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THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JOB

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

Bruce V. Malchow

May 1966

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
NEW-EN TRANSLITERATIONS	iv
Chapter	
I. THE PROBLEM OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JOB	1
II. THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (<u>CDSQ</u>) IN THE OLD TESTAMENT	6
A Concept of Relationship	6
Conformity to a Norm	9
A Legal and Religious Concept	9
Resulting Behavior	12
III. THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (<u>CDSQ</u>) IN THE BOOK OF JOB	16
Prologue and Epilogue	16
The <u>gdnq</u> Terms in the Book of Job	21
Relationship to God	25
Sinlessness	28
Conformity to a Norm	29
Job's Problem	30
Job's Reaction to His Problem	34
Job's Fleeting Hopes	36
IV. PARALLEL AND ANTI-THETICAL CONCEPTS OF <u>CDSQ</u> IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IN THE BOOK OF JOB	43
Parallel Concepts	43
Anti-thetical Concepts	52
V. THE BEHAVIOR OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN IN THE BOOK OF JOB	56
Right Relationships with Other People	56
Behavior of the Unrighteous	59
Behavior of the Righteous in Job 31	62
Form and Structure	65
Near Eastern Parallels	71
Job's Behavior	75

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
HEBREW TRANSLITERATIONS	iv
 Chapter	
I. THE PROBLEM OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JOB. . .	1
II. THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (<u>QDHQ</u>) IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.	6
A Concept of Relationship.	6
Conformity to a Norm	9
A Legal and Religious Concept.	9
Resulting Behavior	12
III. THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (<u>QDHQ</u>) IN THE BOOK OF JOB.	16
Prologue and Epilogue.	16
The <u>qdhq</u> Terms in the Book of Job.	21
Relationship to God.	25
Sinlessness.	28
Conformity to a Norm	29
Job's Problem.	30
Job's Reaction to His Problem.	34
Job's Fleeting Hope.	39
IV. PARALLEL AND ANTITHETICAL CONCEPTS OF <u>QDHQ</u> IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IN THE BOOK OF JOB.	43
Parallel Concepts.	43
Antithetical Concepts.	52
V. THE BEHAVIOR OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN IN THE BOOK OF JOB.	56
Right Relationships with Other People.	56
Behavior of the Unrighteous.	59
Behavior of the Righteous in Job 31.	63
Form and Structure	65
Near Eastern Parallels	71
Job's Behavior	75

VI. REACTION TO JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.	97
Job's Friends.	97
Elihu.	100
God in the Whirlwind	103
VII. THE NATURE OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JOB	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY	114

HEBREW TRANSLITERATIONS

Hebrew Alphabet

<p>כ .</p> <p>ב b, bh</p> <p>ג g, gh</p> <p>ד d, dh</p> <p>ה h</p> <p>ו w</p> <p>ז z</p> <p>ח h</p> <p>ט t</p> <p>י y</p> <p>כ k, kh</p>	<p>ל l</p> <p>מ m</p> <p>נ n</p> <p>ס s</p> <p>ע .</p> <p>פ p, ph</p> <p>צ c</p> <p>ק q</p> <p>ר r</p> <p>ש s</p> <p>ת t, th</p>
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Masoretic Pointing

Naturally-long

יְ	ê
יִ	î
יֹ	ô
יּוּ	û

Tone-long

ַ	ā
ֵ	ē
ֹ	ō

Short

Indistinct

CHAPTER I

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Job maintains emphatically that he is righteous. His righteousness is one of the key points in the Book of Job, because Job bases his whole argument against Eliphaz upon the fact that God should not be punishing a righteous man. But what does Job mean when he says that he is righteous? It is commonly assumed that he is making a moral assertion. Job's three friends are the first to make this assumption. They berate Job for the impurity and scandalousness of his life. Subsequent interpreters of the Book of Job concur with the friends' evaluation of Job's righteousness. They believe that Job means he has lived a morally upright life when he claims that he is righteous.

With a similar assumption, the writer of this paper began this study as an investigation of the "ethics" of the Book of Job. The term "righteousness" (*tsedeq*) was soon encountered as a primary concern of this research. When the opinions of various, leading Old Testament scholars were compared, it was discovered that there is a dichotomy of belief concerning the meaning of this term in the whole Old Testament. Some experts hold that "righteousness"

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JOB

Job contends emphatically that he is righteous. His righteousness is one of the key points in the Book of Job, because Job builds his whole argument against Eloah upon the fact that God should not be punishing a righteous man. But what does Job mean when he says that he is righteous? It is commonly assumed that he is making a moral assertion. Job's three friends are the first to make this assumption. They berate Job for the impurity and scandalousness of his life. Subsequent interpreters of the Book of Job concur with the friends' evaluation of Job's righteousness. They believe that Job means he has lived a morally upright life, when he claims that he is righteous.

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signifies conformity to a moral standard. Others maintain it means that a person is rightly related to God. The second opinion appeared to have the greater weight of evidence supporting it. It was first enunciated by Hermann Cremer in the late part of the preceding century¹ and further developed by Johannes Pedersen in the early years of this present century.² Certain present-day theologians, such as Gerhard von Rad,³ Walter Eichrodt,⁴ and E. R. Achtemeier,⁵ have followed the lead of these earlier scholars.

Although the concept of righteousness in the Old Testament has, thus, received a great deal of examination, little has been done to apply this research to the use of this term

¹Hermann Cremer, Die Paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre im Zusammenhang ihrer Geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen (Zweite Auflage; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1900).

²Johannes Pedersen, "Righteousness and Truth," Israel: Its Life and Culture, translated from the Danish by Aslaug Møller (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1926), I and II.

³Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated from the German by D. M. Stalker (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), I.

⁴Walter Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the German by J. A. Baker (London: S C M Press, 1961), I.

⁵E. R. Achtemeier, "Righteousness in the O T," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV, 80-85.

in the Book of Job. The only, somewhat extensive treatment of Job's righteousness discovered by the present writer, is an article by Morris Stockhammer.⁶ Stockhammer arrives at conclusions, which are opposite to those defended in this paper. He feels that Job's righteousness consists in conformity to the moral law. However, as will be demonstrated later, Stockhammer proceeds from certain unproven presuppositions, which guide his decision. On the other hand, Gerhard von Rad states, in a cursory manner, that Job's righteousness consists in the relationship between God and Job.⁷ The present study will make a careful examination of the concept of righteousness in the Book of Job. Such a study will demonstrate that von Rad's position is in accord with the evidence.

In the arrangement of this paper, the concept of righteousness in the whole Old Testament will be studied first to provide a background for an investigation of the righteousness of Job. Next, Job's righteousness itself will be treated, on the basis of the use of the gdhg terms in the Book of Job. Following this, the place of this righteousness

⁶Morris Stockhammer, "The Righteousness of Job," Judaism, VII (1958), 64-71.

⁷von Rad, I, 408-418.

in the speeches of Job will be indicated. The succeeding chapter of this paper will present an examination of the terms which are parallel and antithetical to gdhg in the Book of Job. Such a study will provide a broader background for the consideration of Job's righteousness. Then, the connection of Job's righteousness with his moral behavior will receive extensive treatment. The description of Job's behavior in chapter 31 of the Book of Job will be analyzed in detail, to discover how it is related to Job's righteousness. Finally, the reaction to Job's righteousness by his three friends, by Elihu, and by Eloah will be presented, so that the viewpoint of the entire Book of Job will have been taken into consideration.

It is the conclusion of this paper that Job claims that he is righteous because he has been in a right relationship with God. He has not disturbed this relationship by any action which would destroy it. His righteousness does not consist in conformity with some norm, outside of his relationship to God itself. His moral behavior is a result of this relationship to God; it is not the constituting feature of his righteousness. In this moral behavior, Job has lived in right relationships with other people. He has been guided by his every-day experiences, which have occurred within the

context of his relationship to God, rather than by some other norm.

... IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

... of Job, ... of righteousness ... the story of Job ... The cog- ... of Job ... the variety of ...

... in the concept of ... determine its meaning by ... of the Old Testament. Such a ... of righteousness ... the ... At ... in the objective ... of conscience. He attended to

... in the O.T., ... edited by George ...

CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (CDHQ) IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A Concept of Relationship

Before a study is made of the righteousness of Job, it is necessary to examine the background of righteousness (cdhq) in the whole Old Testament. The etymology of cdhq offers little by way of illuminating its meaning. The cognate Arabic root signifies straightness, hardness, or firmness. But none of these ideas can explain the variety of uses of cdhq in the Old Testament.¹

Since etymology throws little light on the concept of righteousness, it is necessary to determine its meaning by a study of the usage of cdhq in the Old Testament. Such a study reveals that there is no universal idea of righteousness. In the past century, Kautzsch tried to discover the point at which all of the meanings of cdhq converged. At various times, he placed this point in the objective norm of truth or the subjective norm of conscience. He attempted to

¹E. R. Achtemeier, "Righteousness in the O T," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV, 80.

find it in the idea of God or the idea of man. But his attempt was foreign to the Hebrew way of thinking. Hermann Cremer recognized this and said that Ꝕdhq was a concept of relationship, referring to an actual relationship between two persons and implying behavior which corresponded to the claims arising from such an involvement.²

Cremer himself says that Kautzsch was wrong, because the general concepts with which he worked were too abstract for the Hebrew mind. He states that Ꝕdhq is, throughout, a concept of relationship, denoting an actual involvement between two people, a subject and an object. The subject has and makes claims, and the object fulfills them.³

Johannes Pedersen further developed Cremer's thoughts on this theme. He says that Ꝕdhq consists of maintaining one's own honor and that of others by giving and taking in accordance with the position each occupies in the covenant. Most frequently, righteousness makes a claim on the stronger person, asking that he maintain the right of the weaker.

²Walter Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the German by J. A. Baker (London: S C M Press, 1961), I, 240.

³Hermann Cremer, Die Paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre im Zusammenhang ihrer Geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen (Zweite Auflage; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1900), p. 34.

Righteousness is, thus, a mutual maintenance by individuals of each other's honor. It implies the necessity of action.⁴

Certain contemporary theologians agree with these earlier scholars. Gerhard von Rad says that righteousness had been defined as man's proper conduct over against some absolute ethical norm. But no absolute norm was ever found. Israel did not measure conduct by an ideal norm, but by specific relationships, in which each partner had to prove himself true.⁵

Achtemeier concurs with what has been said above. He insists that righteousness is not behavior in accordance with an ethical, legal, psychological, religious, or spiritual norm. He says that it is the fulfillment of the demands of a relationship, with God or man. There is no norm of righteousness outside of the relationship. When man fulfills the conditions imposed on him by the relationship, he is righteous.⁶

⁴Johannes Pedersen, "Righteousness and Truth," Israel: Its Life and Culture, translated from the Danish by Aslaug Møller (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1926), I and II, 343-345.

⁵Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated from the German by D. M. Stalker (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), I, 371.

⁶Achtemeier, IV, 80.

Conformity to a Norm

On the other hand, there are scholars who believe that the basic idea of righteousness is conformity to a general norm. Fullerton says that the root idea of ꝥdhq is "conformity to a norm."⁷ Snaith finds this overarching norm in the character of God.⁸ Quell maintains that it is found in the idea of Law.⁹ But such general conceptions of ꝥdhq do not account for the variety of ways in which it is used in the Old Testament. The remainder of this chapter will indicate wherein some of this variety consists.

A Legal and Religious Concept

The term ꝥdhq is frequently used in the Old Testament in a legal sense. The verb, ꝥadhōq or ꝥādhēq, is primarily employed for forensic purposes. The Hiphil can signify

⁷Kemper Fullerton, "Job, Chapters 9 and 10," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature, LV (July 1938), 245.

⁸Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), p. 202.

⁹G. Quell, "The Concept of Law in the O T," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel, translated from the German and edited by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1964), II, 174.

"acquit" (Deut. 25:1; Is. 5:23). The Piel can mean "to show to be in the right" (Jer. 3:11; Ezek. 16:51,52). At times, the Hithpael can be translated "to clear oneself" (Gen. 44:16). The Qal can mean "to be right legally" (Gen. 38:26).¹⁰

Righteousness is a prescribed quality for an Israelite judge (Lev. 19:15). When the word is used of a judge, it does not mean that he is to apply some formal standard of justice impartially. It means that he is rightly to satisfy the claims of the participants in a trial, brought forward from the relationships of their lives. In these relationships, each person has his own right. It is the task of the righteous judge to render each one's right effective, so that the good of everyone in the community is safeguarded.¹¹

The parties involved in a trial may also be called righteous. The righteous party is the one who has fulfilled the demands of the relationship in question or who has had his right taken away. It is the function of the judge to restore the right to him from whom it was taken. The judge's decision is not based on a legal norm, as in the West, but on the

¹⁰Fullerton, pp. 245, 246.

¹¹Eichrodt, I, 241.

claims each party has in the relationship under consideration.¹² At the end of the trial, the judge declares the party who is in the right ḥaddiq and the party in the wrong, rāshā' (Ex. 23:7).¹³

Ḥdhq is also used extensively in the Old Testament as a religious concept. In Greek thought, righteousness is the highest virtue and the sum of all virtues. But Cremer insists that this Greek way of thinking is not to be transferred to the Hebrew religious sphere. The righteousness of an Israelite is his righteous condition. He obtains this condition as a result of the divine deed of justification.¹⁴ His righteousness expresses his relationship to Yahweh, based on Yahweh's righteous acts (ḥidhōth) for him (I Sam. 12:7). The righteous man measures up to the claims his relationship with God makes on him.¹⁵ The primary fulfillment of these claims is the faith of the righteous in Yahweh (Gen. 15:6; Hab. 2:4).¹⁶

¹²Achtemeier, IV, 81, 83.

¹³James Muilenburg, The Way of Israel: Biblical Faith and Ethics (First edition; New York: Harper, 1961), p. 36.

¹⁴Cremer, pp. 23, 43.

¹⁵von Rad, I, 372.

¹⁶Achtemeier, IV, 83.

Cremer defines the righteous as one who trusts in God (Ps. 31:17-19; 33:18; Mic. 7:7-9), hopes on His promises, humbles himself under God's judgement (Ps. 143:1,2), recognizes and confesses his sins, asks for forgiveness, and, through forgiveness, expects salvation (Ps. 32; 103:10-13; 118:18-21).¹⁷ Eichrodt sums up the meaning of righteousness for the Israelite by saying that it is "an essentially religious conception," which was not watered down to the ethical.¹⁸

Resulting Behavior

Although righteousness in the Old Testament is not mere ethical behavior, such behavior is a result of a man's righteous condition. Israel's relationship to Yahweh was not dependent on her morality. This covenant relationship was based originally on God's choice of Israel. God's ethical expectations for Israel came later. Israel could reject God, but she could not escape her relationship to Him. If she rejected Him, their relationship became one of wrath. Minor sin could not set an Israelite outside of God's grace, but rejection of God could. The reason for this

¹⁷Cremer, pp. 48, 49.

