

THE EPILOGUE OF JOB

Job 42:10-17

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## An Exposition



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THE EPILOGUE OF JOB

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A Commentary  
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Dr. Merrill F. Unger

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by  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                 |    |
|-------------------------------------------------|----|
| TRANSLATION OF JOB 42:10-17 . . . . .           | 1  |
| ANALYSIS OF CLAUSES . . . . .                   | 2  |
| INTRODUCTION . . . . .                          | 4  |
| The Position of Job . . . . .                   | 4  |
| The Period of Job . . . . .                     | 5  |
| The Problems of Job . . . . .                   | 6  |
| I. HIS RESTORED HEALTH 42:10 . . . . .          | 8  |
| The Reason for His Deliverance, 10a,b . . . . . | 8  |
| Job's part, . . . . .                           | 8  |
| Yahweh's part . . . . .                         | 9  |
| The Radicality of His Deliverance, 10c. . . . . | 10 |
| II. HIS RETURNING FRIENDS 42:11 . . . . .       | 11 |
| The Relationship of the Friends, 11a. . . . .   | 11 |
| The Rejoicing with His Friends, 11b . . . . .   | 12 |
| The Remembrance by His Friends, 11c . . . . .   | 12 |
| The Riches from His Friends, 11d. . . . .       | 14 |
| III. HIS REGAINED POSSESSIONS 42:12. . . . .    | 16 |
| The Reason for His Wealth, 12a. . . . .         | 16 |
| The Rewards in Detail, 12b . . . . .            | 17 |
| IV. HIS RENEWED POSTERITY 42:13-15. . . . .     | 20 |
| His Sons, 13a . . . . .                         | 20 |
| His Daughters, 13b-15 . . . . .                 | 21 |

|                                              |    |
|----------------------------------------------|----|
| Their recorded names . . . . .               | 21 |
| Jemima . . . . .                             | 22 |
| Keziah . . . . .                             | 22 |
| Keren-happuch . . . . .                      | 23 |
| Their ravishing beauty . . . . .             | 24 |
| Their rare inheritance . . . . .             | 25 |
| V. .HIS REALIZED LONGEVITY 42:16-17. . . . . | 26 |
| His Real Age, 16a . . . . .                  | 26 |
| His Resultant Joy, 16b . . . . .             | 27 |
| His Rich Life, 17 . . . . .                  | 29 |
| CONCLUSION . . . . .                         | 31 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .                       | 34 |

THE EPILOGUE OF JOB

JOB 42:10-17

TRANSLATION:

And Yahweh turned the fortune of Job when he prayed for his friends and Yahweh increased all that was Job's two-fold.

Then came to him all his brothers and all his sisters and all his former acquaintances, and they ate bread with him in his house, and they bemoaned him, and they comforted him concerning all the evil which Yahweh had brought upon him, and each one gave him a Keshita (piece of money) and each a golden ring.

And Yahweh blessed Job's end more than his beginning and he had fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels and a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand she asses. And he had seven sons and daughters. And the one was called Jemima (Dove) and the second Kezia (Cassia) and the third Kerenhappuch (horn of eye-makeup). And in all the land there were not found women so fair as the daughters of Job and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers.

And Job lived after this a hundred and forty years, and he saw his offspring and his children's offspring to four generations. And Job died, being old and satisfied with days.

ANALYSIS OF CLAUSES

- 10 וַיְחַוֶּה שָׁב אֶת־ שְׁבִית אִיּוֹן בְּהַתְּפַלְלוֹ בַעַד  
וַיִּסַּף הַדָּוָה אֶת־כָּל־ אֲשֶׁר לְאִיּוֹן רעהו  
לֹא שָׁגָה:
- 11 וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־אֲחָיו וְכָל אַחֵי־תִזְוֹ וְכָל־  
יָדְעֵי לִפְנֵיהֶם  
וַיֹּאכְלוּ עִמּוֹ לֶחֶם בְּבֵיתוֹ  
וַיִּנְדְּדוּ לוֹ  
וַיִּנַּחֲמוּ אֹתוֹ עַל־כָּל־הָרַעַךְ אֲשֶׁר־חָבִיא  
יְהוָה עָלָיו  
וַיִּתְגַּדְּלוּ אִישׁ קִשְׁטָה אֶחָת וְאִישׁ  
גִּזְמֹם זָהָב אֶחָד:
- 12 וַיְהוֹה בְּרַךְ אֶת־אֲחֵרֵית אִיּוֹן פְּרָאֲשָׁתוֹ  
וַיְהִי־קוֹ אֲרֻבְעָה עָשָׂר אֲלָפֵי צֶאֱן וּשְׁשַׁת אֲלָפִים  
גְּמָלִים וְאֲלָפֵי צֶמֶד בָּקָר וְאֲלָפֵי אֲתוֹנוֹת:
- 13 וַיְהִי־קוֹ שֶׁבַעֶנָה בָּנִים וּשְׁלוֹשׁ בָּנוֹת:
- 14 וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־הָאֶחָת יִמָּה וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית  
קֹצֵעָה וְשֵׁם הַשְּׁלִישִׁית קָרֹן הַפּוֹד:
- 15 וְלֹא נִמְצָא גְּשִׁים יְפוֹת כְּבָנוֹת אִיּוֹן  
בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ  
וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם גְּחָלָה בְּתוֹךְ אַחֵיהֶם:
- 16 וַיְהִי אִיּוֹב (אֲרֻבְעָה דְרוֹת): אֶסְרִי־זֹאת מֵאָה וְאַרְבַּעִים  
שָׁנָה  
וַיִּרָא אֶת־בְּנָיו וְאֶת־בְּנֵי בָנָיו אֲרֻבְעָה דְרוֹת:  
וַיִּסֹּת אִיּוֹב זִקְן וּשְׁבַע יָמִים:

