

Q:

Why did God turn Job over to Satan?

The Book of Job might be the most trying book in the Bible.

I have read Job so many times, including much surrounding commentary, that I often feel like I am sitting alongside Job on the ash heap of his obliterated fortune, staring off at the horizon in a deep, long, incredulous silence.

For me, Job raises more questions than it answers and leaves little satisfaction upon deeper inquiry.

Taken as written, God brings an honorable and innocent man to the attention of Satan, then hands him over to be brutalized.

"The LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.'"

- Job 1:8

In the opening round, God grants Satan permission to do with Job as he pleases minus physical injury or death.

In the same breath, Job's livestock are slaughtered, his camels stolen, his servants murdered, and a mighty wind arrives from the desert to collapse his son's home killing all ten of his children.

A stunning first chapter in any book.

And so, we ask...

Who exactly is this God of Job?

What lesson can we take from Job's suffering under God's permission?

How would any of us react to such a series of events?

Set in the early world of the Old Testament, Job's God is pre-Israel, pre-temple, pre-law of Moses, and maybe even prior to God appearing to Abraham. In the conversations between Job and friends, God is most often referred to as El, Eloah, or Shaddai – Semitic names for 'The Almighty' and "the Creator".

This powerful God exists and Job knows Him. Job considers this creator God to be both his Judge and Redeemer.

"For even if I were right, I could not answer. I could only beg my Judge for mercy."

- Job 9:15

"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth."

- Job 19:25

To Job, God is the God who judges ALL humanity.

But what "law" would this God-judge preside over? Theologians refer to it as general revelation or natural law. A law inherited and known by every born soul.

Job recounts many of these laws and declares passionately that he has broken none of them.

"...the requirements of the law are written on their hearts."

- Romans 2:15

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And God also knows Job. Job fears and worships this God. A God who, up to this point, might appear to the reader as rather callous, uncaring, even cruel.

Unbeknownst to Job, and despite Job's status as "the greatest man among all the people of the East", God permits horrible calamities to fall upon him.

Notwithstanding, Job rises, tears his robes, shaves his head, and throws himself to the ground - in worship.

"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised."
- Job 1:21

In chapter 2, God once again mentions Job's name to Satan and removes any restriction except death. Satan pounces on the challenge and covers Job in oozing sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head.

Now broken, destroyed, and diseased, Job is left sitting upon the ashes of his former glorious life scraping his sores with a broken shard of pottery. His wife hisses at him:

"Curse God and die!"
- Job 2:9

Job's friends hear the terrible news and arrive to soothe and comfort Job. But their show of support quickly turns to accusation. They demand to know Job's hidden sins which have led to such tragedy.

All three live under the ancient Near Eastern paradigm – the righteous prosper and the wicked are punished. No exceptions.

Know therefore that God exacts of you less than your iniquity deserves."
- Job 11:6

"Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue."
- Job 20:12

The next thirty-some chapters are filled with sharp accusation countered by Job's declaration of innocence. And still Job remains painfully unaware of the reason for his woeful state. The reader is told. Job is not.

One is left to wonder how Job might have responded differently had he known. And through it all, Job never compromises his integrity.

He does, however, take every opportunity to rail against God. He insists God appear and give him a hearing. He begs God to relent. He laments ever being born. He accuses God of injustice. He grieves God's absence. He appeals to God to identify his sin. He demands an explanation.

"In all this did not Job sin with his lips."
- Job 2:10

WORD ON THE WORD:

The ancient Hebrew word tummah (pronounced "toom-AH") means integrity, innocence, or blamelessness - the idea of being complete, whole, finished, sound, or without inner fracture. More spiritually, one's inner and outer life match. From a carpenter's perspective – tummah describes a piece of wood under enormous pressure which bends, creaks, even scars, but does not split. It retains its integrity and remains structurally whole.

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And then, God appears.

*"Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:
'Who is this that obscures my plans with words
without knowledge?
Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you
shall answer me.'"*
- Job 38:1-3

God spends the next four chapters quizzing Job. Do you know how the universe came to be? Can you harness a wild ox to serve you? Can you land Leviathan (a sea monster) with a hook? Did you design the ostrich to outrun the horse?

God asks Job if he has ever seen the bottom of the ocean or if he knows where light lives?

Never does God address Job's circumstances or answer his demands.

And still, not once does Job curse God. He never turns away or denounces God. While his attack was blunt and often quite heated, it was always WITH God, managed inside the relationship.

*"My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept
his prayer and not deal with you according to your
folly. You have not spoken the truth about me, as my
servant Job has."*
- Job 42:8

Despite Job's direct confrontation, it was not Job who would be rebuked by God, but Job's feckless friends and their misguided theology.

God ultimately restores Job's fortunes delivering twice as much as he had before.

How different the story had Job's fortunes never been restored?

And, what happened to Satan? No mention of him again after chapter two. Perhaps there was no reason to return. The wager had been lost.

However, one thing he did say, almost offhandedly, continues to haunt humankind to this day:

"Does Job fear God for nothing?"
- Job 1:9

Can we love and fear God without expectation of reward?

Can we love something only for what it is?

Can we love God just because He is God?

*"Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me to know."*
- Job 42:3

Q. HAS THE WORD "SIN" LOST ITS POTENCY, ITS POWER TO IMPACT AND AFFECT OUR LIVES?

Q. WHAT IF THE APPLE WAS NEVER PLUCKED?

↳ WHAT IF IT STILL HUNG RIPE AND DELICIOUS IN THE CENTER OF THE GARDEN?

↳ WHAT WOULD THE STORY OF MAN AND GOD HAVE BEEN?



TROUBLE
WILL COME.

TROUBLE
WILL GO.

TROUBLE
WILL COME AGAIN.

"THEN JOB ROSE, AND RENT HIS MANTLE, AND SHAVED HIS HEAD, AND FELL DOWN UPON THE GROUND, AND WORSHIPPED."
- JOB 1:20

"AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS THAT GOD DID TEMPT ABRAHAM AND SAID UNTO HIM, ABRAHAM: AND HE SAID, BEHOLD, HERE I AM."
- GENESIS 22:1

□ ONLY GOD/JESUS MAY CALL ANOTHER A "HYPOCRITE" FOR ONLY THEY CAN SEE INTO A PERSON'S HEART.

def: HYPOCRITE - those who stage acts of righteousness for public approval while their hearts remain insincere.

1 THE "POSEUR" - MAKES A PUBLIC SHOW OF HOLINESS

2 THE "PUSHER" - FORCES HIGH STANDARDS ON OTHERS THAT THEY DO NOT FOLLOW THEMSELVES

3 THE "PREOCCUPIED" - OBSESSED WITH EXTERNAL RITUALS WHILE NEGLECTING THE HOLY MATTERS OF THE HEART
(SOURCE: 4QT QUESTIONS)

"THESE PEOPLE DRAW NEAR TO ME WITH THEIR MOUTHS... BUT THEIR HEARTS ARE FAR FROM ME."
- ISAIAH 29:13

JOB

"WHO IS THIS THAT DARKENETH COUNSEL BY WORDS WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE?"
GOD, JOB 38:1

"A HUMBLE FAITH AND SINCERE OBEDIENCE SHALL SEE FURTHER AND BETTER INTO THE SECRET OF THE LORD THAN ALL THE PHILOSOPHIES OF THE SCHOOLS, AND THE SEARCHES OF SCIENCE, SO CALLED."
- Matthew Henry