¹⁸Eichrodt, I, 249.

situation was that rejection of God implied a lack of faith, and faith was the fulfillment of a man's relationship to Yahweh and constituted his righteousness.¹⁹ When a man professed that he was righteous, he did not deny that he had sinned, but he was stating that his heart was honest and his intention was pure.²⁰ Pedersen sums up the connection between righteousness and right action well in these words:

To act rightly is not to act according to rules which are forced upon the man from without. The good man acts rightly, because he acts entirely in accordance with the nature of his soul. But the soul exists only as a link in a covenant; it maintains its nature by maintaining the covenant.²¹

It is in this sense that certain Old Testament passages which connect righteousness with moral behavior, are to be understood. For example, Ezek. 3:20 speaks of "righteous deeds." Is. 64:5 talks of doing "righteousness." In Deut. 6:25, it is said that "it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment" Ps. 106:31 states that Phinehas' act of intervention "has been reckoned to him as righteousness from generation to

¹⁹Achtemeier, IV, 82.

²⁰William Straton Bruce, The Ethics of the Old Testament (Second edition enlarged; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1960), p. 76.

²¹Pedersen, I and II, 337, 338.

generation for ever." In all of these cases, moral behavior is called "righteous," because it is the result of a man's righteous state. Righteousness is still expressed primarily in the man's relationship to God. As a result of this fact, Vischer can say that righteousness denotes dutiful conduct, which is a response to the covenant, through which God in freedom bound Himself to man. Israel is righteous when she lives as God's people.²² But when a man calls himself righteous, he is not, in the first instance, making a moral self-evaluation. In the cult, Yahweh assigns this title to those who cling to Him. Anyone vocal in the cult is righteous.

This fact is demonstrated by the use of type expressions in later Israel. In these expressions, speakers put themselves in the picture of the righteous par excellence. The righteous par excellence is described in the most glowing terms, as loyal to Yahweh and upright in life. The use of these type expressions is fostered principally by the wise men. That the wise can use these expressions demonstrates that righteousness is a relational concept. If a man is in the right relationship to God, he is righteous. He can claim

²²Wilhelm Vischer, "God's Truth and Man's Lie: A Study of the Message of the Book of Job," Interpretation, XV (1961), 135.

the highest sort of moral behavior for himself, even if he has not done all that he claims. What matters is that he is rightly related to God, and if he is, he can claim to be the righteous par excellence.²³

It may be concluded that the usage of ꝓdhq in the Old Testament reveals that the religious sense of righteousness basically signifies that people are in the right relationship to God. God establishes this relationship, in the first place, by doing gracious acts of salvation for His people. When they trust in Yahweh to care for them in the present and future, as He has in the past, they are in a right relationship with Him. This relationship is maintained as long as they do not reject God by some grave sin or series of sins. Righteousness is not conformity to some ethical norm, which stands outside of the relationship between Yahweh and His people. Moral behavior is only the result of men's righteous condition. It is not the primary constituent of righteousness. Righteousness is by faith, not by works.

²³von Rad, I, 381, 382.

CHAPTER III

THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (QDHQ) IN THE BOOK OF JOB

Prologue and Epilogue

Before an examination of the concept of righteousness in the Book of Job is made, it is necessary to explain why a study of the prologue (1:1-2:13) and epilogue (42:7-17) is considered a part of such an examination in only a minor degree. It was first suggested by Wellhausen in a review of Dillmann's Hiob in 1871, that the prologue and epilogue of Job were originally part of an older prose tale and were adapted by the poet who wrote the dialogue as a framework for the book. This suggestion was elaborately worked out by Budde and Duhm.¹

This theory has been accepted by the majority of present-day scholars of Job. The theory is also accepted in this paper for the reasons that will follow. There are several indications that there is a different author at work in the prologue and epilogue and in the dialogue. Sacrifices play a major part in the prologue and epilogue

¹Alexander Gordon, "Job," Expositor, Series 7, III (1907), 191.

(1:5; 42:8,9) but are conspicuously absent from the dialogue. Job in the prologue speaks in perfect agreement with the will of God (1:21,22; 2:10), while in the dialogue, he contends against God and blasphemes (23:2-7; 7:11-21). The atmosphere of the prologue and epilogue is like that of a legend. Everything about Job is described in glowing terms (1:3,4; 42:12,15-17). The dialogue, on the other hand, portrays the cold, hard realities of life without embellishment. The author of the prologue and epilogue speaks as an observer of Job. The poet of the dialogue speaks as if he is pouring out his own heart in the words of Job.

The facts noted above would seem to indicate that one author has written the prologue and epilogue, and another, the dialogue of Job. But they do not prove that the poet of the dialogue was the one who adapted the other two parts as the framework for his book. A later redactor still could have done the combining. That the writer of the dialogue used the other material is indicated by the following facts. It is unlikely that the author of the dialogue began in medias res with the sentence, "After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth" (3:1). There are a number of linguistic similarities between

the other sections and the dialogue, such as the use of the infrequent words tām, tummāh, and 'Alām in both sections. But there is still so much difference that it is unlikely that the whole book is by the same author. The language and content of the prologue and epilogue and the language and content of the dialogue correspond to different historical periods. The first sections have similarities with the patriarchal traditions, edited by the Yahwist of the Pentateuch, and may be dated close to the time of the Yahwist, around the eleventh or tenth century before Christ. The dialogue has great similarity to later wisdom literature and has been dated by Terrien between 580 and 540 before Christ. Apparently, the poet could have used the earlier material as the framework for his dialogue.²

On the basis of the above evidence, it may be concluded that the prologue and epilogue were part of an older prose narrative and were used by the poet as the framework for his dialogue. This fact has importance for the viewpoint that is adopted regarding the theology of the Book of Job. While the poet may have taken over certain points from the

²Samuel Terrien, "The Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1954), III, 886-888, 890.

theology of the earlier sections, he may have opposed this theology elsewhere.

It would seem that the poet agreed with the prologue in regard to the essence of Job's righteousness. The prologue says that Job was "tām" and "yāshār," one who "yārē" God and turned away from "ra'" (1:1). As will be seen in chapter four of this paper, tām and yāshār are terms that the poet uses synonymously with qdḥq. The narrator of the prologue equates being tām and yāshār with fearing God and turning away from evil. yir'āh is better defined as "awe" or "dread" than "fear." Smith defines the fear of God as trembling adoration of the transcendence or holiness of God.³ The concept is a part of the experience of faith. In his faith, Job turns from evil. This aversion to immoral behavior flows from the man's faith. The conclusion may be reached that the narrator is rooting Job's "blameless" and "upright" nature in Job's faith or fear of God. As will be seen below, the poet, likewise, finds the essence of Job's righteousness in his relationship of faith with God.

But, in regard to Job's righteousness, this is where the

³Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), p. 81.

similarity between the framework of the book and the dialogue ends. In the prologue Job does not change his relationship to God because of his affliction. Job 1:22 says, "In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong." The same thought is expressed in 2:10: "In all this Job did not sin with his lips." Job is still confident of God's good intention toward him (1:21; 2:10). The Job of the prologue remains in a relationship with God that is intact because he says nothing that would destroy that relationship. The Job of the dialogue is very different. As will be seen below, he frequently speaks against God and sins with his lips.

The framework is also different from the dialogue, because it holds to the retribution theory that the good receive good and the evil receive evil. In the epilogue Job finally receives manifold good after his long testing. The story teaches that while men should not serve God for advantage, the good may, except when God wisely ordains differently, expect to enjoy a richer portion than the bad in the present life.⁴ On the other hand, a major purpose

⁴Hinckley Gilbert Mitchell, The Ethics of the Old Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1912), p. 293.

of the dialogue is to show that the retribution theory is untenable. The arguments of Job undermine it, and God says nothing from the whirlwind to oppose Job and uphold the theory. There exist, then, one major similarity, regarding the essence of righteousness, and several major differences in the view of Job's righteousness that is held in the framework of the book and in the central dialogue.

The çdhq Terms in the Book of Job

Seventeen of the forty-one occurrences of the verb çādhōq or çādhēq in the Old Testament appear in the Book of Job. The verb is used predominantly in a forensic sense. It appears six times in Job's speeches (9:2,15,20; 10:15; 13:18; 27:5) and regularly with a forensic meaning. The verb used in 9:2 is in a speech that is saturated with legal terminology. For example, the term ri^hbh appears in verse three. The context suggests that yiçdaq means "be justified in one's plea." In 9:15,20; 10:15; and 13:18, the term means "to be innocent." For example, in 9:20, the parallel clause has the expression, "am blameless." In 27:5, it means "admit you to be in the right."

The verb appears five times in the speeches of the friends (4:17; 11:2; 15:14; 22:3; 25:4). In 11:2, it has a

forensic sense. In its other four occurrences it seems to have the meaning of "be righteous in behavior." In 4:17, Job is implicated in the general sin of mankind. In 15:14, he is accused of his own particular sinfulness. In 22:3, being righteous is equated with making one's ways blameless. Finally, 25:4 is in a similar context to 4:17 and seems to be an indirect quote of that verse.⁵

The verb has five occurrences in the speech of Elihu (32:2; 33:12,32; 34:5; 35:7). In the first four occurrences, the word has a definitely forensic meaning. The last time it appears, the word is speaking of Job's righteous behavior. The final occurrence of the word is in the whirlwind speech of God (40:8), where it is again forensic.

The noun or adjective cedheq occurs seven times in the Book of Job. Four times it has a forensic meaning (6:29; 8:3; 8:6; 35:2). Once it is mentioned as an attribute of God (36:3). In 31:6, it appears with the word "balance." The idea of a just balance can be seen as a concept of relationship. In the particular relationship of men in commerce, the just balance is that which allows each to

⁵Kemper Fullerton, "Job Chapters 9 and 10," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature, LV (July 1938), 249-253, 262.

receive his due. But in common parlance, the expression "just balance" was probably used as a manner of speech without usually being connected to this derivation. For the purposes of this paper the most important occurrence of cedheq is in 29:14, because it refers to the righteousness of Job. Job says that he "put on righteousness" like a garment. In its context this reference is definitely in the realm of relationships. Job acted rightly toward other people in his relationships with them. He acted appropriately for the poor, the fatherless, the one who was about to perish, the widow, the blind, the lame, and the one whom he did not even know who had a cause.

The noun cedhāqāh occurs four times in the Book of Job. Once it is used in speaking of an attribute of God (37:23). In 35:8, from the speech of Elihu, it seems to mean righteous behavior. In 33:26, Elihu uses it in the sense of "salvation." Here righteousness is man's deliverance by God from his sins. The similarity here to the use of cidhqōth for Yahweh's righteous acts in I Sam. 12:7 is apparent. In 27:6, Job declares his intention to hold fast to his cedhāqāh. It is not clear in this passage what the connotations of the word are.

The noun çaddiq appears seven times in the book. In

34:17, it is used of God. In 22:19 and 27:17, it is used of a group of people who are opposite the rāshā'. Chapter 32:1 states that Job was a righteous person in his own eyes. In 36:7, Elihu speaks of righteous people who are under affliction, have transgressions, and behave arrogantly (verses 8 and 9). Here moral behavior is obviously not the constituting mark of the righteous. In 17:9, Job states that the righteous holds to his way. In 12:4, Job says that he is righteous and defines a righteous person as one who calls (qōrē') to God, and whom God answers. This verse describes the righteous as a person who is in a calling and answering relationship with God.

In summary, a study of the qdhq terms in the Book of Job reveals the following facts. In a high percentage of their occurrences, they have a forensic sense. It will be recalled from chapter two of this paper that righteousness in its legal sense is a concept of relationship between people and not a concept of conformity to law. Furthermore, the qdhq terms are never used in the speeches of Job to refer to behavior that conforms to a law. They are seldom used anywhere in the book even in the broader sense of right behavior. In 36:7-9, Elihu speaks of the righteous as people whose behavior is not right. Twice, Job clearly

speaks of righteousness as relationship. In 12:4, he refers to his relationship with God. In 29:14, he refers to his relationship with people. Finally, Elihu speaks of righteousness as salvation from God in 33:26. The present study of the qdhg terms seems to reveal that Job's righteousness lies in the area of relationships and not in the area of conformity to an ethical norm.

Relationship to God

In accord with the immediately preceding study and the study of righteousness in the Old Testament in the second chapter of this paper, this writer concludes that the righteousness of Job is primarily his relationship to God. A number of scholars concur with this conclusion. Von Rad says that when Job is speaking of his righteousness, he presupposes a relationship in which God is graciously turned toward man, which Job has not broken by any renunciation. Rather, Job has sought to maintain this relationship, and God has withdrawn. Job repeatedly asserts that he can see nothing in his suffering to cast doubt on his loyalty to God.⁶

⁶Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated from the German by D. M. Stalker (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), I, 408, 414.

Samuel Terrien maintains that the total book of Job intends to show the divinity of God, the humanity of man, and their relationship. This relationship is one of grace alone, apprehended by faith.⁷ Job acknowledges this grace which God has shown to him in the past, the grace which initiated their relationship, in 10:12. Job says, "Thou hast granted me life and hesedh; and thy care has preserved my spirit."

King states that Job had a way of salvation, through grace, in the reach of God toward man.⁸ Vischer says that God enters a covenant with man out of free goodness and fidelity. God owes nothing to man, and man's guilt cannot annul God's goodness, because man's merit has earned nothing. The Book of Job wrestles with the verification of righteousness, with the commitment of God to man and vice versa. The mutual commitments have arisen from God's free decision of heart and have resulted in fidelity on both sides.⁹

⁷Terrien, III, 898.

⁸Albion Roy King, The Problem of Evil: Christian Concepts of the Book of Job (New York: Ronald Press Company, c.1952), p. 108.

⁹Wilhelm Vischer, "God's Truth and Man's Lie: A Study of the Message of the Book of Job," Interpretation, XV (1961), 135.

