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VIEWS OF JOB IN THE MIDRASH

by

Edward D. Kiner

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters and  
Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion  
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Referee, Prof. Eugene Mihaly

## THESIS DIGEST

I deal with four areas of the rabbinic view of Job.

Was he a Jew? This chapter manifests the variety of answers, negative and positive. I show that the Amoraic understanding of opinions of when Job lived in Bava Bathra 15a-15b is linked with two other issues. Was Job a Jew? Was he a prophet? I also show that some sages viewed Job as a convert and married to Dinah.

When did Job live? I treat passages which put Job in the time of Moses. There are two possible reasons for this. They may have been prompted by a desire to place God's actions into an acceptable ethical framework. Perhaps the sages wanted to make Israel the focal point of the book of Job as they did in the book of Jonah.

Was Job righteous? I prove that the sages did consider Job a true צדיק. He acted צדיק ממש.

In my last chapter, I deal with the passages delineating Job's defects. He compared himself with Abraham. He rebelled when God tested him. He spoke offensively. I show that Rabbi Akiba first depicted Job as one who עָוָה, and that later sages developed this theme. The Pesiqta Rabbati describes him as עָוָה, and Bava Bathra calls him עָוָה. I contend that Job was a threat to the accepted view of suffering.

Thus, I show that Job was viewed as attacking basic rabbinic concepts, especially God's providence, judgment, and execution of divine justice.

DEDICATION

To my wife and children:

Their love has been an inspiration.

May it ever be so.

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is the result of a process with three steps. I discovered the rabbinic comments on Job. I selected my chapter subjects. I translated a body of passages centered around a topic, and I probed the meaning of those passages.

I utilized Hyman's מפרש כל פסוק בפרש to check the rabbinic comment on every verse in the book of Job. I could not check certain verses and find their rabbinic comments. Every verse was checked: I was afraid I would miss something, and I wanted to be thorough.

When this exhaustive task was completed, I had a large collection of notes. I then decided which specific subjects I would treat. I read secondary literature in order to know what has been done with reference to the rabbinic view of Job. Little! An author incidentally cites passages about Job. Often, he does so only to express his particular idea. A. Marmorstein cites passages showing that as Job was blessed in his end, so Israel's sufferings will be rewarded.<sup>1</sup> However, he does not mention the wealth of material revealing Job's refusal to accept; this is a major theme in the rabbinic view of Job. Hence, my readings in secondary literature showed that the rabbinic view of Job is treated in a fragmented manner.



I decided to attempt a treatment of the rabbinic view of Job as an area of study per se. However, that general subject can be broken down into many specific chapter subjects. For example, I could have dealt with the question of whether Job served from love or from fear. I did not. My general knowledge concerning that issue is insufficient. To become familiar with that general area to a degree permitting comprehension of the specific question of Job would have taken me far from my major interest, Job.

The Bible is succinct in depicting the character and background of Job. Job 1:1 states: "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was whole hearted, and upright, fearing God and shunning evil." This verse is a concise delineation of the man called Job.

But it is silent concerning some basic questions. Was Job a Jew? Was he a prophet? When did he live? What are the specifics of his righteousness? What were the defects in his character? These questions permit the rabbis to expound and to describe Job in various ways. Thus, I decided to treat four problems. Was Job a Jew? When did Job live? What are the specifics of his righteousness? What are his defects?

My next step was to discover the determinant for a particular view of Job. What prompted the partic-

ular views of the sages? In order to answer this question, I had to establish the best text of the passages I was treating. I had to translate those passages into a comprehensible reading. I then had to probe and discover the meaning of the passages.

The following pages are the result of this long process. I discovered that there is much material on specific aspects of Job that has not been fully treated heretofore. I also found that specific views are often prompted by theological suppositions. Thus this thesis tells what the rabbinic view of Job is as well as the why behind that view.

This thesis would not have reached its present form without the patience and guidance of Dr. Eugene Mihaly. It is easy to drown in the sea of the Midrash and the Talmud. Dr. Mihaly's patient understanding of the problems of a neophyte in rabbinic studies is admirable. His guidance was invaluable. Without his aid and concern, this thesis would not have been written.

