

Contemporary Mystic Christianity **Bible Self-Study Supplement**

The Book of Job

*To get the final lilt of songs,
To penetrate the inmost lore of poets, to know the
mighty ones Job, Homer, Aeschylus, Dante,
Shakespeare, Tennyson, Emerson, To diagnose the
shifting, delicate tints of love and pride and doubt — to
truly understand.*

— *Walt Whitman*

Job: A Mystery Drama

"We know nothing of Job or the man who wrote his story beyond what we learn from this book. The history of Job was probably a tradition in the East like that of Priam of Greece, the symbol of fallen greatness, and his misfortunes the problem of philosophers," wrote Froude; and Coleridge, writing in 1830 on the Book of Job, is of the opinion that it is an Arabic poem antecedent to the Mosaic dispensation. To this Peake adds that there is no need to fix the date of the book below 400 B.C. He says, "It was perhaps as the fifth century was slipping into the past that the poet, whose genius made him the peer of the most gifted of our race, wrote his mighty work."

A modern writer, an English Vicar, Reverend Minos Divine, in his sympathetic study of "Job in the Light of History and Literature," approaches the New Age interpretation when he writes, "Job is one of the great dramas of the soul, which like the Confessions of St. Augustine, Dante's Divine Comedy, Shakespeare's King Lear and Goethe's Faust, prove that the fountains of life and passion are not in any outward forms but within."

A recent work (1939) of Emil Kraeling, Associate Professor of Old Testament History at Union Theological Seminary, New York, also closely approximates New Age concepts when he writes, "The book of Job thus stands before us as a work that has had a checkered past. It does not belong to just one time and generation, but betrays the fact that it is the final harvest of a number of books about this individual of antiquity."

This great mystery Book, in English familiarly styled "Job", is "Eyov" in Hebrew. The name signifies "one who is the object of hostility" and is evidently a figurative appellation.

The esotericist understands that the Book of Job is a poem of Initiation, that it contains an allegorical narrative of the Mysteries. The trials that beset Job are similar to those encountered by the neophyte in the famous Egyptian

initiatory ritual, the Book of the Dead, and also in the Babylonian poem of King Nippur.

Biblical scholars are agreed that Job is the most ancient of all the accepted biblical manuscripts, and they are frank to admit that its origin and authorship are shrouded in the mists of antiquity. Their inability to determine its origins is not to be wondered at in view of the fact that the great truths of Initiation which comprise the major theme of the Book are revelations from the Masters of Wisdom who operate behind the scenes of history, and who give out certain fundamental teachings in one guise or another from age to age according to need. The fundamental concepts are unchanging, only the methods of approach and the presentations vary with the passing centuries.

To the peoples of every land inspired messengers have come, concealing in superb classics the keys to the mysteries of life and being for the few ready to receive them. Such a messenger was Homer, the sublime Mystery teacher of Greece. Like Melchizedek, he leaves no record of parentage or ancestry. Seven different cities claim him as their son. A "high priest forever," he walked intimately with the gods, and if his mortal eyes saw not, the eyes of his soul beheld infinite vistas of spiritual beauty. He appeared, indeed, to walk among the men of Earth that he might give to them the priceless gems of occult wisdom embedded in

the Iliad and the Odyssey, the Biblios, or Book of Books, of the early Greeks.

Such a messenger, too, in medieval days was Dante with his Divine Comedy; and such, in more modern times, was Milton with his Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained.

Kraeling in his book on the "Ways of God," states that "Job remains one of the greatest religious books of all time, the noblest product of the pre-Christian life, as the Commedia is the most excellent poetic offspring of Christian piety. Together they are the morning and evening stars of the sky of religious literature." And he adds that Job also deserves the sobriquet men have given the Commedia, "divine."

The spiritual inflow which was the wisdom of biblical seers and prophets was in like manner the source of the knowledge held by Initiates and sages of an earlier day and among other peoples.

All of the great world religions may be compared to pearls which are strung upon the golden chain of Eternal Truth. This accounts for their similarity in fundamentals and also for the many correspondences to be noted in the lives of their representative World Teachers.

Not until biblical scholars came to understand the universality of truth, and the methods by which it is imparted to men through Initiation, will the existing confusion and obscurity be removed, and much of the biblical teaching which now appears unintelligible and contradictory be rightly interpreted.

The Bible is primarily a Mystery book and only a knowledge of the Mysteries will reveal its most profound meanings. As the Zohar expresses it:

"Is it conceivable that God had no holler matters to communicate than theme common things about Esau and Hagar, Laban and Jacob, Baslam's Ass, Balak's jealousy of Israel and Zimri's lewdness?

"Does a collection of such tales taken in the ordinary sense deserve the name of Torah? And can it be said of such a revelation that it utters pure truths? If that is all the Torah contains, we can produce in our time a book as good, aye perhaps better.

"But no, the higher mystical sense of the Torah is its true sense."

The biblical narratives resemble a beautiful dress which enraptures fools so that they do not look beneath it.

This robe, however, covers a body, i.e., the precepts of the Law; and this again a soul, the higher soul.

Woe to the guilty, who assert that the Torah contains only simple stories and therefore look only upon the dress.

"Blessed are the righteous who seek the real sense of the Law. The jar is not the wine, so also stories do not make up the Torah."

(Excerpt from Pick's Cabala.)

The Book of Job is justly ranked with the world's eternal literature. Lifting sphinx-like above and beyond the limitation of any one race, nation or age, it repeats the eternal and continuous mandate of God: "Let there be light."

— ***Corinne Heline***