An older article by J. T. Mueller makes substantially the same point as the more recent statements noted above. Mueller says, "Emphasis rests upon the fact that Job is a true believer, who holds to his integrity."¹⁰ He calls this point the "keynote to the whole book."¹¹ Mueller states again, "the one great thing which the author wishes to stress is Job's faith."¹² In an article dated in the same year as Mueller's, Jacoby maintains, "For every true believer in Christ has all the elements of Job's integrity."¹³ He claims that Job is nothing more nor less than a strong Christian character.¹⁴ While Jacoby's use of the term "Christian" is an anachronism, the emphasis he makes on the centrality of faith in Job's righteousness coincides with the conclusion amplified in this section. Job says he is righteous, because he has been in a right relationship with God. God has brought this relationship into being

¹⁰John Theodore Mueller, "The Paramount Lesson of Job: God's Glory Magnified by Faith Triumphant over Tribulation," Theological Monthly, I (June 1921), 163.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³J. C. Jacoby, "The Book of Job: Its Author and its Doctrine," Lutheran Quarterly, LI (April 1921), 188.

¹⁴Ibid.

by His grace, and Job has maintained his side of the relationship by faith in God. Job has done nothing that has been so out of harmony with his relationship to God that it has destroyed the relationship.

Sinlessness

In terms of the definition that has been offered here for righteousness, sin would be some act by man that is not in perfect accord with his relationship to God. Such an act would, in some measure, diminish man's faith in God and his fidelity to their relationship. One particular sin would not necessarily be so severe that it would destroy the whole relationship. Another sin or an accumulation of sins might be that devastating.

When Job claims that he is righteous, he is saying that his relationship with God is still intact. He has not committed any sin or group of sins that could have broken the entire relationship. He is not saying that he has never committed any sins, that he is sinless. Job admits that he has performed some sinful acts. He states his sinning as a possibility in 10:14 and 7:20,21. He seemingly includes himself in the general category of man when he says about man, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There

is not one" (14:4). He admits that there were iniquities in his youth (13:26). He confesses that he has sin (hattā'th), transgression (pesha'), and iniquity ('āwōn) (14:16,17). On the basis of these statements, it is safe to say that Job's righteousness is not a sinless condition.

Conformity to a Norm

Morris Stockhammer arrives at opposite conclusions to those expressed above in defining the righteousness of Job. He finds the essence of Job's righteousness in conformity to the moral law. He states, "Only the moral law, . . . determines Job's law-abiding conduct to be guiltless and his sufferings not to be punishment."¹⁵ He feels that readers of the Book of Job should be convinced of Job's total innocence of moral infractions. For Stockhammer, the biggest question is Job's moral quality. He states that the method of ascertaining this quality is measuring Job's deeds by the yardstick of certain laws. If Job conforms to the laws, he is meritorious. If not, he is guilty.¹⁶

¹⁵Morris Stockhammer, "The Righteousness of Job," Judaism, VII (1958), 69.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 64, 67.

Stockhammer errs in ignoring the passages noted above that refer to Job's transgressions. Also, he fails to take Job's relationship to God into account as a possibility in determining the nature of his righteousness. Instead of basing his investigation of Job's righteousness on an exegetical study of the text, he begins with the unproven pre-suppositions mentioned above regarding the importance of the moral law and proceeds from this basis. The exegetical study in the previous parts of this chapter contradicts his conclusions. It reveals that Job is sinful to a certain extent and that his righteousness is basically his relationship to God. It shows no particular emphasis on the moral law and does not provide Stockhammer with the privilege of proceeding from that starting-point.

Job's Problem

The very fact that Job is righteous creates a problem for him. Job's whole contention against God in the dialogue arises from the fact that he has been in the right relationship to God. Job has lived in conformity with his relationship to God, but Job is afflicted like an unrighteous man. If anyone has ever lived in the way which would perpetuate his relationship to God, the Book of Job wishes to make clear

that Job has. No one is more pious than Job. The decision about human piety as such falls in the verification or non-verification of the most pious.¹⁷ Job admits that he is not perfect, but he has not intentionally neglected any known God-pleasing deed. Job denies having sinned so greatly that such sinning has dissolved his righteousness (6:24; 21:16). Job agrees that sin is a universal occurrence among men, so that it is impossible for him to be sinless before God (14:4). But he turns the matter around by bracketing such minor sinning with his finitude and weakness to evoke God's pity, rather than his wrath (chapter 14).¹⁸ There is to be no doubt that Job is a truly righteous man, who has not broken away from God, at the time his affliction strikes him.

Although Job is righteous, a number of catastrophes befall him. This is incomprehensible to him, because he believes that all afflictions are punishments from God. He thinks that only the unrighteous should receive punishment. Why is he, a righteous man, punished? Job differs

¹⁷Johannes Hempel, "Das theologische Problem des Hiob," Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie, VI (1929), 643.

¹⁸Mary Francis Thelen, "J. B., Job, and the Biblical Concept of Man," Journal of Bible and Religion, XXVII (1959), 204.

little from his three friends in the way he views tribulation as punishment. All of them hold to the theory of retribution for evil.

Had he (Job) and Eliphaz been in reversed positions they would undoubtedly have also reversed their arguments, for Job was also of the orthodox school which clung to the theory of retribution, though¹⁹ Job claimed he would have been more sympathetic.

Thus, there are two opposing realities before Job. He is suffering, but in spite of his suffering, he can not confess that he has disturbed his intact relationship with God by a severe sin. However, God is completely free, and only His right avails. Therefore, Job believes that he must consider himself guilty, although he does not know why. Job tells his friends, "know then that God has put me in the wrong. . . . I call aloud, but there is no justice" (19:6,7). Job's position is especially critical, because of his high standing in his community. If a socially lower, righteous man had received seemingly unjust affliction, there would have been little problem. A leader in the community might have failed God, and the lower man might have suffered, because he was part of the leader's constituency. But there is a real

¹⁹A. A. Jones, "The Problem of Suffering in the Book of Job," Evangelical Quarterly, XVI (October 1944), 289.

problem when the sufferer is a head of the community,
like Job.²⁰

At this point, Job can choose to believe that he really has been in a right relationship with God or that God is doing something right in troubling him. To his way of thinking, he cannot believe both. Job chooses the former; he holds to his righteousness. Ludwig Fuerbringer did not agree that Job really held this position. He said that it does not do justice to the Book of Job to say that Job's righteousness becomes swallowed by his self-righteousness.²¹ But this is precisely what happens. Upholding his righteousness leads Job into pride. His misfortunes are a sign in the eyes of the world that he is a vile sinner. He is in terror that he will die and go to Sheol with this stain on his reputation and not be able to return to set the matter right.²² He is oppressed by uncertainty about his righteousness. He becomes

²⁰Johannes Pedersen, "Righteousness and Truth," Israel: Its Life and Culture, translated from the Danish by Aslaug Møller (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1926), I and II, 363.

²¹Ludwig Ernest Fuerbringer, The Book of Job: Its Significance to Ministers and Church Members, translated from the German by E. H. Paar (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1927), pp. 19, 20.

²²King, pp. 131, 132.

more concerned about his integrity than about his physical torment. For Job, the center of life is his righteousness. He can abandon his belief in everything else in life, including God's goodness, before that. He knows of his righteousness from his own immediate consciousness. He only knows of God's goodness from tradition and his past experience. The past does not prove God's goodness to him. His present distress suggests that his former happiness might have masked some sinister design of God.²³ So Job holds to belief in his righteousness and speaks out against God.

Job's Reaction to His Problem

Job is faced with the conflict between his former righteousness and his present affliction. He clings to his righteousness and reacts to his affliction by hurling several accusations and challenges at God. At various points in the dialogue, he presents the following arguments to God.

Job has been righteous, because God and he have been properly related to each other. If Job has done nothing

²³Arthur Samuel Peake, The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament (London: Epworth Press, 1947), p. 75.

to break that relationship, then God must have broken it. Job accuses God of having shattered their relationship by unjustly tormenting him. Job challenges God's justice and judges Him. The old relationship of love and trust between God and Job is gone since God is unjust. So another relationship comes into prominence, that of strength to weakness. Job views God as the tyrant who is oppressing him, simply because God is mightier than Job. His sense of weakness does not make him humble. If Job had become humble, he would have asked for help. Rather, he soars on the wings of pride.²⁴ When Job was strong, he upheld everyone within his covenant and maintained justice by keeping all their relationships in balance. God has not done the same for him. Job says God is unjust, because He has deserted His righteousness. Job suffers the agonies of a good conscience. As his conscience acquits him, it condemns Eloah. Job stands up for what he thinks is right. If this is not greater than God, it is because God is God. If it is Job's mistake to dissociate what is right from God, it is to his credit that he lets God's omnipotence go and clings to what is

²⁴James Mc Kechnie, Job: Moral Hero, Religious Egoist and Mystic (New York: George H. Doran Company, c.1927), pp. 70-72, 81.

right.²⁵ Job knows that he is righteous. Therefore, he accuses Eloah of being unrighteous and breaking their relationship.

Since this is the state of affairs, Job demands a trial before God, so that he may prove he is righteous and, thus, is being punished unfairly. He says:

Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!

I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.

I would learn what he would answer me, and understand what he would say to me.

Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?

No; he would give heed to me.

There an upright man could reason with him, and I should be acquitted for ever by my judge. (23:3-7)

Elsewhere, Job says to God, "Do not condemn me; let me know why thou dost contend against me" (10:2). Job speaks in the concepts of law in other places. He cries out (zā'aq) for his right (19:7), like a suppliant cries out before a king (II Kings 6:26). He conjures the earth not to let his blood trickle away, so that his cry may not come to rest (16:18). Job is certain that he will win his case. "Behold, I have prepared my case; I know that I shall be vindicated" (13:18). Job demands a trial, but God does not

²⁵Ibid., pp. 15, 16.

appear to allow him to have one. Job complains that Eloah is not giving him a fair chance.

But even if God would appear, Job knows that he still would not have a chance. God's strength would make Job suppliant and awe-struck. God is so wise that Job could not meet any of His requirements.²⁶ Job complains, "If I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head" (10:15). "Though I am innocent, I cannot answer him; I must appeal for mercy to my accuser" (9:15). "Though I am innocent, my own mouth would condemn me; though I am blameless, he would prove me perverse" (9:20). Job's only chance is a trial, but even a trial is no real chance.

Job will not admit that he is a flagrant sinner. But his next appeal to Eloah asks why He does not simply forgive Job if He finds some major transgression in him. "Why dost thou not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?" (7:21) Stewart is correct when he says that Job comes short in his estimation of the nature and work of sin. He does not recognize the moral deterioration brought about by sin. He does not see its effect on God. Job

²⁶Mitchell, p. 298.

fails to see that transgressions hurt God (7:20).²⁷

Job has tried all the appeals, to God that he thought might help him. All that he can say now reveals the hopelessness he feels. He asks that God leave him alone.

Let me alone, for my days are a breath.
 What is man, that thou dost make so much of him,
 and that thou dost set thy mind upon him,
 dost visit him every morning, and test him
 every moment?
 How long wilt thou not look away from me,
 nor let me alone till I swallow my spittle? (7:16-19)

Job denies that the wicked suffer for their offenses.

Rather, he goes to great lengths to describe their prosperity (21:7-33). He concludes that his closeness to God mattered little, since those who are far from God have much better lives than he. Job has nothing to put in the place of his old view of retribution for good and evil. With the breakdown of his old religious ideas, Job is confronted by a theological abyss, in which all faith can say about God is lost, and over which remains only God in His power and holiness.²⁸

²⁷James Stewart, The Message of Job (London: Independent Press, 1959), p. 135.

²⁸von Rad, I, 412.

Job's Fleeting Hope

Since Job's appeals to Eloah have achieved nothing for him, he still has one, momentary ray of hope. He repeats this hope three times, and each time, he immediately gives it up and goes back to his former hopelessness. In 9:32,33, he says:

For he is not a man, as I am, that I might
 answer him,
 that we should come to trial together.
 There is no umpire between us,
 who might lay his hand upon us both.

Another textually well-attested reading for the second line is, "Would that there were an umpire between us." Either way the text is read, Job brings the possibility to mind, at least, that there might still be some third party involved, besides God and him. He calls this party a môkiah (umpire). A môkiah is someone who decides, judges, convinces, corrects, or rebukes. Here this umpire is not only to decide between the cases of Eloah and Job. Job also conceives of him bringing Eloah and Job together in harmony.²⁹ Job has hope that God will see he is righteous and be close to him again, because of the intervention of an umpire.

²⁹Terrien, III, 985.

This idea occurs to Job again in 16:19. He states, "Even now, behold, my witness ('ēdhî) is in heaven, and he that vouches for me (sāh^adhî) is on high." Here Job states his hope more confidently than in the preceding occurrence but with a less exalted meaning. In this case, the intermediary is a witness, who sees God murdering Job (verse 18).³⁰ Job has the hope that even if he dies with the unjust stain still upon his reputation, at least, there will still be a witness to say that he was right.

The last occurrence of Job's hope is in 19:25-27. The text of these verses is very corrupt, and where it is decipherable, a number of possibilities for translation exist in several places. For the present study, it is helpful to note that, in this text, Job states that he is confident of the existence of his intermediary, here called a redeemer (qō'ēl). In the Old Testament, a qō'ēl was the avenger of blood when a murder occurred (II Sam. 14:11). In this case, he was usually the next of kin. Also, as next of kin, a qō'ēl had the right to buy or redeem the estate of a dead relative or raise up posterity for him (Deut. 25:5-10; Ruth 2:20; 4:4-12). By extension of this

³⁰Ibid., III, 1026.

original sense, a qō'ēl could be any defender of the oppressed (Prov. 23:10,11).³¹ It is in this latter sense, that the term occurs here. The use of the term connects this text with the preceding one (16:19). The "witness" beheld Job's murder. The "redeemer" can, similarly, be an avenger of blood. But the function of the redeemer is similar to that of the umpire in 9:33. He will vouch for Job's righteousness in trial before God. This passage, also, seems to contain the hope of after life for Job. Job has previously stated that he does not have hope of a life after his death, when the injustice done to him can be righted (7:7-10,16,21; 10:20-22). But at this moment, Job asks what would happen if the dead were to live again. Then, he could look forward to another life in which the wrongs of the present could be righted. Job is thinking of an ad hoc resurrection, a miracle for the purpose of his own vindication.³² At this moment, Job has hope that he will live again to see his redeemer set his case right with God.

Job has referred to his intermediary three times in

³¹Ibid., III, 1051.