## CHAPTER I

## WAS JOB A JEW?

The following passages contain material relevant to that question. Some of the passages also discuss the issue of whether Job was a prophet or not; but our basic interest is the issue of whether Job was a Jew or not.

Yes and No!

Genesis Rabbah 57:4 states:

Rabbi Johanan said: He was one of those who came up from the exile. He was a Jew, and his school was in Tiberias. Therefore, they learned from him (the custom) of tearing and the blessing for mourners, as it is written, Job 1:20, "Then Job arose and rent his garments." From this it is deduced that one must rend his garment while standing. Rabbi Hanina said: He was a non-Jew. Rabbi Hiyya taught: "One righteous non-Jew stood up for Me among the nations; I paid him off, and let him go. Who? Job."...

The opinions expressed in this section of Gen. Rab. 57:4 are all Amoraic. But, beyond agreement in strata, there is obviously no agreement concerning Job's Jewishness.

Rabbi Johanan views Job as a Jew, a sage, one who had a school in Tiberias.

Both Hanina and Hiyya differ with Johanan. Hanina views Job as a **גוי**. Hiyya agrees that Job was not a Jew; but he was a righteous non-Jew.

There are problems with Hiyya's view. What does the Hebrew **עמד לי** mean? Literally it means stood up for Me. Also, what exactly does **פדיוני** mean?

Other versions of Hiyya's statement enable a clear understanding of the sense of his statement and the Hebrew phrases. Bava Bathra clarifies the statement. Job was a righteous non-Jew who thought that he had come into this world to receive his reward here. When God tested him, Job rebelled. God paid him off here but did not permit him to enter the world to come.

More Yes and No!

Yer. Soṭah 20c-d contains the following:

Rabbi Yishmael taught: Job was one of Pharaoh's advisors and one of the grandees of his household, as it is written, Exod. 9:20, "The one who feared God among Pharaoh's servants...", and it is written, Job 1:1, "A God fearing man." Rabbi Hiyya taught: I had one righteous non-Jew in My world; I gave him his reward and let him go from My world." Rabbi Joshua b. Levi said: he was one of the exiles, and a Jew; therefore, Rabbi Johanan learned from him the laws of mourning, as it is written, Job 1:20, "And he arose and tore."...

The passage contains two sections relating to statements in Gen. Rab. 57:4. We have another version of Johanan's view. However, Joshua b. Levi's report differs from Johanan's view in Gen. Rab. 57:4.

The major difference is that the sense of Joshua's statement permits this conjecture. He links Johanan's view that Job was a Jew with the teaching of the laws of mourning. "He was one of the exiles, and a Jew; therefore, Rabbi Johanan learned from him the laws of mourning, as it is written,..." may be an indication why Johanan viewed Job as a Jew. He may have done so in order to

deduce the laws of mourning from a Jew.

Hiyya's statement here contains two phrases not found in Gen. Rab. 57:4. The reading here adds "from My world" to "let him go." The reading here is "I had" instead of "stood up for Me."

The addition of "My world" to "let him go" is clarifying. On the basis of the Bava Bathra reading we see that "My world" is the world to come.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is clear that Job, the righteous non-Jew, was deprived of the reward of entrance into the world to come.

Yishmael's statement that Job was one of Pharaoh's servants is paralleled by the Targum Yerushalmi. The Targum Yerushalmi, but not Onkelos, to Exod. 9:20 states: "Job, the one who feared the word of God among the servants of Pharaoh, gathered his servants and cattle into his home."

But is Job a Jew? I contend that the sense of Yishmael's view and the Targum Yerushalmi is that Job was a non-Jew, a grandee of Pharaoh's household, but one who feared the word of God. Thus, when Moses warned the God-fearing of the coming plague, Job responded and did protect his belongings, as Moses had suggested.<sup>3</sup> (There is more evidence that Job was viewed as living in the time of Moses. It will be treated later.)

Hence, our passage contains a section relating to Hiyya's view that Job was a non-Jew. It contains a statement concerning Johanan's view that Job was a Jew. Also,

it gives us the view of a Tanna, Yishmael, that fits into an area to be treated later; i.e., Job was a non-Jew who lived in the time of Moses.