## INTRODUCTION

### The Position of Job

Among all writings, inspired or uninspired, the book of Job stands preeminent for its lofty representations of the pure moral personality, the holiness, the unchallengeable justice, the wisdom, the omnipotence, and the absolute sovereignty of God. The formal kinship of the book of Job is with the Eastern hokmay or wisdom literature. Within the canon of the Old Testament the function of the wisdom books was to apply the foundational Mosaic revelation to the problems of human existence and conduct as they were being formulated in the philosophical circles of the world. A figure like Job, standing outside the Aaronic-Mosaic administrations of the Covenant, was an ideal vehicle for Biblical wisdom doctrine, concerned as it was with the common ways and demands of God. (Tenney, p. 433).

The position which the book occupies in our English Bibles after the historical books and before the Psalms is that which it has always occupied in the Western Church, at least since the days of Jerome. But in the original Hebrew it stands after the Psalms and Proverbs in the third of the three divisions (the Kethubhim) into which the Scriptures are divided by the Jews. It is rightly placed in close

connection with the Psalms and Proverbs, as being, like them, poetical in form (Gibson, p. IX).

### The Period of Job

The indications of date derived from the contents of the book, from its tone, and from its general style, strongly favor the theory of its high antiquity. The style has an archaic character, replete with Aramaisms which are not of the later type, but such as occur in parts of the Pentateuch, in the Song of Deborah, and in the earliest Psalms. The events which the author narrates belong to the early Patriarchal period, as is evident from features like Job's longevity, revelation by theophany outside the Abrahamic Covenant, the nomadic status of the Chaldeans, and the early social and economic practices. The historical allusions contain not the faintest hint of any of the great events of Israelite history, not even the Exodus. Judging from those facts, the book of Job is probably more ancient than any other composition in the Bible, excepting perhaps the Pentateuch, or portions of it (Pulpit Commentary, p. 15).

The book was not written until after Job's death (42:17) and the only tradition which has come down to us with respect to its authorship ascribes it to Moses. Though this tradition, affirmed by Aben Ezra (c. A. D. 1150) and the Talmud, is of little critical value, leaving it we would float upon a sea

of conjecture.

### The Problems of Job

The author of Job is a didactic writer. Placing the complicated problems of human life before him, he inquires into a number of its most hidden and abstruse mysteries. Why are some men especially prosperous? Why are others crushed and overwhelmed with misfortune? Does God care for men or does He not? Is death the end of all things? How can man be just with God? How can man know God? But above all--why must man suffer? These are the questions the book asks and which are directly or indirectly answered by the author.

Job is tried and tested in every possible way: by unexampled misfortunes, by a most painful and loathsome disease, by the defection of his wife, by the cruel charges of his friends, by the desertion of his relatives, by the insulting language and actions of the rabble (30:1-10). Yet he retains his integrity; he remains faithful to God; he continues to place all his hope and trust in the Almighty (13:15; 31:2,6,23,35). While hopelessly despondent and protesting passionately against what he interprets as an unjust divine sentence upon him, it is still to God that Job turns and cries. And although the Voice from the whirlwind has offered no explanation of the mystery of his past sufferings, it nevertheless controverts the theory of his friends, that all suffering

proceeds from sin.

