectly well what is going on here!”](#)] Job 36:2-4 NKJV

God finally comes on the scene

Elihu continues to describe God’s unquestionable righteousness. He is building his case against Job when suddenly we are thrown into an unannounced whirlwind scene where God Himself shows up and speaks to Job. We have already dealt with the fact that we are missing part of the story here. Job must have been in the process of replying to Elihu and probably calling him an ignorant young brat of some sort when a whirlwind came up and cut him short. Elihu had defended God, and now God came on the scene to defend Elihu and declare his words “counsel”! At this point, everyone had had enough of Job. What God says to Job now can be summed up in one short sentence:

“Who on earth do you think you are?”

The first question God asked Job is:

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?” Job 38:4 NKJV

I don’t know about you, but just hearing Almighty God thunder that question to another man takes *my* breath away and makes *me* quake in my boots! What do you suppose it did to Job? God continued to describe a number of things He does and knows, and asked Job how he compares. Many Bible teachers argue that God’s words were meant

to imply... “I alone am God, and as God I can do what I want when I want and there’s nothing you can say about it.” I ask, if that were true, why would God care what Job thinks about it? No capricious tyrant ever feels compelled to give an explanation of his actions to anyone! God obviously placed value on what Job and the others thought of Him.

The reason this picture of a God who, “*does what He wants when He wants and there’s nothing you can say about it,*” continues to flourish is because it fits well with Calvinist doctrines. It could not be further from the truth. God’s discourse to Job has **nothing** to do with explaining Himself. It has **everything** to do with forcing Job to see how small and **unlike** God he really is. Coming face to face with this fact is very humiliating for Job. He finally admits he’s wrong and humbles himself ...the very place God intended to bring him to from the start. Job says:

“I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You.
Therefore **I abhor myself, and repent** in dust and ashes.” Job 42:5-6 NKJV

Remember, just before cursing God, Job had previously said, “**my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live.**” (Job 27:6) Apparently something changed in Job!

God’s anger at Job’s three friends

God’s anger is then aroused at Job’s three friends for setting themselves up as counselors and not getting to the truth. It wasn’t that what they did say was so wrong. It was because they didn’t speak “what is right”. They inspected the outside of the cup and endeavored to find flaws in it but couldn’t. They failed to point to filth of pride inside Job.

...the Lord said to Eliphaz, “My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me **what is right** as My servant Job *has*.”
Job 42:7 NKJV

This is another place where there is an obvious error in translation, or at best, a misunderstanding. It should be pointing out that the Hebrew text of this passage does not end with the word “has”, it ends with the word “Job”. The word “has” was added by translators to complete the *supposed* thought in English.

It simply isn’t possible that God could have indicated here that Job was right all along as some teachers suggest. How could God possibly have said Job was right all along when He had just blasted Job for saying so much wrong? If Job had been right all along, why did he need to repent? God immediately took Job back as soon as he

repented, but he had clearly been very wrong up to that point. Again, this picture of *innocent Job* who really didn't deserve what he got is the preferred interpretation of those who want to keep the lie going.

The word that has been translated "as" is simply one Hebrew letter (caph) that is prefixed to another Hebrew word meaning "My servant". It can't be denied that this letter means "as" or "like" in a comparative sense. So if there were any words of Job that God could have referred to as "what is right" they had to have been the words Job just uttered when he repented.

"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You.
Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:5-6 NKJV

This was the point that Job needed to be brought to and his three friends had failed to bring him there. The other possibility is that something has been lost in the most ancient meaning of a word, or a mistake was made in the identity of a single Hebrew letter in the earliest copy, and what was thought to be a *caph* was really the Hebrew letter *bet*, and the text was originally intended to read; "you have not spoken of Me what is right **to** My servant Job." This rendering would make the most sense, but it certainly can't be that God indicated Job had been speaking the truth all along.

Job, an innocent victim of God's bet with the devil?

So what is with this apparent need for so many in both Christianity and Judaism to see Job as an innocent victim? One would think that if another interpretation were available, where God isn't made to be a pathologically unrighteous sucker for a devil's challenge, everyone would instantly embrace it! The answer to that question is found in the story of Job itself. It's man's pride. Job would have much rather found fault with God and condemned Him to save himself!

"Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it." "Would you indeed nullify My judgment? **Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?**" Job 40:1,8 NKJV

Nothing has changed since then. Man today would still rather see God as the ultimate source of all their problems to justify themselves and relieve themselves of any real responsibility for wrong in this world. Considering what it took to get Job to snap out of it, what do you suppose the chances are people today will snap out of their pride after simply being told the truth?

The truth is, this Job-like pride is rationalized in a Calvinistic worldview, where, under the guise of ascribing greatness to God, people actually make God responsible for all the evil in the world. Hardcore Calvinists will say it outright ...that evil itself is a part of God's plan from the very beginning. This blasphemous lie brings the people who subscribe to it a supposed "peace" that stems from believing God is in complete control, when in fact that "peace" should really be termed "relief". The feeling is *relief* from any real responsibility for one's actions. This is the true source of appeal behind the embracement of this damnable doctrine. The end result is that people have a view of God to which they cannot relate. Therefore it is impossible for them to truly love Him or want to be anywhere near Him. Who would want to be close to a person who might decide at any time to destroy you no matter how good you are? Satan's goal of making it impossible for man to love God is accomplished in all who believe this lie.

A similarly corrupted passage from the Psalms

At this point it might be enlightening to take a look at a verse from the Psalms where it is clearly illustrated how Calvinist special interests have altered another passage in an effort to promote their doctrines.

Even though the NIV translation has only been around since 1978, many people have heard and are familiar with its version of this particular passage. It is where David supposedly says to God:

"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalm 139:16 NIV

Everyone who hears these words comes to the conclusion the number of days a person will live is predetermined and known by God before a man is even born, *and*, God has preordained what happens on each and every one of those days in exhaustive detail and has written it all in a book somewhere! This is the exact conclusion the Calvinists want you to come to. This passage is continually being used to proof-text their doctrines of predestination and a God who is in absolute control. But is that what David really said? **NO!** Not at all! Not even close! One thing that is telling is that you will never hear this version quoted in its context! The reason it is never quoted in context is because there is no connection that can be made from it to anything that was said before or after! The old King James Bible renders this passage most accurately. As you read the following translation from the KJV in the entire context of the subject matter at hand, bear in mind that we have two very respected translations saying two completely different things ...and they can't both be right.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully **made**: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. **My substance** was not hid from thee, when I was **made** in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see **my substance**, yet being unperfect; **and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.**” Psalm 139:14-16 KJV

The NIV has David saying all the **days of his life** were written in a book beforehand, and the KJV has David saying all his **body parts** were written in a book at the time he was conceived and he was just a blob of cells “substance” growing in his mother’s womb before any of his parts could be identified! It should be obvious from the context which translation is the correct one. The context demands that the subject matter be about what was happening to him in his mother’s womb when he was “made”. The context has absolutely nothing to do with what happens to him after he gets out of the womb and begins the days of his life!

And what has become a terrible collateral loss to the truth in this blatantly corrupted translation is the obvious identity of this “book” in which David said his body parts were written out before any of them could be identified. **David was speaking of the DNA genetic code!** At that time, no one had any idea there was such a thing! Apparently David had been told by God there was such a thing! Imagine that! It would have been more forgivable for translators of the KJV in the early 15th century to get it wrong since they also knew absolutely nothing about the breathtaking detail with which every part of the body is written out as a “run” program at the moment of conception, than it is forgivable for the Calvinists to pervert the truth out of it at a time when we knew well about the DNA genetic code! But the KJV translators got it right!

It is telling that the list of editors involved in the translation of the NIV Bible reads as a list of who’s who in the academic halls of Calvinist tradition. If you consider yourself a conservative and have hated the way the mainstream media continually slants the news to the left in an attempt to sway public opinion that direction, realize, the same deceitfulness has occurred in the translation of the NIV Bible. At every opportunity to do so, the NIV inserts a translation designed to lead the reader to a Calvinist position. You can see this plainly in the very verse from Job 2:3 that we dealt with where most translations render “without cause.” The NIV says “without any reason” to further drive home the picture that God admitted Job didn’t deserve it. Another proof of this is evidenced in the fact that there is no Hebrew word for “sovereign”. The word cannot be found in other translations like the new or the old King James versions. But the NIV has chosen to use it many times in place of God’s name in an attempt to get the reader to think of God as sovereign ...in the sense that *He does what He wants when He wants and you have nothing to say about it.*

But at the same time, Calvinist NIV editors have effectively blown up their own doctrine of God being in absolute sovereign control of what made it into the Bible! By rendering passages with completely different meanings from previously well-established translations they have created **two** Bibles and both can't be right! One of them has to be in error and containing material that obviously should not have made it in there!