Job's Dating, Jewishness, and Status as a Prophet

Bab. Bava Bathra 15a-15b states:

You say that Moses wrote his book and the section of Balaam and Job. This supports the opinion of R. Joshua...who said that Job was a contemporary of Moses. It is written here, Job 19:23, "On that my words were now (נִכְחָז) inscribed," and it is written elsewhere, Exod. 23:16, "For wherein now (נִכְחָז) shall it be known."...

The discussion then presents opposing views to the contention that Job was a contemporary of Moses on the basis of נִכְחָז. If so, then appearances of that word with reference to Issac, Gen. 27:23, Jacob, Gen. 43:11, and Joseph, Gen. 37:16, would prove that Job was their contemporary.

The text then continues:

(The proof that Job was a contemporary of Moses is that) it is written, Job 19:23, "Would that they were inscribed in a book," and it is Moses who is called inscriber, as it is written, Deut. 33:21, "And he chose the first part for himself, for there was the lawgiver's (מִשְׁכָּנִית) inscriber's portion inscribed." Raba said that Job was in the time of the spies. It is written, Job 1:1, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job," and it is written, Num. 13:20, "Whether there was wood there." Where is the parallel? In one place it is נִכְחָז, in the other עֵץ. So Moses said...(see) if that man is there whose years are as the years of a tree and who shelters his generation like a tree....R. Johanan and Rabbi Elazar both stated that Job was among those who returned from the exile, and that his house of study was in Tiberias. An objection was raised from the following: the span of Job's life was

from the time that Israel entered Egypt until they left....An objection was further raised: seven prophets prophesied to the heathen: Balaam and his father, Job, Eliphaz...Bildad...Zophar...and Elihu....Granted as you say (that Job was one of these), was not Elihu a Jew seeing that scripture mentions that he was from the family of Ram? Evidently (he is included) because he prophesied to the heathen. So too Job: also he prophesied to the heathen....An objection was raised: there was a certain pious man among the heathen named Job, but he (thought) that he had come into this world only to receive his reward, and when the Holy One blessed be He brought chastisements upon him, he began to curse and blaspheme, so the Holy One blessed be He doubled his reward in this world in order to expel him from the world to come....There is a difference on this point between Tannaim, as it has been taught: R. Eliezer says that Job lived in the days of the judging of the judges, as it says, Job 27:12, "Behold all of you have seen; why then are you altogether vain?" What generation is it that is altogether vain? You may say: the generation where there is the judging of the judges. R. Joshua b. Korha said: Job was in the time of Ahasuerus, for it says, Job 42:15, "And in all the land were no women as fair as the daughters of Job." What was the generation in which fair women were sought out? You must say that it was the generation of Ahasuerus....R. Nathan says that Job was in the time of the kingdom of Sheba, since it says, Job 1:15, "The Sabaeans fell on them and took them away." The sages say that he was in the time of the Chaldeans, as it says, Job 1:17, "The Chaldeans made three bands." Some say that Job lived in the time of Jacob and married Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. It is written, Job 2:10, "You speak as one of the impious women." And it is written elsewhere, Gen. 34:7, "Because he has done an impious thing (עוון) in Israel." All these Tannaim agree that Job was a Jew except those who say (that he lived in the time of Jacob). If you suppose (that they regarded him as a) heathen, after the death of Moses how could the Divine Presence rest upon a heathen seeing that a Master has said: Moses prayed that the Divine Presence should

not rest upon heathens, and God granted his request, as it says, Exod. 33:16, "That we be separated, I and Your people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."...R. Johanan said: the generation of Job was given up to lewdness. It says, Job 27:12, "Behold all of you have seen ( *h*); why then are you altogether vain?" And it is written elsewhere, Cant. 7:4, "Return, return, oh Shulamite. Return, return, that we may look upon you ( *h*)." But may not the reference be to prophecy, as in the words, Isaiah 1:1, "The vision ( *h*) of Isaiah." If so, why does it say, "You are altogether vain."

This long passage contains many areas that must be studied. Because of this, I now present a brief statement of the subjects.