³²Mc Kechnie, pp. 91, 94.

the three passages discussed above. Scholars are divided on the question of what sort of a being this mediator is. Irwin states that the intermediary is an aspect of the divine.³³ But Mowinckel says that it is senseless to say that Job appeals to God against God. As in the Akkadian Psalms of lament, Mowinckel says that the mediator is a heavenly guardian god or angel of the individual person.³⁴ Mowinckel's conclusion seems to be in accord with what Job says about his mediator. When Job thinks that God has deserted him, he turns for help to his intermediary in the heavenly council of gods. But he has no way of being sure that such a being exists, nor that he will have an after life in which his wrongs will be righted. Job's hope is a shot in the dark. He quickly passes over it and returns to his hopeless gloom.

³³William A. Irwin, "Job's Redeemer," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXI (1962), 228.

³⁴Sigmund Mowinckel, "Hiobs go'el und Zeuge im Himmel," Karl Marti zum Siebzigsten Geburtstage, herausgegeben von Karl Budde (Giessen: Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, 1925), pp. 208, 209.

CHAPTER IV

PARALLEL AND ANTITHETICAL CONCEPTS OF ꝢDHQ IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IN THE BOOK OF JOB

Parallel Concepts

The preceding chapter of this paper has come to the conclusion that Job's righteousness is his right relationship to God and that it is not his conformity to some external norm. This conclusion was reached on the basis of a study of the Ꝣdhq terms in the Book of Job. In this chapter, the terms that are parallel to Ꝣdhq in the Book of Job will be studied first. A survey of these terms confirms the conclusion mentioned above. Von Rad has arrived at a similar decision. He says that the account he has given concerning the Ꝣdhq words in the Old Testament holds good for kindred terms, like tām and yāshār.¹

The first terms demanding investigation are those that are based on the root tmm. As Job said that he was righteous, he also says, "I am tām" (9:21). The tmm terms

¹Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated from the German by D. M. Stalker (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), I, 372.

are, also, used in parallel positions with the qdhq words (12:4; 27:5,6).

The verb tāmam is used twice in the Book of Job. In 31:40, it is used in its original sense, "be finished." In 22:3, Eliphaz uses it in the Hiphil. Here it has the sense of right behavior in the expression "make your ways blameless."

The noun tōm also occurs twice. In 21:23, it means "completeness" or "prosperity." In 4:6, Eliphaz uses it significantly in a construction which is parallel to the words "fear of God." It may be recalled from chapter three of this paper that "fear of God" denotes a faith relationship with God.

The noun tummāh is first used in the prologue. In 2:3, Yahweh tells Satan that Job holds fast his tummāh. In 2:9, Job's wife asks him if he is still holding fast his tummāh. In the context of the prologue, it does not make as much sense to connect "integrity" with moral behavior, as it does to connect it with Job's relationship to God. Job is clinging to his relationship with God here, rather than breaking it by speaking against Him. When tummāh next occurs in 27:5, Job simply says that he will not give it up. In its final occurrence, 31:6, Job connects it with

right behavior.

The adjective tām is also used in the prologue. Its use in 1:1 was examined in the preceding chapter of this paper. It appears in the same construction at 1:8 and 2:3. At all these places, tām indicates that Job is in a faith relationship with God. This is shown by the connection of tām with "fear" in all three texts. When tām occurs in 8:20, the verse says that God will not reject a "blameless" man. Tām appears three times in 9:20-22. The word is used here in the sense of being innocent in a trial.

The final tmm word to be considered is the adjective tāmim. When it occurs in the speech of Elihu at 36:4 and 37:16, it refers to the fact that God's knowledge is "complete." It is parallel to ḡaddiq in 12:4. Here the tāmim man is the one who calls upon God, and whom God answers. The "blameless" person, at this occurrence, is in the right relationship to God. A study of the tmm words indicates a frequent connection with relationship to God and little ethical emphasis.

A large number of scholars support these findings when speaking of the use of tmm in the whole Old Testament. Terrien says that integrity means that a person's personality

is integrated within himself and with his environment. This person has the right kind of relationships with himself, those around him, and God. His right relationships demonstrate themselves in shālōm, a healthy wholeness.² Pedersen states that tmm is used to indicate integrity as an inner presupposition. The tmm man is healthy from the core of his person. No secondary wills have a seat within him, so that they may counteract the main will which is at the center of his being. This main will is directed toward oneness with God.³ Smith adds that tmm has definitely cultic associations (Deut. 18:13). Here it means whole or sound, like a sacrificial offering. For a man to be tmm, he must be wholly turned, with his entire will and being, to God, as God is turned to man. This is man's response of obedience in faith (Ps. 26:1). Tmm does not have a legalistic background, nor is it the end state of ever-increasing goodness. It is the acceptance of grace, which is always whole, complete, and perfect. In the

²Samuel Terrien, "The Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1954), III, 898.

³Johannes Pedersen, "Righteousness and Truth," Israel: Its Life and Culture, translated from the Danish by Aslaug Møller (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1926), I and II, 336.

strength of this acceptance, man's life is lived.⁴ Kooy maintains that tmm is the state of being complete and well-adjusted, which is evaluated by relationship to God, rather than by some absolute or ideal norm.⁵ Garratt holds that a tmm person is a partaker of man's common sinful nature but is also a sincere and consistent servant of God. By grace he is enabled to fear God and turn away from evil.⁶ It may be concluded that when the Book of Job says that Job is tmm, it means that he has a sound, integrated personality, based on a right relationship with God.

A second term which is used in the same sense as cdhq in the Book of Job is yāshār. The prologue describes Job with this word, together with the term tām (1:1). In this verse yāshār is defined by the statement that Job feared God. As has been shown above, such fear denotes a faith relationship. In 17:8, yāshār is used but not explained.

⁴Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), p. 167.

⁵V. H. Kooy, "Integrity," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), II, 718.

⁶Samuel Garratt, The Discipline of Suffering; or, Job's History (London: William Hunt and Company, 1889), p. 12.

In 33:27, Elihu speaks of the man who sinned and perverted yāshār. Here the word can be understood to mean that he perverted the right relationship with God, but this cannot definitely be concluded. "Upright" is used in a forensic sense in 23:7. In 4:7, Eliphaz asks where the "upright" were ever cut off. Verse 6 just stated previously that Job's fear of God was his confidence. Hence, "upright" is, probably, used in a faith relationship context at this point. The final occurrence of yāshār in the Book of Job is in Bildad's speech at 8:6. Parallel to the clause in which it is found, Bildad says, "If you will seek God and make supplication to the Almighty," in verse 5. Bildad is making "uprightness" synonymous with restoring one's relationship to God.

The cognate word yōsher also occurs three times in the Book of Job. Twice, it is used of "honest" speech (6:25; 33:3). In 33:23, Elihu says that the mediator will declare to man what is yōsher for him. In its context, "what is right" is concerned with God's grace and man's redemption from destruction.⁷ "What is right" is God's relationship with man, based on God's mercy. The conclusion may be

⁷Hans Möller, Sinn und Aufbau des Buches Hiob (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1955), p. 100.

reached that, like the terms previously studied, the yshr words in the Book of Job are closely connected with Job's relationship to God.

What is true of yshr here is also true of this concept elsewhere in the Old Testament. Snaith states that it is commonly thought that this is primarily an ethical word, but that such an idea is not a fact. The root meaning of the term is "be gentle" (Judg. 14:3,7). Later, the word came to denote a level path (Is. 40:3). Then the Deuteronomic writers used yshr to mean "agreeable" or "pleasing to" (Deut. 12:25). While the word may denote right behavior, it is important to understand that the meaning of the word is conditioned by the character of the one to whom the action is pleasing (Prov. 14:12).⁸ Therefore, something can only be said to be yshr if a relationship exists. One person in the relationship is pleasing to the other person involved. In the Book of Job, Job is "pleasing to" God within their relationship.

Another term deserving consideration is zakh. This word appears four times in the Book of Job. In 8:6, Bildad uses it with yāshār in close connection with a statement of

⁸Richardson, p. 273.

Job's relationship to God (verse 5). In 11:4, Zophar claims that Job says his doctrine (lighi[^]) is zakh. Job contends that there is no violence in his hands and that his prayer is zakkāh (16:17). Finally, Elihu states that Job has said, "I am zakh, without transgression" (33:9). It cannot be denied that this last verse does use zakh in the sense of ethical purity. But it must be noted that Job himself never says that he is "clean." The most he says is that his prayer is zakkāh (16:17). Furthermore, Bildad brings the term within the area of relationship to God (8:5,6). Likewise, Pedersen says that zakh implies that a person's integrity within a relationship has not been broken by foreign wills or contaminating elements inside him.⁹ Therefore, although zakh can denote ethical purity, such purity appears to arise from a man's relationship to God.

The next word to be considered is nāqi[^]. Twice it is used in a parallel construction with ḡaddiq[^] (22:19; 27:17), once, with tām (9:22,23), and once, with yāshār (4:7). Eliphaz connects the word with Job's faith relationship in 4:6,7. In three of nāqi[^]'s other uses, little can be determined

⁹Pedersen, I and II, 337.

regarding its significance (17:8; 22:19; 27:17). It is employed forensically in 9:23. In 22:30, Eliphaz may be using it in an ethical sense, since it is parallel to the phrase "the cleanness of your hands." The conclusions that may be reached concerning nāqī[^] are the same as those reached in regard to zakh. Job never uses this term directly about himself. Eliphaz brings the term within the area of relationship to God (4:6,7). What Pedersen says about zakh's connection to relationships applies equally well to nāqī[^].¹⁰ Thus, even if nāqī[^], like zakh, can carry the idea of moral cleanness, such a state seems to result from a man's relationship to God.

A term which occurs seldom in the Book of Job but requires attention in this discussion, nevertheless, is br. In 11:4, Zophar says, "For you say, 'My doctrine is zakh, and I am bar in God's eyes.'" Little can be derived from this verse that will clarify the meaning of br. In 22:30, Eliphaz states, "you will be delivered through the bōr of your hands." The clause which is parallel to this one contains the word nāqī[^]. This verse may connote an ethical meaning for the term br, but the parallelism of br with

¹⁰Ibid.

zakh in the first verse and with nāqī in this latter verse moves it into the realm of those words. Thus, it seems to move within the area of relationship to God.

The final concept which is parallel to ḡdhq in the Book of Job is tāhōr. This word is used three times in the book. When it occurs at 28:19, it is used to designate gold as "pure." In 14:4, Job asks, "Who can bring tāhōr out of an unclean?" Chapter 17:9 speaks of "clean hands." The cognate verb tāhēr is also used once. In 4:17, Eliphaz asks if a man can "be pure" before his Maker. In these last three references, thr may convey an ethical sense. But it should also be noted that twice it is parallel to the relationship word ḡdhq (4:17; 17:9). Furthermore, tāhōr was originally a cultic word (Lev. 4:12; 10:10; 14:4). In the cult, it denoted something which was suitable for use in worship. The cultic use of the word had little to do with ethics. Here the word signified something which was suitable for Israel's worship relationship with God (Lev. 10:10). Once again, a word appears which can convey a moral implication but which probably arises first from man's relationship to God.

Antithetical Concepts

Now that the parallel concepts of ḡdhq have been studied,

it is also necessary to consider those concepts which are antithetical to ḡdhq. The most common term used in this sense is rāshā'. At times, it is employed as the opposite of ḡdhq (Job 22:18; 36:6) and as the opposite of tām (9:22). In the majority of the uses of the adjective rāshā' in the Book of Job, little is contributed toward an understanding of the connotations of this term (9:24; 10:3; 20:5,29; 27:7,13; 34:18; 36:17, and in thirteen other places). Chapter 9:22 employs rāshā' in a forensic sense, as the guilty party in a trial (verse 19). Elihu sheds light on the use of the word in 36:6-9. Here the "wicked" are opposite to the ḡddiq[^]. But the "righteous" themselves are guilty of transgressions and iniquity. Therefore, by the most explicit definition, the "wicked" are not those who commit sins. Both Job and Eliphaz describe the "wicked" in 21:14-17 and 22:12-18, in the same way. The "wicked" are those who say to God, "Depart from us! We do not desire the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?" (21:14,15) These passages make it very clear that rāshā' means alienated from God. The "wicked" are those who have no positive relationship to God.

Achtemeier comes to a similar conclusion in regard to the use of the word rāshā' concerning social relationships

in the Old Testament. He says that the wicked man is mentioned over against the righteous, not because the wicked violates a norm of ethical action, but because he destroys the community itself by failing the demands of a community relationship. What he does is not evil in itself but evil committed against others in a relationship.¹¹ The use of rāshā' in the social sphere is, thus, similar to the use of the word in the religious sphere.

The other term which is antithetical to ꝓdhq in the Book of Job is hānēph. This word is a parallel term for rāshā' in 20:5 and 27:8. Three of the uses of hānēph add little to an understanding of the concept (17:8; 20:5; 34:30). Chapter 15:34,35, moves the term into the moral area by citing bribery, mischief, evil, and deceit as marks of the "godless." Four other occurrences, however, use the word in speaking of the relationship between God and man. Chapter 8:13 says that the "godless" man forgets God. In 13:16, Job says, "This will be my salvation, that a godless man shall not come before him." In 27:8-10, he implies

¹¹E. R. Achtemeier, "Righteousness in the O T," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV, 81.

that God does not listen to the cry of the "godless" and that the "godless" do not take delight in nor call upon God. Elihu says that the "godless" do not cry for help when God binds them (36:13). These latter passages reveal that the hānēph is a man who is not in a right relationship to God. In the one passage in which Eliphaz uses the word in a moral sense (15:34), it is justifiable to say that the immoral behavior mentioned arises from the godlessness of the hānēph.

It may be noted, in conclusion, that a study of the parallel and antithetical terms for q̄dhq in the Book of Job confirms the results derived from an investigation of the q̄dhq terms themselves. All of the words which are parallel to q̄dhq ultimately carry the connotation of right relationship to God. All of the words which are antithetical to q̄dhq signify that a person is "not properly related to God. The Job who says that he is righteous is saying that God and he have been intimately involved with each other.

James L. Carstensen, Job: Defense of Honor (New York and London: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 87.

Augustus Ernest Suerbinger, The Book of Job: Its Significance for Literature and Church History, translated into English by E. H. Dart (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917), p. 87.

CHAPTER V

THE BEHAVIOR OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN IN THE BOOK OF JOB

Right Relationships with Other People

The previous chapters of this paper have stressed that Job's righteousness is his relationship to God, rather than his conformity to some external norm. However, Job does live in a moral manner, and this right behavior does have some connection with his righteousness. Job lives in a proper way, but not because he is required to do so by some law or statute.¹ Ludwig Fuerbringer takes a wrong approach when he tries to impose the code of the Decalog upon the description of Job's behavior in chapter 31 of the Book of Job.² Job's behavior is rooted in his faith relationship to God. He lives in a way that will please God, because God has touched his life with His grace. Job lives in right relationships with other people, because he is impelled to

¹Roger N. Carstensen, Job: Defense of Honor (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1963), p. 87.

