

## **Silence, Speech and Theodicy: Job 1&2**

Raphael Magarik, Tisha B'Av 5775

### **Alan Mittleman, "The Job of Judaism and the Job of Kant," 25 and 35**

The Book of Job presents its chief protagonist in two discrepant ways: Job the patient and Job the rebel. Ancient Jewish interpretations of Job praise Job the patient and condemn, or at least do not praise, Job the rebel. Modern Jewish interpretations, by contrast, praise Job the rebel and scant the patient, pious Job of the frame story. Job the rebel becomes a model of sincerity or authenticity, a chief value of modernity. Job the patient and pious sufferer so celebrated by antiquity is at best an ambivalent figure...

[The traditional commentators] continue to affirm a divine governance of the world that can be disclosed by reason. All of them hold to a purposive, teleological universe, as opposed to a modern universe of mechanical, material causation from which final causality has been banished. All of them counsel acceptance of misfortune as the appropriate response to the divine plan. None of them see evil as a fatal threat to an ordered universe and a coherent theism. None despair of theodicy.

### **Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 92, 105-6, 108**

When we move from the prose frame-story in Chapters 1 and 2 to the beginning of the poetic argument in Chapter 3, we are plunged precipitously into a world of what must be called abysmal intensities. It is only through the most brilliant use of a system of poetic intensifications that the poet is able to take the full emotional measure and to intimate the full moral implications of Job's outrageous fate...

The power of Job's unflinching argument, in the biblical book that bears his name, has rarely failed to move readers, but the structure of the book has been a perennial puzzle. It begins, as we all recall, with a seemingly naïve tale... the prose of the frame-story switches into altogether remarkable poetry... the prose frame-story then clicks shut by restoring to Job health, wealth, and prestige, at the same time symmetrically providing him with another set of children. This ending has troubled many readers over the centuries. Even if we put aside the closing of the folktale frame, so alien to later sensibilities in its schematic doubling of lost property and its simple replacement of lost lives...

...it makes little difference whether one regards the frame-story as an old folktale incorporated by the poet or (my own preference, based on a few tell-tale indications of Late Biblical Hebrew in the frame-story) as an old tradition artfully reworked by the poet...

## Job Chapter 1

1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was whole-hearted and upright, and one that feared God, and shunned evil. 2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. 3 His possessions also were seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the children of the east. 4 And his sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one upon his day; and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. 5 And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said: 'It may be that my sons have sinned, and blasphemed God in their hearts.' Thus did Job continually.

6 Now it fell upon a day, that the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. 7 And the LORD said unto Satan: 'Whence comest thou?' Then Satan answered the LORD, and said: 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.' 8 And the LORD said unto Satan: 'Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a whole-hearted and an upright man, one that feareth God, and shunneth evil?' 9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said: 'Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions are increased in the land. 11 But put forth Thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, surely he will blaspheme Thee to Thy face.' 12 And the LORD said unto Satan: 'Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thy hand.' So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

13 And it fell on a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, 14 that there came a messenger unto Job, and said: 'The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them; 15 and the Sabeans made a raid, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.' 16 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said: 'A fire of God is fallen from

## איוב פרק א

א איש היה בארץ-עוץ, איוב שמו; והיה האיש ההוא, תם וישר וירא אלהים--וסר מרע. ב ויולדו לו שבעה בנים, ושלוש בנות. ג והיה מקנהו שבעת אלפי-צאן ושלושת אלפי גמלים, וחמש מאות צמד-בקר וחמש מאות אתונות, ועבדה, רבה מאד; והיה האיש ההוא, גדול מכל-בני-קדם. ד והלכו בניו ועשו משתה, בית איש יומו; ושלוהו, וקראו לשלושת אחיותיהם, לאכל ולשתות, עמם. ה והיה כי הקיפו ימי המשנה וישלח איוב ויקדשם, והשכים בבקר והעלה עלות מספר כלם--כי אמר איוב, אולי חטאו בני וברכו א--לקים בלבבם: ככה יעשה איוב, כל-הימים. {פ}

ו והיה היום--ויבאו בני האלהים, להתיצב על-יהוה; ויבוא גם-השטן, בתוכם. ז ויאמר ה' אל-השטן, מאין תבא; ויען השטן את-ה', ויאמר, משוט בארץ, ומהתהלך בה. ח ויאמר ה' אל-השטן, השמת לבך על-עבדי איוב: כי אין כמותו בארץ, איש תם וישר וירא א--לקים וסר מרע. ט ויען השטן את-ה', ויאמר: החנם, ירא איוב א--לקים. י הלא-את (אתה) שכת בעדו ובעד-ביתו, ובעד כל-אשר-לו--מסביב: מעשה ידיו ברכת, ומקנהו פרץ בארץ. יא ואולם שלח-נא ידך, וגע בכל-אשר-לו--אם-לא על-פניה; וברכה יב ויאמר ה' אל-השטן, הנה כל-אשר-לו בידך--רק אלי, אל-תשלח ידך; וצא, השטן, מעם פני ה'.