1. Moses wrote the book of Job.
2. Raba did not consider Job to be a Jew; R. Johanan did.
3. There are three objections to R. Johanan's view.
  - a. One objection is an expansion of *H*iyya's opinion as found in Gen. Rab. 57:4 and Yer. Soṭah 20c-d.
  - b. Another objection also has parallels in Gen. Rab. 57:4 and Yer. Soṭah 20c-d.
  - c. That these objections lead to the possibility that the dating of Job is linked with the issue of his Jewishness.
4. The Tannaim differed concerning whether Job was a Jew or not.



- a. The issue of the dating is linked with the question of Jewishness and status as a prophet.
  - b. A comparison of lists of opinions in Gen. Rab. 57:4, Yer. Soṭah 20c-d, and Bava Bathra manifests differences in transmitting a tradition.
5. The following statement is part of a larger thought about whether Job was a Jew or not: "All these Tannaim agree that Job was a Jew except those who say (that he lived in the time of Jacob)."
- a. That statement is the correct reading.
  - b. That the statement is connected with the issue of Job's Jewishness.
  - c. That R. Johanan, an Amora, could not be included in the statement because he did not view Job as a prophet.

The discussion in Bava Bathra begins by relating the opinion that Moses is the author of the book of Job. This statement is uncontested in the discussion here and no further comments concerning it are found throughout the rabbinic literature.

If Moses wrote the book of Job, did the man Job live in the time of Moses? Yes, he did. But does this have anything to do with the question of Job's

Jewishness? Raba's statement that Moses told the spies to see if Job was there, the man whose years were as a tree, may mean that Job was a non-Jew. Rashi understood the statement to be so, and likewise the Tosafists.<sup>4</sup> Thus, if Moses told the spies to see if Job was still alive, and if they are sent to see the non-Jewish people of Canaan, it is possible that Job is a non-Jew.

Johanan's view clearly shows that Job's Jewishness is linked with the issue of when he lived. He specifically states that Job was an exile who returned to Israel and had a school in Tiberias. Since this view soon follows Raba's view, it counters the opinion that Job lived in the time of Moses. I contend that it also refutes the thought that Job was a non-Jew.

Objections to Johanan's view are raised. The first one reiterates the position that Job was contemporary with the enslavement in Egypt.

The second objection lists seven prophets who prophesied to the non-Jew, including Job. The argument states that if one stated that Elihu were a Jew, although he spoke mainly to the heathen, one can argue similarly concerning Job.

But this thought, that if Elihu is a Jewish prophet, Job must also be a Jewish prophet, is countered by another objection. Although it is anonymous, we immediately recognize its relationship to Hiyya's view

as stated in Gen. Rabbah 57:4 and Yer. Sotah 20c-d. The unclear "My world" is clarified here: Job rebelled and was expelled from the world to come. Job is a righteous non-Jew in all three passages.

Also, we have thus determined the source of one of the three objections. Hiyya's view in Gen. Rabbah 57:4 and Yer. Sotah 20c-d is the source for the statement in Bava Bathra that God had one righteous non-Jew in the world.

Also, the objection that Job was a contemporary of Moses and not a sage in Tiberias has parallels in Gen. Rabbah 57:4 and Yer. Sotah 20c-d. All agree in stating that R. Jose b. Halaftha is the teacher.

Hence, it can be concluded that there are parallels to two of the objections raised against R. Johanan's view that Job was a Jew with a school in Tiberias. The parallels are the sources for the statements in Bava Bathra.

All three objections to Johanan's view that Job was a Jewish sage attempt to show one of two things: Job was contemporary with Moses, and Job was a non-Jew. Perhaps they are identical in intent; i.e., the implications of Job living in the time of Moses may also imply that he was not a Jew. The issue of when Job lived is linked with the question of his Jewishness.

Bava Bathra continues: "There is a difference

on this point (whether Job was a Jew or not) between Tannaim." That is, after the three objections were raised to refute Johanan's view that Job was a Jew, the passage informs us that Tannaim also differed in their discussion of the issue.

Bava Bathra then lists a series of opinions concerning when Job lived: however, the issue of Job's Jewishness is also a primary concern. This is proved by the statement: "All the Tannaim agree that Job was a Jew except those who say (that he lived in the time of Jacob)." Why?

