

THEOLOGY FROM THE LATE SECOND MILLENNIUM BC

ANTHROPOLOGY

First just a word about Job in the setting of anthropology and migrations and national development of the Hamitic and Shemitic families

JOB AND HIS TIMES

The Book of Job comes to us from the period when the house of Jacob was in Egypt and Job himself was familiar with the Nile and with its trees and animal habitats. Job's friends appear to come from an Edomite background. **The LXX writers are probably guessing that Job is the Jobab of Genesis 36.33.** Their intelligent guess is no doubt based, however, on the correct historical period – around 1700 B.C.

UZ ONE - 3200B.C. or before

The introductory words of the Book tell us he hails from the land of Uz and Uz was one of the four children of Aram (Genesis 10.22-23). Josephus tells us that Uz's territory was near Palmyra in Mesopotamia and that he founded Trachonitis (a pear shaped area of over 300 square miles east of Galilee) and Damascus. These territories are both at least 300 miles from the Chaldean and Sabeian power bases.

UZ TWO – 1700 B.C.

One of the seven dukes of the **Horites** [רַחֵם *"hole or cave"*] of Genesis 36.21-28 or **troglodytes** had a son named Uz whose territory would have been in the vicinity of Petra and Edom. The second Uz had lineal & genetic linkage with the first being descended from another son of Shem than the Jews. The two families grew immensely and had become nations by the time Shem died and Abraham moved to Canaan. From the line of Ham Mitzraim had long since established Egypt whose earliest dynasties are recorded by Manethro from 3120 – 2686 B.C.

THE EDMITE TAKE – OVER IN PETRA 17TH century B.C

It appears that Job's record in Job 30.5-6 suggests that the young generation of this people who were his people and that their fathers lived near him but were certainly not trusted companions. This nation which was partially displaced by the Edomites and partially confederate with them would have been accessible to Sabeian raiders and Chaldeans who might seek to challenge the trade routes commanded by the Edomites could equally well have surged into the area when the opportunity presented itself. Some imagine that "Uz" is the name of a god but חַוִּיל is generally linked to Ausitis - an Arabian location which Ptolemy located east of Petra in the Arabian Desert. The book of Lamentations 4.21 indicates that Edomites also lives in Ausitis. There can be little doubt but that this area was the home of Job.

THEOLOGY

Today we think of theology as "thinking about God" that sourced in John Calvin or maybe in the Church Fathers. However, in the Book of Job God says "You have not spoken right about Me as Job my servant has". The right or orthodox talking or discussion about God (Theos) which God is concerned about is rightly called "Theology" in this context.

THE THEOLOGY OF JOB

Job believed in Eloah which expression stands usually for **the “True God”**. In the Book it is used 40 times. It is a word not used for idols and has a monotheistic significance.

Job was a man who sacrificed daily to God. In youth Job mounted **the name of God** on his tent for all to see.(29.4)

In chapter 4 there is mention by Eliphaz of the unrecognised **Spirit who brought gentle conviction** – a testimony of the book to the third person of the Trinity

In 7.7-21 Job refrains from suicide acknowledges his sin and recognises God as the **“preserver and scrutinizer”** of man.

Job recognised that God brought about the deluge (9.6-7)

In 9.13-18 **he prefers to seek grace than to justify himself**. This is one of the signs that Job understood that man’s life depended on God’s grace.

In 10 8-22 Job confesses **God is marvellously “kind”**.

Job opens his remarks in Chapter 14 by confessing plainly that “man is a sinner”

In chapter 19 23-27 he makes his **historic statement of faith in a Redeemer** and in his **resurrection** and in **the coming of the Redeemer in the glorious last days**.

In 20.22-3 Job is very clear that sinners and the proud who are self-made and live for what this life alone offers will fall into the hands of **God’s wrath**.

In Chapter 26 Job acknowledged **divine Sovereignty**

In Chapter 27 he understands **divine retribution and judgment**

In 28.13 he restates his belief in redemption

In Chapter 29 he recognises **God’s watch-care**.

In Chapter 28.20-28 Job states what Solomon restates that **“the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom”**

In Chapter 42.10-11 Job shows his belief in **Prayer**

THE FAULTY THEOLOGY OF THE COMFORTERS

ELIPHAZ – YOU CAN’T BE A FRIEND OF GOD BUT TRY PRAYING

Failure to recognise the Holy Spirit Chapter 4

Only evil men suffer 4.7

He would curse men if he were god 5.2-3

The wise man cannot know the Spirit of God 15 1ff

A strong man cannot be a familiar of God 22.1ff

Will God go with you through judgment? 22.1-5

God will bring another “deluge” on you 22 10-20

ZOPHAR –GOD JUST FORGETS SIN

God just forgets “some” sins 11.6

Zophar suggests Job lives to eat and will suffer God’s wrath 20 22-23

BILDAD –THERE IS NO SALVATION

You must be impure or God would defend you- the solution may be historical research 8

Job, you do not know God 18 17-21

How will a man in his malady be justified with God? 25.4

THE THEOLOGY OF ELIHU

THE Spirit causes a man to understand God 32 6-11

God will speak once to man- but not again! 33.13ff

Oh for the day of a redeemer when man sees God's face! 33 23ff

God knows man's path.

We need to speak carefully to God.34.18-18

Elihu is confused on justification 35 1-4 but discusses imputation

Elihu puts the challenge of a second slip and asks "what then?"35.6

Elihu pins the hope of redemption to the coming seed 35.8

FIRST DIATRIBE CHAPTER 36 1-25

When those caught in a fault repent they will gain years of sweetness and grace but if not a judgment missile will punish them.

The polluted like the men of Sodom will be judged

Men know of God's judgment in their hearts

SECOND DIATRIBE 36 26-29

God is great and inscrutable

God is sovereign and providential

God gives rain and outpours his blessing

THIRD DIATRIBE 36 30-37.24

In considering the ancient theological approach it has to be observed that before revelation was written in the bible it was written in the heavens. Jewish synagogues incorporated a zodiac in their floor design. I have seen one such in Hammath near Tiberias. This is because the original zodiac declared by its decans the message of God.

Elihu appears to speak of **the wounding of the Shepherd**- a zodiacal matter.

He expresses his overwhelming joy and foresees Shiloh and a future birthright.

He sees **the Mighty one wrestling with the serpent** – a further zodiacal truth

He speaks of the refreshing of the Spirit because man must be judged aright, because of his land and because of his Kingdom God will act.

The One who knows all is a God of miracles.

Elihu with this volume of revelation then asks to be introduced to prayer!

Elihu further rejoices in the Great Light of God and that because He will not oppress men fear Him.

After this contrast of truth and error and the ancient message of the spheres God speaks to Job and shows himself as the one who created Arcturus and Orion and as the one who desires holiness and intimacy exactly as modelled by Job. Into this personal relationship with God Job introduces his friends along with his family so that in the era that parallels Israel in Egypt God was working by his Spirit directly among the Horites and Nomadic peoples. These men were probably well aware of Shem others of their ancestors and clearly had not forgotten the grace of God to Noah. They may even have known a good deal about Abraham and their historical knowledge may well have encompassed something of the story of Joseph in the Hyksos period.

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A Bible Companion