יג והיה, היום; ובנו ובנותיו אכלים ושתים יין בבית אחיהם הבכור. יד ומלאך בא אל-איוב, ויאמר: הבקר היו חרשות, והאתונות רעות על-ידיהם. טו ותפל שׂבא ותקחם, ואת-הנערים הפו לפי-טורב; ואמלטה רק-אני לבדי, להגיד לך. טז עוד זה מדבר, וזה בא ויאמר, אש א--לקים נפלה מן-השמים, ותבער בצאן ובנערים ותאכלם; ואמלטה רק-אני לבדי, להגיד לך. יז עוד זה

heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.' 17 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said: 'The Chaldeans set themselves in three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have taken them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.' 18 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said: 'Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house; 19 And, behold, there came a great wind from across the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.' 20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped; 21 And he said; naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. 22 For all this Job sinned not, nor ascribed aught unseemly to God.

מדבר, וזה בא ויאמר, פשדים שמו  
 שלשה ראשים ויפשוטו על-הגמלים  
 ויקחו, ואת-הנערים הכו לפי-תרב;  
 ואמלטה רק-אני לבדי, להגיד לה. יח  
 עד זה מדבר, וזה בא ויאמר: בניך  
 ובנותיך אכלים ושתים יין, בבית אחיהם  
 הבכור. יט והנה רוח גדולה באה  
 מעבר המדבר, ויגע בארבע פנות  
 הבית, ויפל על-הנערים, וימותו;  
 ואמלטה רק-אני לבדי, להגיד לה. כ  
 ויקם איוב ויקרע את-מעלו, ויגז  
 את-ראשו; ויפל ארצה, וישתחו. כא  
 ויאמר ערם יצתי מבטן אמי, וערם אשוב  
 שמה--הי נתן, והי לקח; יהי שם ה'  
 מברך. כב בכל-זאת, לא-חטא איוב;  
 ולא-נתן תפלה, לא-לקים. {פ}

**Job Chapter 2**

1 Again it fell upon a day, that the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. 2 And the LORD said unto Satan: 'From whence comest thou?' And Satan answered the LORD, and said: 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.' 3 And the LORD said unto Satan: 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a whole-hearted and an upright man, one that feareth God, and shunneth evil? and he still holdeth fast his integrity, although thou didst move Me against him, to destroy him without cause.' 4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said: 'Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5 But put forth Thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, surely he will blaspheme Thee to Thy face.' 6 And the LORD said unto Satan: 'Behold, he is in thy hand; only spare his life.'

**איוב פרק ב**  
 א יהי היום-ויבאו בני-הא-לקים,  
 להתעצב על-ה'; ויבוא גם-השטן בתוכם,  
 להתעצב על-ה'. ב ויאמר ה' אל-השטן,  
 אי מזה תבא; ויען השטן את-ה', ויאמר,  
 משט בארץ, ומהתהלך בה. ג ויאמר  
 ה' אל-השטן, השמת לבך אל-עבדי  
 איוב--כי אין כמותו בארץ איש תם וישר  
 ירא א-לקים, וסר מרע; ועדנו מחזיק  
 בתמתו, וחסיתני בו לבלעו חנם. ד ויען  
 השטן את-ה', ויאמר: עור בעד-עור,  
 וכל אשר לאיש--יתן, בעד נפשו. ה  
 אולם שלח-נא ידך, וגע אל-עצמו  
 ואל-בשרו--אם-לא אל-פניו, וברכה. ו  
 ויאמר ה' אל-השטן, הנה בידך: אה,  
 את-נפשו שומר.