²Ludwig Ernest Fuerbringer, The Book of Job: Its Significance to Ministers and Church Members, translated from the German by E. H. Paar (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1927), p. 53.

do so by his right relationship to God.

In this connection it is well to call to mind that the Book of Job is largely a piece of wisdom literature. The sources of the wisdom writings are not the events of Israel's past. There are almost no references in the wisdom works to election, the covenant, or the Torah. A major source of Old Testament books of this sort is the international wisdom of the ancient Near East, particularly that of Egypt, Edom, and the desert.³ Because of this, there is little reason to expect that Job would base his righteousness on any of the laws of the Pentateuch. If this is true, there is one passage in the Book of Job which requires some explanation. In 23:12, Job claims that he has not departed from "the commandment of his (God's) lips." The "commandment" in this verse is not referring to some of the content of the Pentateuch. Brown, Driver, and Briggs put this reference to "commandment" under the category of special ordinances from God and not under the categories of any of the law codes of the Pentateuch.⁴ The wise commonly considered themselves

³James Muilenburg, The Way of Israel: Biblical Faith and Ethics (First edition; New York: Harper, 1961), p. 99.

⁴Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1907), p. 846.

inspired by God (Job 4:12-21). What they taught to people was what might be considered good advice on how to get along in life. Their teachings were involved with everyday relationships of people (Job 29 and 31). What Job calls "the commandment of his lips" may, in this context, be what he has learned through personal experience and from other "inspired" wise men about the best way to live with other people. This experience guides Job in living in the way which is in best accord with his relationship to God.

Bruce states that, "The objective principle of Old Testament morality is just the will and the character of God, as revealed to man."⁵ He goes on; "the subjective principle of Old Testament morality is a free, loving obedience to this holy will of God."⁶ The moral behavior of Job has this basis. The manner in which God has acted for him and the way he has responded in faith toward God has affected the rest of his life. Job has conducted himself toward other people in the same positive, wholesome way that God and he have acted toward each other.

⁵William Straton Bruce, The Ethics of the Old Testament (Second edition enlarged; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1960), p. 24.

⁶Ibid., p. 27.

Behavior of the Unrighteous

Before speaking of the manner in which a righteous man behaves toward other people in their relationships, it might be well to consider the description the Book of Job gives of the behavior of the unrighteous. Because the unrighteous has no right relationship with God, his behavior toward others does not conform to his relationships with them. It is destructive and distorting. The Book of Job demonstrates this disruptive force of the behavior of the unrighteous in the terms it uses for this behavior and in the description it gives of such behavior.

One term which the Book of Job uses for the behavior of the unrighteous is ra'. One use of the word ra' has reference to a factual judgment that something is bad, displeasing, or harmful. An "evil" thing can be anything causing pain, unhappiness, or misery (Job 5:19). Therefore, Job's affliction is called by this name (2:10; 30:26). The development of the moral connotation of ra' is very natural in the light of this original sense of the word. A harmful act is wicked from the viewpoint of the injured person (Judg. 11:27; II Sam. 13:16).⁷

⁷Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 73, 74.

In this moral sense, the Book of Job uses ra' to describe the action of the unrighteous (20:12; 22:5; 28:28). Because of the harmful activities of the unrighteous, they themselves are given the name of the evil they do (21:30).

The deeds of the unrighteous are also called 'awlāh. "Wrong" actions are perversion and wickedness. They are basically unjust. The Book of Job employs 'awlāh frequently for injustice of speech and action (6:29,30; 13:7; 15:16; 22:23; 27:4). The unrighteous behaves in a way which deprives his neighbor of his right.

Another word for the action of the unrighteous is 'āwōn. This word for trespass or sin always involves the guilty party's consciousness. It has its roots in his evil disposition.⁸ This word conveys the idea of turning aside or twisting. 'āwōn is, thus, a person's warped condition which reveals itself in warped acts (Job 15:5). This word includes the dimension of guilt (11:6; 13:26). The guilt of the unrighteous comes to light as soon as his sin is committed. Therefore, 'āwōn's meaning can be further extended. It can also include the punishment which

⁸Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated from the German by D. M. Stalker (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), I, 263.

results from guilt (19:29).⁹

The unrighteous also "sins" (hātā') in his godless condition. The verb hātā', as well as the corresponding noun hattā'th, literally means "to miss the mark." It is used once in the Book of Job to convey this original sense of "missing" (5:24). In addition, the word signifies all kinds of failures in men's relationships with each other. But first and foremost, it describes human failure against God (1:5; 10:14).¹⁰

The final term for the behavior of the unrighteous in the Book of Job is pesha' (7:21; 13:23; 31:33). The word may have originally meant "impeachment of property" (Ex.22:9). It was used more extensively in the language of politics for "revolt" or "rebellion" (I Kings 12:19). In this sense, it is taken into the religious sphere. Here it signifies deliberate rebellion against God. Thus it is the gravest word for sin.¹¹ The words which are used for the behavior

⁹Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the German by Arthur Heathcote and Philip Allcock (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1958), pp. 281, 286.

¹⁰von Rad, I, 263.

¹¹Ibid.

of the unrighteous in the Book of Job all show how such action destroys proper relationships with God and one's fellowmen.

The destructive force of the behavior of the unrighteous is also indicated by the examples the Book of Job gives of such behavior. In this book, deceit and its outward manifestation in lying are the basic sins (13:4; 15:35; 31:5). Job and his friends mutually accuse each other of this fault. They view each other's failure to come to an agreement with themselves as a result of such dishonesty. A man's treatment of those weaker than himself also takes a large part in the Book of Job's description of unrighteous behavior. The unrighteous takes advantage of the weak and exploits poverty (22:6). He oppresses those feebler than himself (20:19; 27:13). He shows no charity to the needy (22:7,9; 24:7; 26:2). The Book of Job is one of the few places in ancient literature which protests against the horrible conditions of poverty and slavery (24:5-12). There are also other immoral acts of the unrighteous toward which the Book of Job points. The unrighteous has an unbridled tongue and speaks harsh words (15:5,13; 20:12-14). He commits bribery (15:34), adultery (24:15), and murder (24:14). He is a thief who takes away the poor's animals and steals their land by

removing landmarks (24:2-4).¹² All of the above acts of the unrighteous are disruptive of right relationships with God and with the people around him. The unrighteous man has no proper relationship to God. Therefore, his actions toward other people distort and upset his relationships with them.

Behavior of the Righteous in Job 31

Now that the portrayal of the negative behavior of the unrighteous man has been presented, it is also helpful to consider the positive behavior of the righteous man. Such a description will deal with the deeds of the righteous which stem from his right relationship to God. His deeds also contribute toward wholesome relationships with other people. The best description of this behavior in the Book of Job is provided by chapter 31. This chapter is the end of Job's speeches. It is his final appeal to God. Job scholars generally have an extremely high regard for this chapter and the portrayal of the behavior of the righteous it offers. Duhm declares that this chapter "marks the climax of Old

¹²Albion Roy King, The Problem of Evil: Christian Concepts of the Book of Job (New York: Ronald Press Company, c.1952), pp. 164-166.

Testament ethics, surpassing in this respect, not only anything that the original story had to offer, but the Decalogue and even the prophets."¹³ König calls this chapter the highpoint of Job's religious expression.¹⁴ Terrien says that this chapter offers a standard of behavior unexcelled in the Old Testament, the ancient Near East, classical Greek, and the New Testament, not excluding the Sermon on the Mount.¹⁵ In chapter 31, Job defines his attitude toward his fellowmen and describes his past conduct in his various domestic and social relationships. At the center of his conscience is revealed a deep commitment to the will of a God who cares for all men (verse 15 and 23). Chapter 31 is valuable, because it reveals that the poet of the Book of Job knows of the subtle link between a socially harmful act and the psychological mood of its perpetrator. It demonstrates a refinement of social thoughtfulness and

¹³Hinckley Gilbert Mitchell, The Ethics of the Old Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1912), p. 308.

¹⁴Eduard König, Das Buch Hiob: Eingeleitet, Übersetzt und Erklärt (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1929), p. 325.

¹⁵Samuel Terrien, Job: Poet of Existence (First edition; New York and Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Incorporated, 1957), p. 186.

generosity that is unique in human behavior.¹⁶

Form and Structure

It is essential for a correct understanding of Job 31 that its form and structure be understood. It is the consensus of opinion among Job scholars that this chapter has the form of an oath of clearance. In the legal sphere, the setting of this oath was that one who believed that he had a case against another could arraign him before a college of judges and impose on him an oath, in which he swore that he had not done certain things. If the party on trial was guilty and perjured himself, the imprecations he had recited against himself in the oath were believed to have the power to bring about his ruin. The man under oath used no self-restraint in calling these imprecations upon himself. His very enthusiasm was what proved him just.¹⁷ The taking of this oath was the last word in an assertion of innocence. It was tantamount to acquittal, since it was assumed that terror of the sanctions of the self-imprecations would

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Emil Gottlieb Heinrich Kraeling, The Book of the Ways of God (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1938), p. 116.

deter anyone from swearing falsely. After Job has taken this oath, there is nothing more that the friends can say. It is up to God alone to answer him.¹⁸

In addition to the legal sphere, the oath of clearance also has a setting within the area of the cult. I Kings 8:31,32 describes the taking of the oath in this setting. In this passage, the temple in Jerusalem is the site of the event. Hans Schmidt feels that some of the laments and penitential prayers in the Psalms have their background in such an investigation in the temple. In some of the Psalms, he finds prayers of the accused (142; 31:1-8; 26; 27:7-14). In others, he sees assurance of the innocence of such a man (69; 35; 31:9-24; 109).¹⁹ Whether the Psalms reflect this procedure or not, the oath of clearance was, at times, taken in the temple. Here it was an appeal for divine judgment. The oath served to prepare for a meeting with God and to call for His legal dealings.²⁰ The parallel here with the

¹⁸Marvin H. Pope, Job (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1965), p. LXXII.

¹⁹Hans Schmidt, Das Gebet der Angeklagten im Alten Testament (Giessen: Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, 1928), pp. 1, 2, 6-46.

²⁰Friedrich Horst, "Der Eid im Alten Testament," Evangelische Theologie, XVII (1957), 369.

theophany in Job 38 to 41, after Job's oath of clearance, is unmistakable. The oath of clearance in the temple is also very similar to the Tempeltora (Ps. 15), a cultic institution in connection with certain rites and lustrations. Its purpose was to discover any uncleanness, which might require a person to abstain from taking part in the cult. It had the form of negatively formulated sentences, like the oath of clearance. In the scheme of this rite, the person being examined asked, "Who may enter here?" The answer from one of the temple personnel was, "He who has done this and not that." Then the examined party gave the assurance, "I have done this, and I have not done that." Upon this assurance, he was admitted to the temple.²¹

Although Job 31 is similar to the Tempeltora, it is still more similar to the oath of clearance in the temple, as described in I Kings 8. As one party had a case against another in I Kings, so Job feels that God has charges against him, and he takes the oath to clear himself of these charges. It may be concluded that the source from which the poet of the Book of Job drew the form of chapter 31 was the

²¹Kurt Galling, "Der Beichtspiegel," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, XLVII (1929), 125, 126.

oath of clearance, as practiced in the temple.

Georg Fohrer carries the search for the form of Job 31 back one step beyond the oath of clearance. He claims that this oath of clearance is adapted from an earlier law code. As proof, he states that the mid-section of the chapter (verses 5-34) is based upon ten commandments and that the total chapter reflects twelve commandments. Thus, he divides the chapter into the following units: verses 1-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12, 13-15, 16-23, 24-25, 26-28, 29-30, 31-32, 33-34, 38-40. Fohrer demonstrates that series of ten and twelve commandments are the standard phenomenon in apodictic law. Series of ten are found in Ex. 20 and Lev. 19:3-12. Series of twelve occur in Ex. 23:10-19 and Lev. 18:6-18. Thus, he concludes that the reflection of ten or twelve commandments in Job 31 proves that this oath of clearance had a law code lying behind it.²² It would seem that Fohrer's conclusion is based on rather unstable evidence. It depends on the occurrence of ten or twelve commandments in the chapter. To arrive at these numbers, the chapter must be arranged somewhat as Fohrer has arranged it. But other commentators divide

²²Georg Fohrer, Das Buch Hiob (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1963), pp. 427-429.

chapter 31 differently. Driver and Gray take verses 5 to 8 as one unit, verses 13 to 20 as another unit, and verses 21 to 23 as a third unit.²³ If this total scheme or any one part of it is accepted in preference to Fohrer's, his numbering is thrown off and his total hypothesis is destroyed. Even if Fohrer's division of the chapter is accepted, the coincidence of the numbers ten and twelve is hardly enough to prove a connection between this oath of clearance and a law code. Fohrer's theory has far too little evidence supporting it and, consequently, is here rejected.

Verses 5 to 34 and 38 to 40 of Job 31 contain Job's actual oaths of clearance. The oaths he utters have two grammatically different forms. In some cases, Job expresses his repudiations, beginning with the word 'im, and follows them with imprecations upon himself (verses 5-12, 21-23, 38-40). In these cases what occur are conditional sentences, and 'im is equivalent to "if." At other times Job expresses only repudiations, beginning with 'im or 'im lō', and no imprecations (13-20, 24-34). The absence of the imprecations and the resultant changes of construction make the 'im's

²³Samuel R. Driver and G. B. Gray, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1921), Part i, 263, 265-267.

practically equivalent to "surely not" and the 'im lō''s equivalent to "surely." This is the regular Hebrew usage in regard to oaths.²⁴ It might be questioned whether verse 22 is only the imprecation for verse 21, as indicated above, or whether it is not also the imprecation for verses 16 to 20. But the imprecation of damage to Job's shoulder and arm seems so directly related to raising his arm in verse 21 and unrelated to the preceding verses, that verse 22 probably only applies to 21.²⁵

In addition to the repudiations and imprecations discussed above, chapter 31 also contains other elements. Verses 1 to 4 refer to a former covenant of Job but are not in a conditional or oath form. Verses 6 and 18 are parenthetical comments. In 11, 12, and 28, Job expresses aversion to the thought of committing the sins involved.²⁶ He states principles which restrained his conduct in 14, 15, and 23. He

²⁴Gesenius, Hebrew Grammar, edited and enlarged by E. Kautzsch, English edition revised by A. E. Cowley (Second edition; Oxford: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1910), p. 471.