God is righteous

God is righteous. He never commits even one act of unrighteousness. Every act of His is right, and morally justifiable.

“The Lord is righteous in **all** His ways.” Psalm 145:17

“...the Lord our God is righteous in **all** the works which He does.” Daniel 9:14

“To declare that the Lord **is upright**; He is my rock, and there is **no** unrighteousness in Him.” Psalm 92:15

God obviously wants us to know this about His character. Since God wants us to know He is righteous, is it not therefore assumable that we should be able to comprehend the meaning of righteousness? How futile would it be for God to tell man He was righteous if man were not capable of comprehending righteousness? Calvinism teaches that whatever God does is righteous because He's God and He gets to define righteousness. Even if God does something that appears totally unrighteous to us, Calvinists say it's still righteous, because God did it and that makes it right. But this is another damnable lie. This line of logic is identical to the rational Richard Nixon used when he said, “if the president does it ...it isn't illegal”! Remember that one ...where Nixon actually thought he was above the law? God is not above the law of righteousness. Righteousness is a standard that God holds Himself to ...flawlessly! More on this shortly.

This kind of God who is above the law is the kind of God the Calvinists serve. One of the Godly founding fathers of this country, Thomas Jefferson, could not have said it better:

"I can never join Calvin in addressing *his God*. He was indeed an atheist, which I can never be; or rather his religion was daemonism. If ever a man worshiped a false God, he did. The being described in his five points, is not the God whom you and I acknowledge and adore, the creator and benevolent governor of the

world, but a daemon of malignant spirit. It would be more pardonable to believe in no God at all, than to blaspheme Him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin."

Thomas Jefferson---To J. Adams, 1823

<http://www.barefootsworld.net/tjletters.html#pshort1820>

Notice Thomas Jefferson adored God! Only in knowing what righteousness is and that God **is** righteous can one possibly say this. No Calvinist can truly love the false God he has created.

Where did the Calvinistic worldview come from?

The Calvinistic worldview has its origins in Greek philosophy. The Greeks attempted to determine through philosophical means what the attributes of deity must include. They also came to some foolish conclusions concerning good and evil. Here's how the Greeks reasoned in a nutshell:

Evil is necessary for good to be seen as good. Therefore God, if He is good, must also create evil to show how good He is!

If you noticed, this philosophy concerns appearances and perceptions and has nothing to do with hard facts. Smoke and mirrors are used here to stand truth completely on its head! To say this philosophy is utter nonsense would be an understatement. It is in fact *totally depraved*. The first tenant of Calvin's 5 demonically pathological points that Thomas Jefferson referred to asserts that man is born *totally depraved* (which he is not!). Here, in this Greek philosophy which suggests God must create evil to show how good He is (a philosophy on which Calvinism itself rests) is where the real *total depravity* is lodged! It is truly "morally corrupted and perverted". But this philosophy made its way into the thinking of first century Pharisees and is the reason that much of Rabbinic Judaism--which fondly traces its roots back to the first century Pharisees--teaches the same damnable things concerning the issue of Job! The best-selling book "When bad things happen to good people" was written by a Rabbi. This same Greek philosophy came into Christianity by way of the Pharisee Paul! Check out this quote from the book of Romans and compare it to the notion that God must create evil show how good He is:

"Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, that He might make known the riches

of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,...?" Romans 9:21-24 NKJV

This passage is a favorite of the Calvinists. The entire context of this passage (Romans 9:6-24) contains the heart and soul of Calvinist doctrine. Leading up to the above passage, Paul misquotes, takes out of context, or misrepresents at least 4 passages from the Tanakh to concoct and cobble together his new doctrine. This is getting too far off subject and too big a matter for this article. (For those who are interested, links to my other works on this subject are located at the end of this article.) Concerning the passage above where Paul clearly indicates that God creates evil just to show how good He is, it should in fact turn everyone's stomach to think that God could ever act in such an unrighteous manner. Far be it from the Righteous Almighty to intentionally create a man destined for destruction **at all**, but to do it just to contrast his torment with a person whom He destined for glory so the glorified person can see just how good God is, is beyond unrighteous ... **it's pathologically evil!**