The issue of Job's Jewishness is linked with the question of his status as a prophet. This is made clear by the statement following the above quote:

If you suppose that they (the Tannaim, excluding those who said he lived in the days of Jacob) regarded him as a heathen, after the death of Moses how could the Divine Presence rest upon a heathen seeing that a Master said: Moses prayed that the Divine Presence should not rest on heathens, and God answered his request, as it is written, Exod. 33:16, "That we be separated, I and Your people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

The Bava Bathra passage presents Tannaitic opinions about when Job lived; as we have said above, placing Job in a certain period may also mean considering him a Jew or not. I presently compare Bava Bathra, Gen. Rab. 57:4, and Yer. Soṭah 20c-d. The purpose of this is to enable the reader to graphically see the

problem. There is seldom agreement about who said what. The first column represents the period in which Job is placed. The next three columns present the opinion's author as cited in the parallels.

Time	Yer. Soṭah	Gen. Rab.	Bava Bathra
Judges	Jose b. Judah	Jose b. Judah	Eliezer
Ahasuerus	Joshua b. Korḥa	same	same
Kingdom of Sheba	Samuel b. Nahman	Nathan	Nathan
Chaldeans	Nathan	Samuel b. Nahman	Sages
Jacob	Aba	Aba b. Kahana	Some say

There is greater agreement between Gen. Rab. 57:4 and Yer. Soṭah 20c-d than between these two passages and Bava Bathra. All three agree only once: all three attribute the view that Job lived during the time of Ahasuerus to R. Joshua b. Korḥa.

Also, Gen. Rab. 57:4 and Yer. Soṭah 20c-d contain more material. Both have opinions which put Job in the time of Abraham and the tribes while Bava Bathra does not relate such opinions. Yer. Soṭah also states that Job was one of Pharaoh's advisors while the other two do not. These differences, as well as those pointed out in the graph, may be attributed to the process of transmitting a tradition whereby names were confused or material was forgotten.

There is a problem relating to the following statement in Bava Bathra. The text states: "All these Tannaim agree that Job was a Jew except those who say (that he lived in the time of Jacob)." All of the sages cited in Bava Bathra, including the ambiguous "some say" who place Job in the time of Jacob, are Tannaim.

But, according to the two parallels, Amoraim also said that Job lived pre-Moses. Resh Lakish said that he lived in the time of Abraham. Also, R. Johanan, an Amora, viewed Job as a Jew post-Moses. How can Bava Bathra state that only Tannaim agreed that Job was a Jew and cite the opinion of R. Johanan, an Amora, that Job was a Jew?

Perhaps Bava Bathra originally read: "All these Tannaim and Amoraim...." The Tosafist to Bava Bathra quotes R. Hananel who "read: all Tannaim and Amoraim agree that Job was a Jew."<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Rabbenu Gershom's comment to Bava Bathra 15b states in a footnote: "It is apparent...that Rabbenu Gershom read: 'All Tannaim and Amoraim.'<sup>6</sup>"

I do not think that that is the correct reading. The statement is part of a larger thought. The second half of the statement makes it clear that the Tannaim agreed that Job was a Jew except those who placed him in the time of Jacob because of a supposition about

prophecy. After Moses there were no non-Jewish prophets. However, Johanan did not consider Job to be a prophet.

This is made clear in the last section of the passage where it is shown that he chose to interpret the verb *ayh* to refer to lewdness, not to prophecy. His position is clear. Job is a Jewish sage, but not a prophet.

Hence, all the Tannaim cited in Bava Bathra agree that Job must be a Jew if he is to be a Jewish prophet who lived after Moses. Johanan, an Amora, places him after Moses, but he does not consider him to be a prophet. Thus, he does not have to be included in the statement.

Furthermore, it is obvious that the Amoraim viewed Tannaitic statements about when Job lived within their thought patterns. They made the time of Moses the terminus after which no non-Jew could prophesy. Thus, it cannot definitely be said that the Tannaim were concerned with Job's Jewishness with relation to when he lived and his status as a prophet. The Amoraim were.

#### Was Job Married to Dinah? Did She Convert Him?

The next series of passages, or selections from passages, deal with the question of whether Job was married to Dinah. If so, was he a Jew? In order to

visualize the mass of material, I present the passages in the following arrangement.