7 So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot even unto his crown. 8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself therewith; and he sat among the ashes. 9 Then said his wife unto him: 'Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? blaspheme God, and die.' 10 But he said unto her: 'Thou speakest as one of the impious women speaketh. What? shall we receive

ז ויצא, השטן, מאת, פני ה'; ויך  
 את-איוב בשחין רע, מכף רגלו עד  
 (ועד) קדקדו. ח ויקח-לו חרש,  
 להתגדר בו; והוא, ישב בתוך-האפר.  
 ט ותיאמר לו אשתו, ערך מחזיק  
 בתמתך; ברה א-לקים, ומת. י ויאמר  
 אליה, קדבר אחת הנבלות תדברי--גם  
 את-הטוב נקבל מאת הא-לקים,

<p>good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' For all this did not Job sin with his lips. {P}</p> <p>11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; and they made an appointment together to come to bemoan him and to comfort him. 12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and threw dust upon their heads toward heaven. 13 So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spoke a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great.</p>	<p>וְאֵת-הַרְעָה לֹא נִקְבְּלָה; בְּכָל-זֹאת לֹא-חָטָא אִיּוֹב, בְּשִׁפְתָיו. {פ}</p> <p>יֵא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת רֵעֵי אִיּוֹב, אֶת כָּל-הַרְעָה הַזֹּאת הַבָּאָה עָלָיו, וַיָּבֹאוּ אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ, אֶלְיָז הַתֵּימָנִי וּבִלְדָד הַשׁוּחִי וְצוֹפָר הַנַּעֲמָתִי; וַיִּנְעְדוּ יַחְדָּו, לְבֹא לְנוֹד-לוֹ וּלְנַחֲמוֹ. יָב וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת-עֵינֵיהֶם מֵרְחוֹק וְלֹא הִכִּירוּהוּ, וַיִּשְׂאוּ קוֹלָם וַיִּבְכּוּ; וַיִּקְרְעוּ אִישׁ מְעָלוֹ, וַיִּזְרְקוּ עָפָר עַל-רִאשֵׁיהֶם הַשָּׁמַיְמָה. יָג וַיִּשְׁבוּ אִתּוֹ לְאָרֶץ, שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְשִׁבְעַת לַיְלוֹת; וְאִין-דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו, דְּבַר--כִּי רָאוּ, כִּי-גָדֹל הַכָּאָב מְאֹד.</p>
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<p><b>Bavli Bava Batra 16a</b> "For all this Job did not sin with his lips." Rava said: With his lips he did not sin, With his heart, he sinned.</p>	<p><b>בבלי בבא בתרא טז.</b> 'בכל זאת לא חטא איוב בשפתיו' אמר רבא: בשפתיו לא חטא, בלבו חטא.</p>
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<p><b>Job 13:15</b> Though He slay me, yet will I hope in him; But I will argue my ways before Him.</p>	<p><b>Job 13:15</b> Behold, he will slay me; I will not hope: I will even argue my ways before Him.</p>	<p><b>איוב יג:טו</b> הוּ יִקְטְלֵנִי, לֹא (לו) אֶיְחָל; אך-דַּרְכֵי, אֶל-פְּנֵי אֹכִיִּים</p>
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<p><b>Mishnah Sotah 5:5</b> On that day, R. Joshua ben Hyrcanus taught: Job served the Holy Blessed One from love: As it is said, "Though he slay me, yet I will wait for him (lo)" (Job 13:15).</p> <p>And it is still evenly balanced "I will wait for him" or "I will not wait for him"? Scripture states, "Until I die I will maintain my integrity" (Job 27:5), this teaches that what he did was from love.</p> <p>R. Joshua said: Who will remove the dust from your eyes, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai, You had expounded all your life that Job only served God from fear, as it is said, "A blameless and upright man that fears God and shuns evil" (Job 1:8) But Joshua, the student of your student, teaches that what he did was from love?</p>	<p><b>משנה סוטה ה:ה</b> בו ביום דרש רבי יהושע בן הרקנס, לא עבד איוב את הקדוש ברוך הוא אלא מאהבה, שנאמר הו יקטלני לו איחל.</p> <p>ועדין הדבר שקול, לו אני מצפה או אני מצפה, תלמוד לומר עד אגוע לא אסיר תמתי ממני, מלמד שמאהבה עשה.</p> <p>אמר רבי יהושע, מי יגלה עפר מעיניך, רבן יוחנן בן זכאי, שהיית דורש כל יומך שלא עבד איוב את המקום אלא מיראה, שנאמר איש תם וישר ירא אלהים וסר מרע, והלא יהושע תלמיד תלמידך למד שמאהבה עשה.</p>
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