With chapter 42 the drama reaches its conclusion and there only remains that the narrative should be satisfactorily concluded. This is done in 42:1-17 where the writer drops the poetical form and reverts to the plain prose of the prologue. In this epilogue Yahweh first turns to Job's friends and pronounces the verdict, condemning the friends and bidding them to offer a sacrifice, promising them pardon at Job's intercession (7-9). Thereupon follows the epilogue proper, where Job, magnificently vindicated, finds his destiny accomplished.

## I. HIS RESTORED HEALTH

### The Reason for His Deliverance.

Vs. 10: And Yahweh turned the fortune of Job when he prayed for his friends and Yahweh increased all that was Job's two-fold.

#### Job's Part

It is no coincidence and there is deep significance in the fact that the very moment when, as regards his friends, Job prays for them, he completely forgives and forgets, notwithstanding they had so grievously injured him, his disease departs from him. It happened when he prayed for his friends וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל בְּעַד רֵעֵיוֹ, not "because he prayed," not "in return for his praying," for בְּ before וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל can only express the idea of simultaneousness ("while, during"), though there most certainly may be a cause-effect relationship. The prayer was וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל בְּעַד. The preposition בְּעַד speaks of any kind of nearness, behind or after, round about, between; here no doubt pro or for, as in Job 6:22, 2:4 (Gesenius, p. 129). The original text properly reads in the singular "for his friend," which singular, however, is to be understood generally, as a collective singular (16:21), or it may be that, as in 42:7, Eliphaz is regarded as a representative of all his friends.

### Yahweh's Part

It was Yahweh that (literally:) turned the fortunes of Job. וַיִּפְּרֹץ placed first in this verbal clause receives the emphasis. וַיִּפְּרֹץ וַיִּפְּרֹץ does not mean "turned the captivity of Job." Expressions of this sort were not originally combinations of a verb and a noun, but arose from a reduplication of the verb וַיִּפְּרֹץ וַיִּפְּרֹץ. The phrase simply means: to turn the turning, to restore to the former condition, to cause an unfortunate turn of affairs to be succeeded by a fortunate one, which puts an end to the former. (Tur-Sinai, p. 580). The phrase וַיִּפְּרֹץ-וַיִּפְּרֹץ וַיִּפְּרֹץ occurs only here, with the name of an individual in the genitive after וַיִּפְּרֹץ; the genitive is generally the name of a people, occasionally that of a country (Jer. 33:11). The exceptional usage can perhaps be best explained in the common origin of the words, than that the verb came from וַיִּפְּרֹץ and the noun form from וַיִּפְּרֹץ, in which case the noun form would have lost its real meaning. Better yet, as Ewald demonstrated, the verb and noun are actually from the same root (ICC, p. 349).

When Job prayed his fortunes were turned. Perhaps his complete forgiveness by God was contingent on his own complete forgiveness of his "friends" (Mt. 6:12, 14, 15; 18:32-35). At any rate, his restoration, though no doubt gradual, followed his intercession.

The Radicality of His Deliverance

Yahweh increased all that Job had two-fold כִּשְׁנֵי.

The description which follows sets forth how this doubling of his former possessions, which need not be pressed throughout with literal exactness, was carried out in detail.

Duhm (p. 205) insists that vs. 10c is a later addition, for, how could Yahweh add (וַיִּשְׂבֹּר) to Job's possessions when he actually possessed nothing anymore. The verb should be וַיִּשְׂבֹּר, he insists. But although וַיִּשְׂבֹּר does mean to add, to increase, one need merely take this as having reference to his former possessions, mentioned in the prologue (1:1-5), to which the epilogue seems to stand in direct contrast. Job's fortunes changed completely. Literally then, the Lord added to all that had been Job's to the double. The subsequent verses speak of the restoration and doubling of Job's former prosperity (11-17). Vss. 11-12 narrate first of all the restoration of his former honor, authority, and dignity.

## II. HIS RETURNING FRIENDS

### The Relationship of the Friends

Vs. 11: Then came to him all his brothers and all his sisters and all his former acquaintances, and they ate bread with him in his house, and they bemoaned him, and they comforted him concerning all the evil which Yahweh had brought upon him, and each one gave him a Keshita and each a golden ring.

There came to him all his brothers and all his sisters and all his acquaintances. They came en toto, as signified by the threefold use of יָבִיאוּ. Everyone came, including all his יָדָעוּ (from יָדָע, plural active participle "to know, to be acquainted with"). The question is, Where had they been all along? It seems remarkable that none of these friends came near to him during his afflictions, and especially that his sisters should not have been with him to sympathize with him. But it was one of the bitter sources of affliction, that in his trials his kindred stood aloof from him. He says therefore in 19:13-14: "He hath put my brethren far from me and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed and my familiar friends have forgotten me." Delitzsch rightly observes (p. 389) that prosperity brought those together again whom calamity had frightened away; for the love of men is scarcely anything but a number of coarse or

delicate shades of selfishness." Job, however, does not thrust his friends back.