Unlike Paul, who never even saw Yeshua's face, the apostle Peter walked with Yeshua and listened to his teaching for over 3 years. He said that God "...is **not willing** that **any** should perish but that **all** should come to repentance." (2Peter 3:9) Apparently then, God's will is **not** being done!

Thomas Jefferson was absolutely right about Calvin. Interestingly, he had a few things to say about Paul too!

"Paul was the great Coryphaeus, and **first corrupter of the doctrines of Jesus.**"

From a letter to W. Short published in *The Great Thoughts* by George Sildes (Ballantine Books, New York, 1985, p.208)

Jefferson had it figured out where the damnable doctrines of the Calvinists came from and he rejected Paul's supposed authority. But now we're boldly going where few Christians have dared to go before by questioning the validity of something found in the Bible! But, realize this: The idea that the Bible, as we have it, is perfect and infallible from beginning to end has its origin in Calvinistic doctrine! It is the idea that everything that occurs on earth is part of God's sovereign plan. The logic flows from this that an all-powerful God would never allow His word to be corrupted! Can you see how air tight this line of circular reasoning is? Restated another way, it's like this:

The Bible, in Paul's letters, teaches that God is in absolute control. God was therefore in absolute control of what made it into the Bible! Paul's letters made it into the Bible!

This is like a virus that masks itself as it enters. The one truth that pulls the foundation out from under this self-supporting logic is that God is **not** in absolute control, therefore His will is **not** being done! Scriptural evidence from Moses, the prophets and Yeshua, clearly demonstrate this to be true.

Here are several examples from Genesis alone. One I mentioned earlier is that God said He “*regretted*” making man on the earth (Genesis 6:6-7)! Another example that we’ll be looking closer at in a minute demonstrates that God was not perfectly aware of everything that was going on in Sodom and Gomorrah, and decided to go on a fact-finding mission to see for Himself. A third example is the fact that God brought the animals He created to Adam “**to see** what he would call them” (Genesis 2:19). And just for good measure, a fourth example is the fact that God said to Abraham, “**Now I know** that you fear God...” (Genesis 22:12)! In each and every one of these references we see new information coming to God ...information He didn’t have previously! How can God be in absolute control if He’s not perfectly aware of everything? These and other passages like them clearly demonstrate that in an effort to truly give man free will, God took His hands off man and limited His knowledge of what man would do. It’s really that simple. The Pharisees and modern Rabbi’s and Calvinists totally ignore these passages for the plain truth they portray. Instead of letting God reveal His nature and character to us, they would rather let Greek philosophy set the parameters of God.

So, if things can happen that God doesn’t want to happen, then things could have made it into the Bible that shouldn’t have! Paul’s words are one of them. And some things that should have been there, like the missing parts of Job, didn’t make it! Calvinists can’t even get themselves to consider the possibility that there is an interpretation of the book of Job that puts the responsibility for Job’s troubles squarely on Job himself. What are the chances any of them will consider the possibility that there are parts missing from the book of Job?

There are two separate incompatible worldviews here. Either you believe like the Greeks that God is in absolute control and ultimately responsible for everything, including the evil in the world, or you believe what God has revealed about Himself--that He has taken His hands off His creation and given it free will to see what **it** would do ...and, His creation is perfectly capable of doing things He didn’t want or expect. You can’t have it both ways. You can’t keep one foot in each world. Either God knows, or He doesn’t. One must choose between going with the god of the Greeks or the God of Genesis!

