

Back (WAY BACK) to Theodicy: If you don't have God on the Cross you get Job?

JOB: his dilemma/his questions/his interpreters/his predecessors

- I. The Dilemma: God 'bets' Satan Job's life: Job's demise and challenge all the way to God's power ['Were You There?'] [This isn't the first time God acts crazy: from Abraham's trials (Genesis 18:22/22:1-10) and Jacob's (32:24ff) and Moses' (Exodus 5:24) all the way Ezekial (20:25ff): How do we arrive at II Cor. 5?]
- II. The Questions—Cold comfort: Job must have been doing something wrong because God is Just. Finally, the whirlwind voice-answering? No-- and then....
- III. Interpreters—from judges [Maimonides-J. 'lacked the love God'] to defenders ('suffering = divine love' Moses ben Hayyim & Augustine-J as a condition) (Jung's critique of the unreflective powerhouse God—who needs a cross) [Archibald MacLeish's 'J.B.': *'I heard it in a yellow wood/If God is God, he is not good/If God is good, he is not God.'*]
- IV. Job as a 'newbie' in Ancient Near East: Egypt: 'The Admonitions of Ipuwer' & 'The Eloquent Peasant'. Iraq etc.: 'Man & His God' [2nd millennium "How long?" But also 'There has never been a sinless child...'] 'I will praise the Lord of Wisdom' ['Who can know the will of the gods in heaven? Who can understand?'] 'The Babylonian Theodicy' ['(the) goddess gave twisted speech to the human race...With lies, and not truth (the gods) endowed them forever.' OH! The B.Th. even has a friend who counsels the sufferer!] Palestine (?): 'Keret'. Hero loses wife and children finally finds favor with the gods and gets a new wife and new children. Don't forget Shiva testing the incredible virtue of Harishchandra. Psalm 26/15 (there's more!) [One ancient rabbi: 'God was doing this wager thing to keep Satan busy while the children of Israel were crossing the Red Sea on Dry land!' Think about it: Substitution!]
- V. Job's powerful story [we'll read as much as we are able]: His challenge and God's power answer (twice!) and then *'it's too wonderful for me'* and finally silence. [God's last speech (& word?) in the Tanakh.]
- VI. God on the cross—inevitable after Job? [see Jack Miles, 'God, a Biography' pg.308ff Vintage, New York, 1996 & 'Christ, a crisis in the Life of God'] [Hebrews 1:1ff]
- VII. The Gospel lives by controversy.