This narrative then is to be understood as the counterpart of the sorry visit by his three "friends" in 2:11, who were nothing but miserable comforters.

#### The Rejoicing with His Friends

They came to eat bread with him in his house. A sympathetic sould of a copyist of the LXX gives to the eating ones also something to drink: וַיִּשְׂקוּ, but the וַיִּשְׂקוּ וַיֵּאָכְלוּ doubtless includes the drinking. The eating of bread was an ancient token of friendship and affection (Ps. 11:9, Prov. 9:5, 23:6, Jer. 41:1). He was now in his own house-- וַיָּשָׁב, to which he returned after his recovery from his defiling illness (Barnes, p. 301). Before Job's calamities, his children feasted in their own houses (1:4); now that Job is restored, he resumes his hospitality.

#### The Remembrance by His Friends

They did not only eat bread with him in his house. More than that: they bemoaned him and comforted him over all the evil the Lord had brought upon him, whereof the worst part was their own coldness and desertion (19:13, 14, 19). Two verbs, containing a noteworthy alliteration, express their sympathetic attention. And exactly the same terms are used for the comfort

and sympathy of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar in 2:11: וַיִּנְחֵם and וַיִּנְחֵם. וַיִּנְחֵם means "to be moved, to be agitated" and followed by a dative, "to pity, to commiserate," as signified by a motion of the head (cf. Job 16:4-5). When followed by וַיִּנְחֵם, as here, it means "to comfort the afflicted." Hence, in comforting there is real physical empathy involved. The verb וַיִּנְחֵם properly means to pant or to groan, and in the Piel indicates "to signify, to declare grief or pity" (Gesenius, pp. 535, 544), followed by an accusative of persons (Gen. 50:21, Job 2:11). It sometimes includes the notion of help put forth, especially when used of God (Is. 12:1, Ps. 23:4). And it can be seen from the following context of this passage that the idea of help is included here too. Their comfort and sympathy, whether genuine or not, evidenced itself in real compassion and help. So it must ever be with our sympathy. Real compassion does not sit by idly at the need of others (Prov. 3:27-28).

Of special note is the fact that here Yahweh, instead of Satan, is seen as the bringer of the evil: וַיִּנְחֵם וַיִּנְחֵם וַיִּנְחֵם וַיִּנְחֵם. וַיִּנְחֵם includes the loss of possessions which do not yet seem to be restituted at this time. Was it not Satan who had originated all the evils which befell Job? Perhaps the inspired writer of the book, in his concluding remark, wants us to see the truth that God is sovereign in all of man's affairs and that nothing comes into

our life which does not first meet the approval of God. Ultimately it was God who tested Job, not Satan. God gave the approval; He set the limits for the evil; He terminated it in His own good time. Now it was Yahweh who restored His servant to honor. Everything is now subordinated to him, who was accounted as one forsaken of God.

#### The Riches from His Friends

Finally, to establish the renewed friendship, every man also gave him a piece of money and everyone an earring of gold. This they all did. ו'א is repeated twice. They all came; they all gave. The writer wants us to see the totality of the restitution. These gifts were presents of well-wishes, much like the present-day wedding gifts. This is probably one of the earliest instances in which money is mentioned in history. The Hebrew word נחשון occurs only in this place and in Gen. 33:19, where it is rendered "pieces of silver." It is evident therefore that it was one of the earliest names given to a coin, and its use here argues strongly for the antiquity of Job. Had the book been composed at a later age, the word shekel, or some word in common use to denote money, would have been used. The relationship of a Qesita--a weight for silver--to other weights is unknown. For a hundred Qesita Jacob bought the field where he spread his tent in Shechem (Gen. 33:19). The basic meaning of the word is "correct (measure),"

Aramaic ܟܘܘܩܐ. Arabic qist (= قسط) likewise means "correct measure, correct weight." Talmudic sources variously interpret this word as denoting a coin, an ornament, a sheep, like a similar word in the Talmud, but there is no room for these meanings here (Tur-Sinai, pp. 580-581). It is not an improbable supposition, however, that the figure of a sheep or lamb was the first figure stamped on coins, and this may be the reason why the word here used was rendered in this manner in the ancient versions.