Just as surely as God took great risk in creating man with free will for the purpose of making true love possible, Calvinism reverses that and sucks the life and love out of its

adherents by believing in a God who takes no risks. I've actually run into some hardcore Calvinists online who outright admit that those of us who don't believe their doctrines are merely predestined to spend all eternity in the torments of hell for the purpose of making their supposed eternal glory look and feel that much better by contrast! Their Job-like condescending arrogance is breathtaking. This calloused view of those *predestined for destruction* is in fact what the Pharisee Paul taught in Romans 9. There is no disputing it. True Calvinists really don't care. They are like their fathers the Pharisees of whom Yeshua said:

“You are of your father the devil, and **the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer** from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resource, for he is a liar and the father of it!” John 8:44 NKJV

Nothing has changed in almost two thousand years ...certainly not among religious leaders. What Yeshua said to the Pharisees he would say to today's followers of Pharisaical doctrine.

Interestingly enough, John Calvin himself was a murderer just like Yeshua said of the Pharisees. Calvin had Michael Servetus burned at the stake as a heretic for disagreeing with him. Calvinists who know about it try to sweep it under the carpet. Some actually try to rationalize it as being “*just the way things were done back then.*”

It should also come as no surprise that Calvinist doctrine is attractive to those who for whatever reason are already incapable of, or have a diminished ability to love.

What is righteousness?

Righteousness is a standard apart from God that God holds Himself to flawlessly. If I were to ask the question: What is 2 plus 2?, the righteous answer is 4. It doesn't take God to make 4 the right answer! If you were to ask God what the right answer to this question is, He will always say 4. If God were to say the answer to the question is something other than 4, like say 5, that would not make 5 a righteous answer, it would make God unrighteous. There is great security in knowing that God will say 4 every time He's asked the question, and He wants us to know this about Him.

Abraham knew God is righteous, and he was stunned when he thought he heard God say He was about to do something to Sodom and Gomorrah that he knew was unrighteous. There are two things in the following excerpts from Genesis I'd like you to notice. First, is the fact that God is going on a *fact-finding* mission to Sodom and

Gomorrah! How could this be possible if He already knows everything? Secondly, is the fact that Abraham knew it would be unrighteous for God to destroy the good people with the bad.

And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, **I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to me, and if not, I will know.**" Genesis 18:20-21 NKJV

And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" "...**Far be it from You to do such a thing as this**, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked: **far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**"
Genesis 18:23,25 NKJV

Abraham knew it would be an unrighteous act for God to destroy the righteous people with the evil people, and he held God to that standard! A little later in the story, Abraham understood that God had no intention of doing such a thing, but would get the few righteous people like his nephew, Lot, out before He destroyed the cities. Now listen to Elihu's words again and compare them to Abraham's words above:

"Therefore listen to me, you men of understanding; **Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to commit iniquity.** For He repays man according to his work, and makes man to find a reward according to his way. **Surely God will never do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert justice.**"
Job 34:10-12 NKJV

Summary and conclusion

The book of Job was not written to answer the question of why bad things happen to good people, nor was it written to show how God works in the lives of every individual today. Ironically, in the final analysis, the book of Job was written in an effort to prevent the very thing that it has been used to promote and justify! Pride.

Every person must decide which direction they are going to take. One must choose between one of two possibilities. Does God know everything in advance or doesn't He?

He can't both know and not know. There can be no fence-sitting on this. Many Christians have tried to keep one foot in each world and thereby keep for themselves a handy double standard in their back pocket from which they can choose the easiest on themselves depending upon the situation. But this, just as Job's pride, has got to come to an end. The arrogance and hypocrisy are making a mockery of God to the rest of the world.

So what will it be? Are you going to go with the God of Genesis, or the god of the Greeks? With the god of Greek philosophy there is no risk. Everything is prewritten in hard cold stone, where the coldness numbs the pain of guilt ...and with it it numbs the ability to truly love anyone at all ...especially God. With the God of Genesis comes the risk that is necessary for one to truly be able to love God and others. With this picture comes adventure and endless possibilities ...where even sin can be forgiven if one would just humble himself.

For more information on the subject of Paul, please see my free online book, *Yeshua and Judaism versus Paul and Christianity* at www.judaismvschristianity.com

Several featured articles include:

Lifespans of ancient patriarchs chart

<http://www.judaismvschristianity.com/Life%20spans%20of%20patriarchs.pdf>

Who were the false apostles Yeshua commended the Ephesian church for exposing as “liars”? <http://www.judaismvschristianity.com/False%20apostles%20to%20Ephesus.pdf>

The exact date of the writing of Revelation

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