²⁵Driver and Gray, Part i, 266, 267.

²⁶Richard Moulton, The Literary Study of the Bible (Chicago: D. C. Heath and Company, Publishers, 1899), p. 554.

makes direct denials of particular sins in 30 and 32. In 35 to 37, Job casts his ultimate challenge at God on the basis of all his oaths. It may be noted that even within these verses Job uses one oath structure. In 36, he begins with 'im lō', in the sense of "surely."

Near Eastern Parallels

Several Near Eastern parallels to Job 31 have been noted by various scholars. These parallels deserve examination, so that it may be determined whether there is any interdependence between them and the Book of Job. The most frequently mentioned parallel is the "Negative Confession" in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Weiser says that this "Confession" may stand behind chapter 31.²⁷ Terrien, likewise, notes that 31 "strikingly recalls" the "Negative Confession."²⁸ In Egypt, before the deceased entered the Hall of Justice, where his heart was weighed before Osiris and forty-two judges, he enumerated a long list of sins that he

²⁷Artur Weiser, Das Buch Hiob: Übersetzt und Erklärt (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1951), p. 210.

²⁸Samuel Terrien, "The Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George Buttrick and Others (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, c.1954), III, 880.

had not committed.²⁹ This list is the "Confession" in question.

Several of the repudiations and assertions of the "Negative Confession" contain thoughts similar to chapter 31. The Egyptian deceased says: "I have not acted unchastely"³⁰ (31:1,9). "I . . . have not acted deceitfully"³¹ (31:5). "I have not closed mine ear to the words of right and truth"³² (31:13). "I have not done violence to a poor man"³³ (31:16). "I have given bread to the hungry [sic!] . . . clothing to the naked,"³⁴ (31:16,17,19,20). "I have cursed no man"³⁵ (31:30). "I have not injured ploughed lands"³⁶ (31:38).

²⁹Kraeling, p. 116.

³⁰E. A. Wallis Budge, editor, The Book of the Dead (London: Harrison and Sons, 1899), p. 48.

³¹Ibid., p. 27.

³²Ibid.

³³J. B. Pritchard, editor, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 34.

³⁴Ibid., p. 36.

³⁵Budge, p. 49.

³⁶Ibid., p. 48.

However, it must be said that there are far more statements in the "Negative Confession" which are not similar to Job 31 than statements which are similar. The Egyptian document contains ethical and ritual claims, while the Hebrew contains only verses 26 to 28 which might be called ritual. The "Confession" is in the form of simple assertions, but chapter 31 is in the form of conditional sentences and oaths. The statements which are similar are in a completely different order in the two documents. Only the thought of the similar passages is alike in most cases; the wording is different. Therefore, one may conclude with Pope that the similarities between the "Negative Confession" and chapter 31 are striking but not sufficient to indicate direct interdependence between the two writings.³⁷

Another parallel from the Near East to chapter 31 is the Babylonian poem "I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom," commonly called the "Babylonian Job." Like chapter 31, this poem presents a list of deeds by the speaker to prove that he is pious. For example, he says:

Yet I myself was thinking only of prayer
and supplication.
Supplication was my concern, sacrifice my rule;

³⁷Pope, p. 200.

The day of the worship of the gods was my delight,
The day of my goddess' procession was my profit
and wealth.³⁸

The speaker here consistently refers to ritual deeds to prove that he is god-fearing. Job, however, moves almost entirely on the moral plane. Also, Job claims that he is innocent of grave transgression and that his suffering was not caused by any sin of his. The "Babylonian Job" contends that he was punctilious in the discharge of cultic duties, but he is not certain that his sin has not caused his suffering. His problem is to discover what he has done to displease the gods and bring affliction upon himself.³⁹ Thus, despite an initial similarity between Job and the "Babylonian Job," the differences between them are too great for interdependence to be claimed.

A similar parallel is the Babylonian writing "A Dialogue About Human Misery." The sufferer here states:

Have I withheld the meal-oblation? (No),
I have prayed to the gods,
I have presented the prescribed sacrifices
to the goddess⁴⁰

³⁸Pritchard, p. 435.

³⁹Driver and Gray, p. xxxiv.

⁴⁰Pritchard, p. 439.

Here again, the speaker is claiming that he was careful in the discharge of cultic duties, but he does not speak of moral activities. While this document is somewhat similar to the Book of Job, the speaker's protestations about his behavior in the past are too different from those of Job 31 for interdependence to be proven. It may be concluded, therefore, that it cannot be proven that chapter 31 is directly dependent on any Near Eastern documents presently discovered, although it does reflect the same general milieu that they reflect. Job's contentions about his behavior in relation to others are apparently from the hand of the poet of the Book of Job.

Job's Behavior

In chapter 31, Job tells how he has acted and not acted, primarily in his relationships to other people. He describes the chastity of his mind in verses 1 to 4. Some have doubted that a reference to chastity is fitting in this place. They have textual support, because Origen's Hexapla indicates that these verses were missing in his copy of the Septuagint.⁴¹ Peake says that it is surprising

⁴¹Ernest Wurthwein, The Text of the Old Testament, translated from the German by P. R. Ackroyd (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), p. 40.

that Job begins with a specific sin and gives a reason as general as verse 3 with it. He expects that a more general term than b^ethūlāh (virgin) would occur in verse 1. He proposes n^ebālāh (folly) as a substitution.⁴²

Kissane similarly objects to the present reading of the Masoretic text. Like Peake, he finds the mention of a special sin at this point unlikely. He adds that the reference to looking at a "virgin" would fit better with verse 9. He proposes behālāh (calamity) as a replacement for "virgin."⁴³ While the criticisms of these scholars may be valid, the weight of textual evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of retaining the Masoretic text, as it presently stands. Job is here saying that he has "cut" a covenant with his eyes. Apparently, the covenant is directed against sin of the eyes generally, and looking at a virgin is one particular instance of the covenant. Job is not necessarily saying that his look would have been sinful, but it might have led to wrong outward conduct (verse 4). So with a strong expression (māh and the imperfect), he indignantly

⁴²Arthur Samuel Peake, Job: Introduction; Revised Version with Notes (London: The Caxton Publishing Company, 1904), p. 267.

⁴³Edward J. Kissane, The Book of Job (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1946), pp. 204, 205.

rejects the suggestion of even a look. Job is selecting sensuality as the most typical form of this temptation. His strong moral stand in rejecting even a glance is unusual for the Old Testament. It is reminiscent of later writings like Ecclesiasticus 9:5 and Matt. 5:28,29.

In verses 2 to 4, Job speaks from the viewpoint he held before his trouble started. Then he felt that affliction was the reward of the wicked. Now that he has experienced woe, he frequently speaks differently (chapter 21). In verse 2, Job asks what his portion from God would have been if he had broken his covenant with his eyes. His words are an adaptation of the standard cry of secession in the Old Testament (II Sam. 20:1; I Kings 12:16). They also recall the dire portion of the wicked mentioned earlier in the dialogue (20:29; 27:13). Job spells out the portion of the wicked here also: it is calamity and disaster (verse 3). But God should know that Job is not unrighteous. He sees Job's ways and numbers his steps (4). "Ways" and "steps" are not strictly ethical concepts. A man's d^erāk^hīm are his actions and the conditions under which he lives.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Johannes Pedersen, "Righteousness and Truth," Israel: Its Life and Culture, translated from the Danish by Aslaug Møller (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1926), I and II, 361.

Job's ways are his relationships in life with God and the people around him and the actions which come from such relationships.

In verse 5, Job repudiates dishonesty of speech and action. He has not carried on his affairs with emptiness of speech (shāw^e') or hastened to speak or act deceitfully (mirmāh). His relationships with associates have been above board. Job adds parenthetically that he desires that God would weigh him as honestly as he has dealt with others (6). He is expressing a common sentiment of the wise in asking for impartial judgment (Prov. 24:23; 28:21). In verse 7, Job denies that he has been covetous. His heart has not gone after his eyes, and no moral stain has adhered to his hands. By the word lēbh he is expressing more than the English word "heart" implies. Lēbh is not primarily the organ of feeling in the Old Testament, as is the English "heart." Basically, it is the organ of thought. The lēbh receives stimuli from the outside and the memory (Jer. 19:5; Deut. 30:1). The heart directs its attention to varying objects (I Sam. 9:20; Deut. 4:39). The heart devises plans (Gen. 6:5; Is. 10:7). At times, it is the source of the will (Is. 57:17). It is also the seat of religious knowledge (Deut. 6:5). Feelings are not entirely excluded from the heart, however. The heart

loves in Judg. 16:15 and is deceitful in Jer. 17:9. When Job says that his heart has not gone after his eyes, he means that his entire inner being has not been envious. Job calls upon himself the imprecation for falsehood and covetousness in verse 8. First, he says that another person may eat what he plants. The second part of the verse is difficult to interpret. The word çe'eçā'ai (produce) can mean either children or food. The Revised Standard Version and Terrien⁴⁵ seem to suggest that the word means food. It must be admitted that the verb "be rooted out" does appear to go better with this meaning. But there are still more convincing arguments for choosing the meaning "children." The Authorized Version, Brown, Driver, and Briggs,⁴⁶ and Pope⁴⁷ accept this rendering. The Book of Job uses çe'eçā'ai in this sense in two other places (5:25; 27:14) and in no other sense. Isaiah does the same in 22:24, and either meaning is possible in 34:1 and 42:5. The uprooting of people is mentioned in Ps. 52:5. These facts would suggest that "children" is the correct meaning in verse 8. These

⁴⁵Terrien, "Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, III, 1118.

⁴⁶Brown, Driver and Briggs, p. 425.

⁴⁷Pope, p. 202.

children would have to be future ones, since Job had none at the time this was spoken. Job is willing to suffer hunger and the loss of whatever offspring may be born to him if he has been deceitful or envious in his relationships with others.

In verse 9, Job disavows the sin of adultery. He says that he has not been enticed to a woman or waited at his neighbor's door to seduce his wife. If he has, the imprecation is that his wife may grind for another man, and other men may bow down upon her (10). There is a difference of opinion among scholars as to what "grind" (tithan) signifies. Luther, Beer in Biblica Hebraica, Tur-Sinai,⁴⁸ and the Hansons⁴⁹ understand the word in the sense of sexual intercourse. Although this does fit the context better than the following interpretation, there is no linguistic ground for this interpretation. "Grinding" most commonly signifies the grinding of grain for the household, which was usually done by women. This is the meaning for the word which is presented by the Revised Standard Version, Kissane,⁵⁰

⁴⁸N. H. Tur-Sinai, The Book of Job (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1957), p. 438.

⁴⁹Anthony and Miriam Hanson, The Book of Job: Introduction and Commentary (London: S C M Press, 1953), p. 91.

⁵⁰Kissane, p. 206.

Brown, Driver, and Briggs,⁵¹ and Stier.⁵² The connotation of sexual intercourse occurs in the next clause of this verse, "let others bow down upon her." Job is willing to let his wife work for another man and be sexually abused by others if he has been adulterous. He is willing to suffer that punishment, because he feels that his sin also would have been extremely wicked (11). It would have deserved the sharp chastisement of the judges. He adds that adultery would be a fire which would consume as far as Abaddon, the place of destruction, or Sheol (12). It would root out all his income. A number of authorities consider "root out" (th^eshārēsh) incongruous in this verse. Driver and Gray maintain that it is suspect because it does not go naturally with "fire" and because "root out" has recently occurred in verse 8. They,⁵³ Kissane,⁵⁴ and Beer prefer to read tisrōph (burn). G. R. Driver proposes, instead, t^erashshēsh (scorch up). He says that the Akkadian word rashāshu (to be red-hot)

⁵¹Brown, Driver and Briggs, p. 377.

⁵²Fridolin Stier, Das Buch Ijob: Hebräisch und Deutsch (München: Kösel Verlag, 1954), p. 147.

⁵³Driver and Gray, Part ii, 224.

⁵⁴Kissane, p. 203.

is sufficient evidence to justify the assumption of this Hebrew word. This emendation would require only a transposition of letters.⁵⁵ But none of these proposed readings has textual support, and the present reading is not so difficult that good sense cannot be derived from it. The Authorized Version and Nairne⁵⁶ also retain the present reading.

In verse 13, Job asserts that he has given a fair hearing to any of his servants who have complained about his treatment of them. This is reminiscent of Job's earlier statement that he had sought justice even for people whom he did not know (29:16). Job asks what he would do when God would try him if he had not shown justice to others (14). All the words he uses for his and God's actions in this verse are legal terms. Yāqum is regularly used of God rising for judgment (Ps. 76:9). Yiphqōdh can signify "make inquiry" or "investigate" (Job 7:18; Ps. 17:3). 'ashibhennu can be used in the sense of replying to the previous questions of a judge.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Martin Noth and D. Thomas, editors, Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East, Supplement to Vetus Testamentum, presented to H. H. Rowley (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), III, 89.

⁵⁶A. Nairne, editor, The Book of Job (Cambridge: Cambridge at the University Press, 1935), p. 55.

⁵⁷Fohrer, p. 435.

Job goes on to state the ground of his fair treatment of his servants (15). His reason is that they and he have had the same Creator, and, in that way, are equals. The ideas of verses 13 to 15 are truly astounding for Old Testament times. It was remarkable to state that slaves had any rights and still more amazing to maintain that all men had rights, established by their Creator. As in all other ways mentioned in this chapter, Job is truly righteous in this regard. He has gone beyond what was required of him in rightly relating himself to his servants. It may also be noted in these verses that Job clearly roots his behavior toward others in his relationship to God.

In verses 16 to 20, Job discusses his treatment of the unfortunate. He says that he has given whatever the helpless poor have asked (16). He has not turned away the weak, even when their demands have been immoderate. In 29:12, Job had previously claimed that he had delivered the poor who cried. Job also asserts now that he has not caused the eyes of the widow to fail by weeping. Formerly, he stated more positively that he caused the widow's heart to sing (29:13). Job goes on to contend that the fatherless child has always had a share of his food (17). Verse 18 is very difficult to decipher. The

Authorized Version and Nairne⁵⁸ retain the Masoretic text as it presently stands. Stier,⁵⁹ Driver and Gray,⁶⁰ Strahan,⁶¹ and Hanson⁶² change "he grew up to me" to "he brought me up" and "I led her" to "he led me." Thus, they make the subject of the verse God and the object, Job. The Revised Standard Version and Tur-Sinai⁶³ emend the verse even more. They have, "from his youth I reared him as a father, and from his mother's womb I guided him." But none of these emendations have textual validation, although they do contribute to the sense of the verse. The simplest emendation, which would make the verse understandable, would be the change of g^edhēlanī to 'aghadd^elennū. This is one of the changes that the Revised Standard Version and Tur-Sinai have made. With this change, Job would be saying, "from my youth I reared him as a father, and from my mother's

⁵⁸Nairne, p. 56.