Everyone also brought a ring of gold. The word rendered "ear-ring" (דָּוָד) may mean a ring for the nose (Gen. 24:47; Is. 3:21, Prov. 11:22; Hos. 2:13), as well as for the ear (Gen. 35:4). The word "ring" would better express the sense here, without specifying its particular use (cf. Jud. 8:24, 25; Prov. 25:12). It should be remembered that the oldest Egyptian coins had the form of a ring and that ṭṭṭ (talent) originally means ring. Ornaments of this kind were much worn by the ancients (cf. Is. 3, Gen. 24:22) and a contribution of these from each one of the friends of Job would constitute a valuable prosperity (Ex. 32:2-3). It was not uncommon for friends to bring presents to one who was restored from great calamity, as in the case of Hezekiah (II. Chron. 32:23)(Barnes, p. 303).

### III. HIS REGAINED POSSESSIONS

Vs. 12: And Yahweh blessed Job's end more than his beginning and he had fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels and a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand she asses.

#### The Reason for His Wealth

Job's friends, which vanished with his fortune, returned with the same. Again they sit at his hospitable table and comfort him because of his misfortune. Their small presents, which no doubt were originally intended to be a present towards the basis of his new prosperity, serve now as folio, on whose background the whole fulness of God's blessing now comes to the fore. גַּרְדָּךְ הָיָה; Yahweh had given, Yahweh had taken away, and now He was blessing again. Yahweh takes away only to enrich, never to ruin and to destroy the faithful. Job's latter end, אֲחֵרֶיךָ, is blessed more than the former, רִאשִׁיתוֹ. The comparative כִּי highlights this change in Job's fortune. And the remainder of the verse emphasizes in detail just how radical the rewards were. James in the New Testament carries on the theme by pointing to Job with the following words: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. The end is the Lord's and therein lies the comfort: גַּרְדָּךְ הָיָה .

The restoration of prosperity prophesied by Eliphaz (5:18-26), Bildad (8:20-21), and Zophar (11:13-19), but not expected by Job, came, not in consequence of any universal law, but by the will of God, and in His pure grace and favor. It in no way pledged to compensate worldly prosperity in the case of another sufferer; and certainly the general law seems to be that such earthly compensation is withheld. But, in combination with the instinct which demands that retributive justice shall prevail universally, it may be taken as an earnest of God's ultimate dealings with men and a sure indication that, if not on earth, at least in the future state, each man shall receive "the deeds done in his body," according to that he had done, whether it be good or evil.

#### The Rewards in Detail

The number of sheep and goats, camels, oxen, and she asses is exactly twice the number given in 1:3, which were Job's former possessions. Several interesting observations can be made from Job's property. First of all, the absence of horses or mules from the list is an indication of the high antiquity of Job. Horses were not known in Egypt till the time of the shepherd-kings (ca. 1900-1650 B. C.), who introduced them from Asia. None are given to Abraham by Pharaoh contemporary with him (Gen. 12:16). We hear of none as possessed by the Patriarchs in Palestine, and on the whole it is not probable

that they had been known in Western Asia very long before their introduction in Egypt from Central Asia.

Secondly, the items of Job's wealth accord with those of Abraham's (Gen. 12:16). Thirdly, Job's wealth of cattle is not beyond credibility. Egyptian lords of the 4th dynasty are known to have had similar possessions. Further, the proportion of the camels is noticeable and implies a residence on the borders of the desert (Pulpit Commentary, p. 2).

Job's possessions are those of a large and princely household. Although Job is not to be regarded as a Bedouin, but as a settled prince, or Emir (1:4, 18; 29:7; 31:32), who also engaged in agriculture (1:14; 5:23; 31:8, 38ff), his wealth is nevertheless, after the manner of those countries, estimated according to the extent of his flocks and herds (1:3: שֵׁן אֶבְרָם), together with the servants belonging to it.

Job had fourteen thousand אַיִל. Sheep and goats are expressed in Hebrew by this single collective term, inadequately rendered "sheep" or sometimes, less inaccurately "flock," so Gen. 30:31f, a passage which proves the extent of the term in Hebrew. A simple term sufficed to cover the two classes of animals, inasmuch as the flocks generally contained both sheep and goats, as they commonly still do today (ICC, p. 5).

Moreover, Job possessed camels and a thousand yokes of oxen. אֵיִל is a yoke, i. e., a pair. Oxen were being

worked in pairs in tilling the land, as seen in 1:14: "oxen were ploughing." Only the she asses are mentioned as forming the most valuable part of this species of cattle property and also indicate that Job's wealth is not stated exhaustively. In Syria even today the she asses are far more numerously owned than the males, and sold at three times the value of the latter, and this is not so much for the milk as for breeding (Delitzsch, p. 390). The terms used for sheep and goats, לְאֵז and for oxen בָּקָר, are collective and as such include females; the masculine plural used of the camels, גַּמְלֵי, is applicable also to females (Gen. 32:15).