Gen. Rabbah 19:12 states:

R. Aba b. Kahana said: Dinah was Job's wife. Therefore, he said to her, Job 2:9, "Do you speak as one of the impious women?"...

Tanhuma Duber, Wayishlah, 19, p. 173 states:

If she were married to Esau, perhaps she would have converted him? When Job took her, did she not convert him?...

Gen. Rabbah 80:4 states:

R. Hanina in the name of R. Aba...began: Job 6:14, "To him that is ready to faint, kindness is due from his friend." You (Jacob) held back kindness from your brother; (therefore,) she will marry Job who is neither a convert nor circumcised....

7

Gen. Rabbah 76:23 states:

R. Huna in the name of R. Aba...said: God said to him (Jacob), Job 6:14, "To him that is ready to faint, kindness is due from his friend."...You held back kindness from your brother, for if she had been married to a man, she would not have played the harlot. (Another version: if she had married Job, would she not have converted him?)...

Theodor-Albeck version of Gen. Rabbah 76:23:

R. Huna in the name of R. Aba...You held back kindness from your brother...(as) when she married Job, would she not have converted him (Esau)?...

Yalqut Job, 900 states:

If he (Jacob) had given her (Dinah) to Esau, would she not convert him as she had done with Job?...

8

We begin with Gen. Rab. 19:12. It and its parallels specify that Job was married to Dinah. However,



they do not state whether Job was a Jew, a proselyte, or neither.

According to the Tanhuma Buber reading, Dinah did convert Job. The Yalqut agrees with this reading. According to Buber's note, the Yalqut cites the Tanhuma as its source, and it changed the Tanhuma reading<sup>9</sup> slightly.

Also, the Tanhuma Buber reading states that Job took her. That phrase means that he married her;<sup>10</sup> thus, Job married Dinah and she converted him.

In diametric opposition to this view is Gen. Rab. 80:4. That passage tells us that Job was neither a proselyte nor circumcised. Theodor-Albeck state that this reading is "strange."<sup>11</sup> In the exhaustive note, variant readings of other Midrashim are pointed out. E.g., Sehel Tov states: "You (Jacob) held her back from your brother, who is circumcised....she will be given to Shechem who is uncircumcised."<sup>12</sup>

Hence, Gen. Rab. 80:4 is "strange" in the light of the readings of other passages. Those variants also agree in thought. Because Jacob did not give Dinah to the circumcised Esau, she will be given to the uncircumcised Shechem, not Job!<sup>13</sup>

Thus, we arrive at a comparison of the Gen. Rab. 76:23 readings. Both Kasher<sup>14</sup> and Theodor-Albeck<sup>15</sup> agree on the same reading. Theodor-Albeck state: "The correct

reading is: 'As when she married Job.' And my version,  
 'She did not convert him,' (is) a question. 'Would  
 she not convert him?'<sup>16</sup> Who is him? Esau.

Kasher states in a few words what Theodor-Albeck  
 say in their long but thorough analysis:

Most of the versions concerning this state-  
 ment (are): "As when she married Job, would  
 she not convert him?"...The interpretation  
 of "...would she not convert him..." as a  
 question is (the following). Just as she  
 converted Job, so if she were married to Esau,<sup>17</sup>  
 would she not cause him to return to goodness?

This is based on Masnoth Kehuna's interpretation  
 found in his comment to Gen. Rabbah 76:23. He states:  
 "When she married Job, did she not cause him to re-  
 turn to goodness? Hence, if she were married to Esau,  
 she would cause him to return to goodness."<sup>18</sup>

Thus, Theodor-Albeck's reading can be accepted.  
 Also, their interpretation, as well as Kasher's, clar-  
 ifies the meaning of the passage. Dinah did marry Job,  
 and she did convert him. Furthermore, the exegesis of  
 the Job verse is clearer; i.e., Job 6:14, "To him that  
 is ready to faint, kindness is due from his friend."  
 Jacob could have done a kindness for his brother by  
 giving him Dinah. She would have converted him as she  
 did with Job. Because Jacob did not do this, Gen. 34:1,  
 "Then Dinah, Jacob's daughter, went forth..." and caus-  
 ed her father much pain.

Thus our study is concluded. Job married Dinah,  
 and she converted him.