⁵⁹Stier, p. 149.

⁶⁰Driver and Gray, Part i, 267.

⁶¹James Strahan, The Book of Job (Second edition; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1914), p. 261.

⁶²Hanson, p. 92.

⁶³Tur-Sinai, p. 441.

womb I guided her." He would mean that, throughout his life, he has cared for the fatherless and the widow. This thought would fit well with the context, but it must be admitted that the proposed emendation has no textual support.

In verses 19 and 20, Job goes on to say that he has always clothed the needy. Earlier, he had claimed that he had been a father to the needy (29:16) and that his soul had been grieved for them (30:25). Verses 16 to 20 indicate that whenever Job found himself in a relationship with someone less privileged than himself, he always lived up to the highest expectancies of such a relationship.

In verse 21, Job says that he has not brandished his hand against the fatherless because he saw his support in the gate. By "support in the gate," Job likely means that he might rely on his influence to offset the charge of the fatherless against him, before the elders of the city. The elders usually sat for judgment in the city gate-way.⁶⁴ Pope also has an interesting suggestion, however. He says that it was the custom of parties having a dispute to bring along an escort to shout down or, if necessary, to beat down opposition.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Driver and Gray, Part i, 268.

⁶⁵Pope, p. 205.

If Job raised his hand against the fatherless, he calls upon himself the imprecation of having his arm and shoulder smashed (22). He states a reason for good behavior on his part in this matter by saying that he dreaded calamity from God and could not have faced God's majesty if he had done such a thing (23). Once again, in Job's fair relationship with the fatherless, he reveals that he is righteous.

In verses 24 and 25, Job disclaims idolatry of wealth. He speaks in the spirit of the wise generally, who often counselled against trusting in riches (Prov. 13:22; 23:4). Job goes on to deny idolatry of the sun and moon (26,27). He has not given salutation to the rising sun⁶⁶ nor the moon moving across the night sky. His heart has not been secretly enticed by these luminaries, and his hand has not kissed his mouth. Tur-Sinai maintains that this last clause does not refer to kissing, but to placing the hand over the mouth in reverential silence.⁶⁷ His conclusion results from the obvious difficulty of making the hand the subject of kissing. However, Driver and Gray find a better solution to this problem by saying that Job is speaking of throwing

⁶⁶Driver and Gray, Part i, 269.

⁶⁷Tur-Sinai, p. 445.

kisses to the sun and moon. The hand is the subject of the verb, because it is more active than the mouth in this action. The throwing of kisses to objects of worship is frequently attested in the ancient world.⁶⁸ Worship of the sun and moon was a real temptation for Job because it was done everywhere around Israel from Egypt to Mesopotamia. It was introduced into Judah itself from Assyria in the time of Manasseh (II Kings 21:3). Communion with the forces of life was an essential aspect of Egyptian and Semitic polytheisms. The cult of the fertility forces, of which the sun and the moon were the most obvious symbols, filled the need for security from want and for sexual fulfillment. It offered economic, aesthetic, and mystical satisfaction. It was more difficult to worship a Deity Who transcended the forces of nature than to worship in a cult which enlisted the service of the forces of nature for man. Paganism had a real attraction for Job, but he did not succumb to it.⁶⁹ He says that if he had succumbed, his iniquity would have been worthy of condemnation, for he would have been false to God (28).

⁶⁸Driver and Gray, Part i, 269.

⁶⁹Terrien, "Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, III, 1121, 1122.

Verses 24 to 29 are the only place in chapter 31 where Job speaks of his behavior as it directly affects his relationship to God. Elsewhere, he is concerned, in the first instance, with his relationship to other men. In verse 28, Job demonstrates that his ethical action over against God was rooted in his relationship to Him. He had previously (14,15) stated that this relationship also governed his conduct toward people.

In verses 29 and 30, Job denies resentment toward his enemies. He has not rejoiced at their ruin. Job's superior morality stands out in the way he defines his enemies. They are those who have hated him (m^esan'ⁱ), not those whom he has hated. He has not asked for their lives with a curse. Job can mean two things by these words. A curse could be viewed as an actual power in itself to demand the life of an enemy and kill him. A curse could also be a request to God for the life of an enemy.⁷⁰ Job likely means the latter, because the whole context in the Book of Job shows Job to be strongly oriented to God in every aspect of his life. Job is very different from much of the Old

⁷⁰Hubert Junker, Das Buch Hiob (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1954), p. 74.

Testament in his attitude toward enemies. Often other books relish the punishment of the wicked (Judg. 5:24-31; Is. 14:12-21; Psalms 58; 69; 137). In these cases it is not certain how much opposition is purely personal enmity and how much it is national and religious opposition. But Job denies hostility toward any sort of enemy. He speaks in the spirit of other wise men (Prov. 24:29), but he even surpasses some of them (Prov. 24:17,18). Job makes the best of any relationship, even involvement with enemies.

Job, next, repudiates inhospitality (31,32). It is commonly acknowledged in his household that he has filled everyone in his vicinity with his food. His generosity stands out in the fact that he eats a "morsel" (verse 17), while his guests feast on "meat." Job also has not let a sojourner lodge in the street. He has opened his doors to the wayfarer. The use of the word "wayfarer" is an emendation of the Masoretic text. The present text has 'ōrah, which usually means "path." But the Septuagint, Aquila, the Syriac, the Targum, and the Vulgate indicate that "wayfarer" is to be read here. Consequently, Beer, Brown, Driver, and Briggs,⁷¹

⁷¹Brown, Driver and Briggs, p. 73.

Driver and Gray,⁷² Kissane,⁷³ and Tur-Sinai⁷⁴ suggest that 'ōrēah be read. This emendation requires only a change in vowel pointing. Because of the great weight of evidence in its favor and because it makes the text clearer, it is adopted here. Job is saying that in his relationship to guests, he has maintained the same high standards that he has upheld in all other relationships. He has been true to the sacred Semitic custom of hospitality (19:14,15; Ex. 22:21).

In verses 33 and 34, Job disavows hypocrisy. He has not concealed his transgressions like a man. The phrase "like a man" (k^e'ādhām) is taken by some to mean "like Adam." The Authorized Version, Tur-Sinai,⁷⁵ and Pope⁷⁶ adopt this meaning. But there are a great number of authorities who oppose them. The general sense of "man" is accepted by Luther, the Revised Standard Version, Nairne,⁷⁷

⁷²Driver and Gray, Part ii, p. 227.

⁷³Kissane, p. 203.

⁷⁴Tur-Sinai, p. 445.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 446.

⁷⁶Pope, p. 208.

⁷⁷Nairne, p. 57.

Stier,⁷⁸ Bruno,⁷⁹ Strahan,⁸⁰ Kissane,⁸¹ and the Hansons.⁸²

It is unlikely that Job is speaking of Adam, because Job is talking about hiding his sins from the multitude. Adam is not like him in this because Adam hid his transgression from God. Job means that he has not hid his sins, as it is man's natural impulse to do. It is unlikely that Job would speak of Adam, because he does not speak of Israel's past traditions generally. On two other occasions (15:7; 20:4), the Book of Job refers to 'ādham's beginnings upon earth. But in these cases, it is as likely as here that man generally is meant, rather than Adam specifically. From its derivation 'adhāmāh, the word 'ādham' signifies that man is brought forth from the earth. The usage of the word stresses that man is a common member of the human race.⁸³ Job insists that he has not acted like a run-of-the-mill person. He has not hid his

⁷⁸Stier, p. 153.

⁷⁹D. Arvid Bruno, Das Hohe Lied, Das Buch Hiob (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1956), p. 117.

⁸⁰Strahan, p. 264.

⁸¹Kissane, p. 209.

⁸²Hanson, p. 92.

⁸³Jacob, pp. 156, 157.

iniquity in his bosom, the fold of the mantle above the belt, where the Arab usually carries goods or a weapon.⁸⁴

Fear of popular opinion and terror of the contempt of those in high social position might have led Job to hide his sin. Then he would have quietly kept to himself, so that others would not know what he had done. But Job has not been secretive. When Job disclaims hypocrisy in these verses, he does not automatically admit that he has been guilty of major sins. He has a clear conscience to match his open behavior.

In verses 35 to 37, Job concludes his oath of clearance with a challenge to God. Earlier in the book, Job has demanded a trial before God so that he might be cleared (13:3,15,22; 23:3-9). Here he makes his final appeal to be admitted to God's presence and examined. He gives Eloah two alternatives: restore him to prosperity or prove him wrong. Job desires that someone may give him a hearing. He presents his "mark" and asks that the Almighty answer him. The "mark" (tāwī) is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. At the time of the writing of the Book of Job,

⁸⁴Terrien, "Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, III, 1123.

it had the shape of an "X" or cross. It was written at the bottom of official documents as a sign of approval.⁸⁵ The "mark" is, thus, equivalent to a signature. Job is speaking as if he has written and signed his appeal to God. Job wishes for the indictment of Eloah against him in written form also. If he had it, he would wear it openly on his shoulder or head. He has no fear or shame over the public disclosure of this indictment, because he is sure that it is worthless. In his trial, Job claims that he would give God an account of all his actions. He would majestically march up to Eloah's throne, like a prince. The word for prince (nāghīdh)[^] is often used for the kings of Israel in the Old Testament (I Sam. 13:14; I Kings 1:35). It implies an ingrained sense of social responsibility, authority, and power. There is no better word to suggest inward self-confidence. This is the height of Job's arrogance. Never does man in the Bible or in the ancient Near East approach the deity as a "prince" (Is. 6:5; Mic. 6:6). Even the Semitic rulers call themselves "slaves" when they step before their gods.⁸⁶ Job has practically erected

⁸⁵Ibid., III, 1125.

⁸⁶Ibid., III, 1126.

himself as god.⁸⁷

After Job's tremendous challenge to God, verses 38 to 40 suddenly return to one more repudiation and imprecation. One senses that these verses have been transposed to this point from some earlier part of the chapter. Beer, Stier,⁸⁸ and the Hansons⁸⁹ suggest moving these verses before verse 35. König prefers to place them after verse 12.⁹⁰ Kissane feels that their proper place is after verse 32.⁹¹ Driver and Gray⁹² and Peake⁹³ agree that the verses are misplaced but are not sure where they belong in the chapter. It seems that these authorities are justified in saying that verses 38 to 40 belong somewhere in the chapter prior to Job's final challenge. In their present position, they disrupt the entire progression of thought. But it cannot be determined definitely where these verses originally belonged,

⁸⁷Terrien, Poet, p. 188.

⁸⁸Stier, p. 153.

⁸⁹Hanson, pp. 92, 93.

⁹⁰König, p. 323.

⁹¹Kissane, p. 203.

⁹²Driver and Gray, Part i, 261.

⁹³Peake, p. 273.

and it must be admitted that no textual evidence exists which would suggest a change. *this chapter (verses 14, 15)*

In these verses, Job repudiates wrong in the sphere of agriculture. He says that his land has not cried out against him, and his furrows have had no cause for weeping because of him. Verse 39 indicates why his land might have had reason for such sorrow. It would have been saddened if Job had wronged people in connection with it. He might have acquired it illegally or caused the death of its workers. These workers were tenants or serfs.⁹⁴ If Job had been too demanding of these men in work or payment, he might have been responsible for their deaths. Then his land would have had good cause for lamentation. The imprecation Job calls upon himself for these deeds is that his land may produce briers and noxious weeds, instead of grain.

Job 31 is very revealing of the connection between the righteousness of Job and his moral behavior. Job's righteousness is his right relationship to God, and this relationship is the ground of Job's proper dealings with other people in his relationships to them. Job connects

⁹⁴Pope, p. 202.

the morality of his actions with his stance over against God in a number of places in this chapter (verses 14,15, 23,28). All the good deeds Job describes in this chapter are connected in some way with his relationships to others. In verses 24 to 28, Job is speaking in the realm of his involvement with Eloah. In the rest of the chapter, he talks of his connections with his fellowmen. Job knows how to live with God and others because his own experience and that of other wise men has demonstrated how this is best done. But Job's motivation for following this experience lies in the involvement of God with Job. Job knows how to maintain the best sort of relationship with anyone, because God has granted the best sort of relationship between Himself and Job. "His awareness of doing right with men was coupled with the certainty of living in a right relationship with God."⁹⁵

⁹⁵Terrien, "Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, III, 1109.

CHAPTER VI

REACTION TO JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Job's Friends

Throughout the speeches of Job, he maintains that he is a righteous man. He claims also that his behavior, which has resulted from his righteousness, has been above reproach. These contentions do not go unheeded by those around him. They call forth differing reactions from Job's three friends, from Elihu, and from Eloah. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar directly counter Job's claims. His avowals appear to them to be contrary to the existing facts. Consequently, they adamantly attack Job in their reaction to his righteousness.

While much of what the friends say in their assault on Job proves to be false, they do offer a few correct propositions. They exalt God to counteract Job's exaltation of himself. Eliphaz speaks of the great deeds of God (5:9-16). Bildad upholds His justice (8:3,20). Zophar proclaims that He is inscrutable (11:7-9). The friends make clear that a great gulf stands between great Eloah and puny man (4:17-21; 15:15,16; 25:4-6). They discern Job's sin in his refusal to accept the limits of his

humanity (15:7,8). They advise him to seek God with humble trust and to make supplication (5:8; 8:5; 11:13).

But most of what the friends say in reaction to Job's righteousness from this point on is untrue. They are staunch upholders of the retribution theory for good and evil. They hold that the good receive good and the evil receive evil in life (8:4,6,20). In their minds, all suffering is a result of sin. If Job is suffering, he must be guilty of great offenses. Eliphaz asks:

Think now, who that was innocent ever perished?
Or where were the upright cut off?
As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap the same (4:7,8).

The friends develop the retribution theory from the true proposition that God is holy, just, and wise. From this proposition they conclude that God always brings blessing to the good and misfortune to the evil, in His justice and wisdom.