The only thing which is omitted here, and which is not said was doubled, was his "household," or "husbandry" (1:3), but it is evident that they must have increased in a corresponding manner, to enable him to keep and maintain such flocks and herds.

#### IV. HIS RENEWED POSTERITY

Vs. 13-15: And he had seven sons and daughters. And the one was called Jemima and the second Kezia and the third Kerenhappuch. And in all the land there were not found women so fair as the daughters of Job and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers.

##### His Sons

In contrast to 1:2, the children appear here only after the possession of the herds, because the cases of misfortune happened in this order (1:13ff) and because the birth of the sons and the daughters was completed later than the doubling of the flocks. Job has the same number of children which he had before his trials. Nothing is said of his wife or whether these children were or were not by a second marriage. The last mention that is made of his wife is in 19:17, where he says that "his breath was strange to his wife, though he intreated her for the children's sake of his own body."

The character of this woman does not seem to have been such as to have deserved farther notice than the fact that she contributed greatly to increase the calamities of her husband.

Job receives the same number of children again, which is also so far a doubling as deceased children also, according to the Old Testament view, are not absolutely lost (II. Sam.



of their acquaintance bestowed upon them. Concerning the giving of names among the Shur even in present-day Arabia, A Musil writes: "Der Name hat immer Bedeutung: er soll die gewuenschten Eigenschaften angeben...Oft entspricht der Name der augenblicklichen Stimmung des Vaters" (Peters, p. 500). Names were bestowed because they were significant of returning prosperity (Gen. 4:25), or because they indicated hope of what would be in their time (Gen. 5:29), or because they were the pledge of some permanent tokens of divine favor (Is. 8:18) (Barnes, p. 304).

Jemima.--Of the three names, יְמִימָה seems to signify the "dove" or "pure as the dove" (possibly "dove-eyed" cf. Cant. 1:15, 2:14, 4:1), unless the Vulgate, LXX, and Chaldee versions are followed, which bring the word into connection with יָמִים, "day," Arabic يَوْمٌ, explaining it to mean "pure, bright as the day" (Lange, p. 631). The name thus conferred would indicate that Job had now emerged from the night of affliction, and that returning light shone again on his tabernacle.

Keziah.--The basic meaning of קִזְיָה is "peel," as the Mishnaic קָצַע, קָצַעַה "to peel." The name was used specifically of the peel of the aromatic plant Laurus cassia. The bark resembles cinnamon but is less aromatic. Cassia grows in Arabia and was used as a perfume. The Chaldee

Paraphrast explains this as meaning that this name was given to her because she was as precious as cassia. Cassia is mentioned in Ps. 45:8 as among the precious perfumes: "All thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia." The agreeableness or the pleasantness of the perfume was the reason why the name was chose to be given to a daughter (Barnes, p. 304).

Keren-happuch.--The third one was called קַרְנֵי הַחֶפְצִי. \_\_\_\_\_ is a box or jar and thus the term means "paint horn, box of ointment." The חֶפְצִי (stibium) was a paint or dye made originally, it is supposed, from sea-weed, and afterward from antimony, with which oriental women have from a remote antiquity anointed the upper and lower eyelids in order to give lustre or beauty to the eye and to make the eye appear larger. The קַרְנֵי is mentioned in I. Sam. 16:1,13, the חֶפְצִי in Jer. 4:30 and II. Kgs. 9:30, Ez. 23:40. Large eyes are considered in the East as a mark of beauty.

The name of the daughter perhaps pointed to the exceedingly beautiful eyes of the girl (Peters, pp. 500-501), or it was given on account of her graceful nature and action, which served to heighten her natural beauty. Therefore she is the charming one who spread her charm all about her (Lange, p. 630). The third daughter was perhaps the most beautiful--as younger daughters often are--possessing a beauty heightened by artificial means. There were therefore like three graces and verse

15 shows that they were all their names implied.

### Their Ravishing Beauty

"And in all the land were no women found as beautiful as the daughters of Job," reads v. 15a. The אֵלֶּיךָ is plural in the LXX, Syriac and Vulgate since this Niphal perfect, used in the passive impersonal sense, has reference to a plural noun, בְּנֵי. In the same verse there is another grammatical form, worthy of note. Three times the third masculine plural ending should correctly be a third feminine ending, in the words בְּנֵי, בְּנֵי, and בְּנֵי. This apparent discrepantcy is due to a weakening in distinction of gender, which is noticable elsewhere and which probably passed from the colloquial language into that of literature; masculine suffixes referring to feminine substantives, as here and in Gen. 31:9, 32:16, 41:23, Ex. 1:21, 2:17 and many other places (Kautzsch-Cowley, p. 440, par. 1350). Even with the difference in gender, the reference is clearly to Job's daughters. The use of אֵלֶּיךָ expresses an objective unconditional negation here, comparable to the οὐκ in Greek. The meaning then is clear: there simply were no more beautiful girls found among the women of the land. Beauty has always been highly valued in the East; and Job would feel himself greatly favored in having three beautiful daughters.

### Their Rare Inheritance

The fact that their father gave them an inheritance among their brethren is mentioned as a general proof of his special regard and is also recorded because it was not a common custom. It was strictly at variance with the regulations of the Mosaic law and sounds more Arabian than Israelitish, for the Thora only recognizes a daughter as heiress where there are no sons (Num. 27:8). The writer is conscious that he is writing extra-Israelitish pre-Mosaic history. The equal distribution of property gives a pleasing picture of family unity in the commencement of history. At the same time it implies that Job did not lack sons-in-law for his fair, richly-dowered daughters. This fact is confirmed by verse 16 and it further serves as corroborating evidence for the antiquity of Job.

In this equal inheritance then is seen the proof of Job's wealth and fatherly regard. And it is also a provision for allowing his daughters after marriage to continue to live among their brothers. Thus the same concord prevails among these later children of Job as among the earlier (1:4).

## V. HIS REALIZED LONGEVITY

### His Real Age

Vs. 16: And Job lived after this a hundred and forty years, and he saw his offspring and his children's offspring to four generations.

Since it is not known how old he was when his afflictions came upon him, it cannot be precisely determined the age at which he died; but as he had previous to his affliction a family of ten children all grown up, he could hardly have been less than sixty or seventy years. The hundred and forty years are probably also to be taken as double of that number of years which he had lived thus far (Ps. 90:16), since God granted him twice as much in other respects too. The LXX emphatically represents Job as being seventy years old at the time his sore trials befall him, although for unknown reasons it adds thirty years to his total age, making him two-hundred forty years old (Duhm, p. 256).

A further indication of Job's old age is the fact that in all likelihood Job's sons had already families of their own (1:4). It should be remembered that in Patriarchal times, when men lived to a great age, marriages did not occur at so early a period of life as they do now. Barnes (p. 306) makes a cogent argument for the age of Job:

In this book, also, though the age of Job is not mentioned, yet the uniform representation of him is that of a man of mature years; of large experience and extended observation; of one who had enjoyed high honor and wide reputation as a sage and a magistrate; and when these circumstances are taken into the account, the supposition of the translators of the Septuagint, that he was seventy years old when his afflictions commenced, is not improbable. The age to which he lived is mentioned as remarkable, and was evidently somewhat extraordinary.

Barnes then goes on to observe that the length of human life after the flood suffered a somewhat regular decline until, in the time of Moses, it was fixed at about threescore years and ten (Ps. 90:10). He gives instances which show the regularity of decline, and enable us, with some degree of probability, to determine the period of the world in which Job lived. Noah lived 950 years; Shem, his son, 600; Arphaxad, his son, 438 years; Salah, 433 years; Eber 464; Peleg, 239; Ren, 239; Serug, 230; Nahor, 248; Terah, 205; Abraham, 175; Isaac, 180; Jacob, 147; Joseph, 110; Moses 120; Joshuah, 110. If it is therefore supposed that the age of Job was somewhat unusual and extraordinary, it would fall in with the period somewhere in the time between Terah and Jacob; and if so, he was probably contemporary with the most distinguished of the Patriarchs.

#### His Resultant Joy

Job saw his sons and his sons' sons, even four generations. אֲנִי, י: instead of אֲנִי, י the K're exhibits the

unusual form וְאֵלֶיךָ, which Lange prefers on account of its fuller musical tone (II. Sam. 17:42; Ez. 18:14) (p. 361), but Kautzsch seems to prefer the K'tib וְאֵלֶיךָ for the full forms (without the apocope of the וְ) not infrequently occur after waw consecutive, especially in the first person in the later books but never in the Pentateuch; also in the third person as here and in Ex. 18:28 (Kautzsch-Cowley, p. 211, par. 75t). The longer form וְאֵלֶיךָ probably merely indicates that there was an awareness among the scribes that in popular language frequently the unshortened imperfect occurs after the וְ consecutive (Duhm, p. 206).

Job was privileged to see וְאֵלֶיךָ וְאֵלֶיךָ וְאֵלֶיךָ. וְאֵלֶיךָ has simply the general sense of descendents: this is demanded by the דְּרֹתָ דְּרֹתָ דְּרֹתָ דְּרֹתָ--four generations (cf. Gen. 50:23; II. Kings 10:30; Ps. 128:6). Job saw his grand-children and great-grandchildren. According to the Hebrew inclusive practice of reckoning, it may be understood that his own generation is included, otherwise one would be justified to insert after וְאֵלֶיךָ the conjectured וְאֵלֶיךָ וְאֵלֶיךָ--and their children (Peters, p. 501).