The friends conclude that Job is unrighteous and immoral. Any man who is afflicted like Job must have done some great evil. He cannot be in a right relationship with God. He must have broken his relationship by some great faults. Eliphaz is certain that Job no longer possesses a faith-filled "fear" of God (4:6; 15:4,5; 22:4). It appears that the friends do not understand the thrust

of Job's words when he contends that he is righteous. Rather than considering his relationship to God, at times, they describe righteousness as ethical purity. They are convinced, accordingly, that no man can be righteous before God (4:17-19; 15:4-6; 25:4-6), least of all, a sufferer like Job. In numerous places, they describe the horrible lot of the wicked (15:20-35; 18:5-21; 20:4-29). Job may conclude that he is one of the wicked, since he shares the same lot. The friends say outrightly that Job is abominable and corrupt, a man who drinks iniquity like water (15:16). God exacts less of Job than his iniquity deserves (11:6). His wickedness is great, and there is no end to his iniquities (22:5). He is accused of heartless and cruel acts (22:6-9). As the friends view life, no man can suffer like Job and not be the most vile sinner.

Although the friends are sure that Job is unrighteous, Eliphaz states that it would not even matter to God if Job were righteous. He asks, "Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous, or is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?" (22:3) According to Eliphaz, God is above concern about man's righteousness. This passage confirms the conclusion stated above that the friends do not understand what Job means when he says that he is

righteous. It would obviously matter to God if He and Job were rightly related to each other. But the friends view Job's righteousness in a moral sense.

Finally, Eliphaz affirms that the righteous suffer for the sake of discipline. He says:

Behold, happy is the man whom God reproves;
therefore despise not the chastening of the
Almighty.

For he wounds, but he binds up;
he smites, but his hands heal (5:17,18).

Suffering for the sake of discipline could be a correct proposition, but the slant Eliphaz gives to it makes it questionable. According to him, the purpose of God's chastisement of Job is that Job may confess the gross sinfulness of his life and return to God (4:7,8,17-21; 5:3-8). If Job will do this, he will no longer be treated like a sinner (5:3-7), but he will enjoy the blessed life of the righteous man (19-27). However, Job is not the sinner Eliphaz thinks he is, and God is not chastening him so that he may repent of immorality. The three friends react to Job's righteousness, but their narrow view of life warps their reaction.

Elihu

Elihu also reacts to Job's claims of righteousness.

His basic argument is that God is an impartial Judge.¹ He says that it is far from God to do wrong and that He requites men according to their works. The Almighty does not pervert justice (34:10-12). Elihu insists that God punishes the wicked (34:24-28; 36:6). Thus, it may be seen that Elihu operates on the theory of retribution, in a manner similar to the friends' approach. He is angry at Job, because Job justified himself, rather than God (32:2). He accuses Job of pride (34:31,32,35-37). Elihu realizes the folly of Job's demand to have a trial before God (34:23). He perceives that puny man could never stand on his own before Eloah's tribunal (37:19-24). He shows greater insight than Job or his friends in analyzing the true nature of Job's sin. Job is not being afflicted because of great sins in his past, as the friends think. Sin is not the direct cause of his suffering at all. But Elihu discerns that Job has lost his righteousness and become a wicked man since the beginning of the dialogue. Job's sin, which destroyed his relationship to God, was blasphemy and rebellion against Eloah. What Job has said

¹Roger N. Carstensen, Job: Defense of Honor (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1963), p. 121.

in the dialogue has made him an evildoer (34:8,9,36,37).

As Eliphaz taught that suffering is for the sake of discipline, Elihu teaches similarly. He says:

For God speaks in one way,
and in two, though man does not perceive it. . . .
Man is also chastened with pain upon his bed,
and with continual strife in his bones; (33:14,19).

Elihu maintains that God attempts to make man understand through suffering that he has been sinful, so that man may return to God (33:19-30). While Elihu's principles in this matter are correct, he is wrong, as Eliphaz was, in applying them to Job. God did not make Job a sufferer, so that he might repent of past great sins. He was not guilty of these.

Finally, Elihu talks about the possibility of a mediator, like Job did (9:33; 16:19; 19:25). He states:

If there be for him an angel,
a mediator (mēliç), one of the thousand,
to declare to man what is right for him;
and he is gracious to him, and says,
"Deliver him from going down into the Pit,
I have found a ransom;" (33:23,24).

In Elihu's words, the mediator has a different function than in Job's words. Job wanted a mediator to contend for him with Eloah and to prove that Job was right. Elihu's mediator performs a saving function. He tells man what is right for him, and he announces that man need not die, but

may return to health, because he has found a ransom (kōpher). After the mediator's work, the man is free to come into God's presence. This person may tell others about his deliverance (33:23-28). Elihu's words in this instance are still based on the presupposition that Job is suffering because of past sins. In this regard, Elihu is wrong in applying his words to Job. But Elihu has an insight here which will be seen one day to really apply to all men. He states the existence of the mediator only as a hopeful wish. In the future, men will see that they actually have such a Mediator.

God in the Whirlwind

The final One to react to Job's righteousness is God. He speaks to Job in a marvelous description of creation, from the whirlwind (chapters 38-41). Some scholars contend that what God says to Job is no real answer at all. Carpenter claims that Job is silenced with no real solution. He is simply brought to an unquestioning acceptance of whatever God may see fit to do.² King contends that the search for

²Spencer Cecil Carpenter, The Bible View of Life (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), pp. 33, 34.

rational meaning leads readers of the whirlwind speech to want the words to imply that God's ways are higher than man's and that there is a hidden purpose in the mysteries of nature and natural suffering. But King insists that answers like these are not in the speech at all.³ However, there is more to be derived from the whirlwind speech than these men claim. Von Rad is correct when he says that the whirlwind speech is not there simply to order Job back into his human limitations in relationship to God.⁴

All of the examples in the whirlwind speech indicate that God's free goodness is the ground of the world. The word "love" is not in the speech, but love pervades this monologue. Job had thought of God's love as selective, confined by justice. But the divine love revealed in the speech is free.⁵ In the universe, there is much that is mysterious and beyond the power of man to understand. But

³Albion Roy King, The Problem of Evil: Christian Concepts of the Book of Job (New York: Ronald Press Company, c.1952), p. 208.

⁴Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated from the German by D. M. Stalker (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), I, 416.

⁵James Mc Kechnie, Job: Moral Hero, Religious Egoist and Mystic (New York: George H. Doran Company, c.1927), pp. 131, 132.

a God of wisdom, power, and grace rules in that universe. However, it is significant that God speaks of His care for all creation but never for man. Perhaps, this means that Job is to discover that God's providence extends to him, too.⁶ Von Rad sums up the significance of God's portrayal of His goodness in the whirlwind speech:

Accordingly, the purpose of the divine answer in the Book of Job is to glorify God's justice towards his creatures, and the fact that he is turned towards them to do them good and bless them. And in the intention of the poem that is also truly an answer to Job's question. If Job's holding fast to his righteousness was a question put to God, God gives the answer by pointing to the glory of his providence that sustains all his creation. Of course this justice of God cannot be comprehended by man; it can only be adored.⁷

The last sentence above does point to the limit of the whirlwind speech, however. While God reveals that He is good to His creation and Job may be able to infer that He is good to him also, the speech does not say why the righteous must suffer. It is necessary that God remain mysterious in His purposes, so that He may be God. He does not lower Himself to answer the terms of Job's contention. God is more than Job expected. Thus, Job's questions are

⁶Carstensen, p. 100.

⁷von Rad, I, 417.

transcended. Job is not simply overpowered by God, but the glimpse he receives of the Almighty lifts him to a higher level, so that he may know the difference between God and himself. The aim of the whirlwind speech is not to penetrate God's motive for action in an individual case but to show man that it is best for him to accept God's good will with humility. It may be concluded from Yahweh's judgment in the epilogue that the just do not suffer as a result of sins of ignorance or inadvertence. From Elihu's remarks it is clear that it is not because of injustice by God. The whirlwind speech shows that it is not because of a lack of wisdom or power in God. But the Book of Job does not say why the fact remains that the righteous do suffer.⁸

At the conclusion of the whirlwind speech, Job repents (42:1-6). As he defended himself in the dialogue, he gained an exaggerated importance in his own eyes. Now, the whirlwind speech makes him see that he is a small part in the scheme of the universe. Job says that he "rejects" ('em'as) and "repents" (nihamti) in dust and ashes. The Masoretic text has no object for the word "reject." The

⁸Edward J. Kissane, The Book of Job (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1946), pp. xxxix, xxx.

Authorized Version and the Revised Standard Version supply the word "myself," which could be correct. Kuyper also has a good point in saying that the expression "my words" could be the intended object. Job says in verse 3, "I uttered what I did not understand," referring to his arguments against God. In verse 5, he states, "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee." What Job had heard of God in the past was his old traditional theology. It had included the retribution theory for good and evil. This is revealed by the contentions Job had raised against God on the basis of this theory. Job now realizes his folly in accusing God of injustice, because he, a good man, had suffered evil. He is brought to this realization by a face to face encounter with God. Therefore, Job rejects the words of his arguments against God and repents of his sin in using them.⁹

In Job's confession, he is not repenting of his life in the days before his affliction. It might be assumed that he still could maintain that he had been righteous, in a right relationship with God, at that time. But Job is repenting of what he has said in the trial. This is

⁹L. J. Kuyper, "The Repentance of Job," Vetus Testamentum, IX (1959), p. 94.

the only sin for which God rebukes him (40:2,8), because this is the one sin which has broken his relationship to God and made him unrighteous. Man is never permitted to remonstrate with God and judge Him. The Book of Job does not shatter the view of righteousness as the normal foundation of life. It deals with a case in which a man who was righteous was made to suffer nevertheless. But man is not to give up his own righteousness or his trust in God's justice because he must suffer. God's justice transcends man's ability to penetrate and goes deeper than man can fathom.¹⁰

¹⁰Johannes Pedersen, "Righteousness and Truth," Israel: Its Life and Culture, translated from the Danish by Aslaug Møller (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1926), I and II, 373.

CHAPTER VII

THE NATURE OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JOB

The entire preceding study confirms the thesis that Job's righteousness consists in his relationship to God. The use of the term ꝓꝓꝓꝓ in the whole Old Testament testifies to the fact that it is, generally, a concept of relationship. In both the legal and religious spheres, it is employed in this sense. The Old Testament does not use ꝓꝓꝓꝓ to mean conformity to a norm, outside of the norm of a relationship itself. This excludes the meaning of conformity to an external ethical norm as well as any other. Consequently, moral behavior does not constitute righteousness, but it is the result of righteousness.

The concept of righteousness in the Book of Job is, likewise, a concept of relationship. Although the prologue and epilogue of the book have a different origin than the rest of the book, they agree with the remainder in this estimate of the meaning of righteousness. A study of the ꝓꝓꝓꝓ terms in the whole Book of Job reveals that Job's righteousness arises from his relationship to God and not from his conformity to some ethical norm. God has brought this relationship into being by His grace, and Job has

maintained his side of the relationship by faith in God. Furthermore, Job's righteousness is not a sinless condition because Job acknowledges that he is not clear from all sin. Job's righteous condition causes a major problem to arise for him. He has lived in conformity with his relationship to God, but God is afflicting him like an unrighteous man. He can only conclude that God is unrighteous, since he is positive that he, Job, is not. He demands a trial before God to prove that his contention is right, but he knows that he will be overwhelmed by God if such a trial is held. His need causes him to conceive of a mediator, who will help him against God, but this fleeting hope quickly vanishes.

An examination of parallel terms to ꝥdhq in the Book of Job yields results analogous to conclusions reached on the basis of a study of ꝥdhq itself. The use of the primary terms, tmm and yāshār, particularly indicates that they are understood to mean rightly related to God. An investigation of the words which are antithetical to ꝥdhq in the Book of Job confirms the preceding conclusions. Particularly, the primary term, rāshā', is regularly used to signify "alienated from God."

The Book of Job does speak of Job's moral behavior, but not as the constituting factor of his righteousness. Job

lives morally as a result of his righteous condition. He reflects the positiveness of his relationship to God in the way he rightly relates himself to other people. Thus, he lives in right relationships with others because of his relationship to God. Contrariwise, the Book of Job does not indicate that his behavior is motivated by some moral law. Job is guided in his behavior by his own personal experience and that of other wise men, gained through living with other people. This experience indicates to him what sort of behavior best agrees with his relationship to God. When the Book of Job describes the behavior of the unrighteous, the starkness of the terms and examples it uses indicates the godless condition of these people. On the other hand, the description of Job's behavior in Job 31 reveals that his behavior arises from the proper manner in which he is related to God. The type of behavior that is described in chapter 31 is all involved with relationships to others.

Job's constant affirmation of his righteousness throughout the dialogue calls forth differing reactions from his three friends, from Elihu, and from God. The friends conclude that Job is actually unrighteous, on the basis of the retribution theory of evil for evil. Their words reveal

that they put a moral connotation on Job's affirmation of his righteousness. Contrary to Job's demand for a trial, Elihu insists that Eloah is always just. He finds the sin of Job, which destroyed his relationship to God, in his rebellion against God in the dialogue. Like Job, he states the fleeting hope that there might be a mediator to bring God and man together. Eloah Himself speaks to Job from the whirlwind and reveals to him that He shows free goodness to the world. Job may be able to infer that God is good to him also. However, Eloah does not condescend to answer Job's former demands to know why he, a righteous man, must suffer. Job realizes the sinfulness of his rebellion in speech against God because of the whirlwind monologue, and he repents of this sin. The Job who received affliction from God was righteous, but he lost his relationship to God in the dialogue. He repents of his transgression, and the relationship is restored by God.

The entire idea of righteousness in the Book of Job is strongly reminiscent of the Christian doctrines of justification and sanctification. In both the Book of Job and Christianity, a man is righteous because of God's action for him and not because of moral accomplishments. In both, the good life of the righteous flows from his

relationship to God. Job living in right relationships to God and other people prefigures the Christian man living in faith toward God and love toward others. This leaves a largely unanswered question. What is the place of the Law in Old Testament morality? Is Job one step ahead of much of the Old Testament, because he lives outside of the Law in love? Or, is Job similar to the rest of the Old Testament? Does the whole Old Testament not use the Law as a norm? This is an important question, deserving further research. The answer to it may have bearings on the present dispute concerning the tertius usus legis in the New Testament.

Job was righteous. God knew him, and he knew God. God acted for Job, and Job responded in faith toward Him. In these latter times, God has acted in the crowning, decisive deed of the giving of His Son. Christ has lived, died, and risen again for unrighteous humanity. Man may be truly righteous, for the efforts of the Mediator relate him eternally to God.

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