To see one's posterity advancing in years and honor and extending themselves in the earth, was regarded as a signal honor and a proof of divine favore in the early ages: Gen. 48:11; Ps. 128:6; 127:5; Gen. 12:2; 17:5-7, Job 5:25 and Prov. 17:6, "Children's children are the crown of old men."

His Rich Life

Vs. 17: And Job died, being old and satisfied with with days.

The accounts of the Patriarchs, Abraham (Gen. 25:8); Isaac (Gen. 35:29, where the exact phrase "old and full of days" occurs); and Joseph (Gen. 21:23, 26), close in the same fashion. This style of ancient Israel, which is recognized everywhere in the book, is retained to the last words. The phrase ד'ד' וַיִּשְׂבַּע יִשְׂרָאֵל is analogous to the Accadian balatu ischtenibbi--"he was satisfied with life." Exorcist formulas for sicknesses close often with belata lu uschbi--"may I be satiated with life" (Peters, p. 502). וַיִּשְׂבַּע means "satisfied, satiated" and is used metaphorically both in a good sense, to abound in anything (Deut. 32:23) and in a bad sense, abounding in troubles (Job 14:1, 10:15) with the additional idea of weariness (Gen. 35:24 and here) (Gesenius, p. 783). In the case of Job it no doubt has reference to both the good sense and the bad sense. The two need not exclude each other.

Job more than filled up the ordinary terms of human life at that period of the world. He reached an honored old age and when he died was not prematurely cut down. Long life is a gift from God, but neither his greatest nor final gift. In his misery Job had prayed for death; in his renewed posterity, life is a boon. The Old Testament blessedness of a long life is enlarged in the New Testament and appears as the

gift of eternal life--man's greatest blessing.

The Alexandrian version presents after verse 17 a long addition that Job belongs to those who shall be resurrected by God; a combination of 19:25f and Dan. 12:2 (Ez. 14:4ff). Then follow several genealogical and historical details about the person of Job from the Aramaic Midrash, which were compiled with a good deal of confusion and recklessness and are completely worthless. Accordingly even Origen and Jerome rejected it (Lange, p. 632).

## CONCLUSION

The epilogue to the book shows Job brought safely through all his trials; evidencing that after all his friends had said and he had said and suffered, he was a good man. There was the divine interpretation in his favor at the close of the controversy, the divine approbation of his general character and the divine goodness shown him in the removal of his calamities, in his restoration to health, in the bestowment on him of double his former possessions, and in the lengthening out his days to an honorable old age. In his latter days his friends come around to cheer him in his declining years and make him honored in the earth.

A New Testament writer would have closed the book in some other way than with the recital of an abundant temporal recompensation, for it is certainly true that the New Testament regards the recompense of affliction and sore tribulations as belonging to the hereafter, and always points to those who suffer for Christ and the gospel to a future reward in heaven (Mt. 5:3, 10-12; 19:29; Mk. 10:29-30; Rev. 7:14). But it would be a one-sided inference from the conclusion of the book to regard it as a ministering to an external, temporal theory of retribution. That Job, after enduring to the end a trial of suffering of inexpressible severity should be rewarded with prosperity in this life and receive full

vindication, is first of all consonant with the spirit of the Old Testament people of God. In the next place, his conclusion harmonizes with the Old Testament stage of progressive revelation, in which the future life was but a mere shadow. Israel was promised earthly rewards; the Church anticipates heavenly recompense.

This close of the narrative has nothing to say of what took place in the hereafter after Job's arrival there, as was the case in ch. 2 when the reader was permitted a glimpse of the celestial realms. Neither is there any prophetic description of Job's entrance into the communion of the blessed. Rather, in natural freshness his restored earthly prosperity is pictured and purposely the wishes and hopes which Job had frequently uttered (ch. 17, 19) for vindication from God in the future life are eclipsed by the splendor of that which in part he enjoyed here on earth.

The question why Job had to suffer is never answered to him, and yet the conclusion is fitting. Without it the heart's need of the Old Testament believers would have found no true satisfaction. Limited to the anticipatory and typical faith of the Old Testament, they would not have been able to derive from the book true comfort and consolation. But God in His grace gave us this earliest of all biblical writings to answer one of man's most perplexing questions: Why must man suffer? and to demonstrate that unconditional

submission to God's holy will and child-like resignation to the heavenly Father alone bring true and lasting happiness.

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