# Job Was a Non-Jewish Prophet

Deut. Rabbah 2:4 states:

Deut. 3:23, "And I supplicated God." This is what the text states, Proverbs 18:23, "The poor man speaks supplicatingly, but the rich answer impudently." R. Tanhuma said: "The poor speak supplicatingly" refers to Moses who came to his Creator with supplications....Another interpretation: R. Johanan said: "The poor man speaks supplicatingly" (denotes) the prophets of Israel; "But the rich speak impudently" (are) the prophets of the nations of the world. Rabbi Johanan said: there is no more righteous non-Jew than Job, and he came only with rebukes, as it is said, Job 23:4, "I would order my case before Him and fill my mouth with rebuke." And you have no greater (Jewish) prophets than Moses and Isaiah, and both came only with supplications....

We have here the view of one Rabbi Johanan who is not the same Johanan who said that Job was a Jewish sage with a school in Tiberias.<sup>19</sup> The Rabbi Johanan here states that the first half of Proverbs 18:23 referred to the Jewish prophets while the last half denoted the non-Jewish prophets. Thus, his view is that Job was a righteous non-Jewish prophet "who came only with rebukes."

This passage clearly fits into Amoraic thought patterns. As will be shown, there is considerable evidence for an Amoraic view of Job as one who did rebuke God, argue with Him, and refuse to accept His divine judgments.<sup>20</sup>

## Summary

Was Job a Jew or not?

We have discovered Tannaitic views that Job was not a Jew. Such a view appears in Bava Bathra in the opinion of the "some say" Job lived in the time of Jacob. The same opinion is expressed in the three objections to Johanan's view that Job was a Jewish sage. We also have the view of Yishmael in Yer. So-tah 20c-d that Job was a grandee of Pharaoh.

We have discovered Tannaitic views that Job was a Jew. We have those Tannaitic opinions in Bava Bathra which place Job after Moses. Recall that the Amora'im interpreted those statements according to their view that after Moses there were no non-Jewish prophets.

There are Amoraic views that Job was a Jew.

Job was converted by Dinah according to the reliable passages. We also have Johanan's view that Job was a Jewish sage.

There are Amoraic views that Job was not a Jew. We have Raba's view in Bava Bathra 15a that Moses told the spies to see if Job was still alive. We also have Hiyya's view that Job was a righteous non-Jew. Also, we have the view of the R. Johanan in Deut. Rab. 2:4 that Job was a non-Jewish prophet.

Is there any connection between views of Job as a Jew or non-Jew and other questions; i.e., was he a prophet?

There are three clear connections of the issue of Job's Jewishness and his status as a prophet. Johanan's view is explicitly one in which Job is a Jew, after Moses, but not a prophet. As Bava Bathra shows, <sup>21</sup> he deliberately did not depict Job as a prophet.

Second, we have the explicit opinion of the other Johanan in Deut. Rab. 2:4. Job is a righteous non-Jewish prophet "who came only with rebukes."

Third, we have the Amoraic interpretation of Tannaitic statements whereby those statements are put into an accepted Amoraic pattern of thought. The Bava Bathra list of Tannaitic opinions about when Job lived is interpreted as being a difference of opinion about his Jewishness. This was done on the basis of Amoraic <sup>22</sup> thoughts about when prophecy became limited to Jews.

Hence, there are three passages which show an Amoraic linking of the two issues. We have encountered only that objection in Bava Bathra--seven prophets <sup>23</sup> prophesied to the non-Jew--which may reveal a Tannaitic concern about the relationship of Job's Jewishness with his status as a prophet. However, even that objection was clarified by the Amoraim in Bava Bathra 15b and made congruous with their comprehension of the issues.

Hence, there is not any clear evidence for a Tannaitic concern for the issue of Job's Jewishness and its relationship to his status as a Jew. There is clear Amoraic concern.

## CHAPTER II

## JOB, A CONTEMPORARY OF MOSES

In the previous chapter we compared three major passages which listed opinions concerning when Job<sup>1</sup> lived. A graph was presented. I shall not repeat the same material now.

Also, certain opinions are mentioned only once; e.g., Job lived in the time of the Chaldeans. No clues, other than exegesis, are given to explain why a sage held such a view. Thus, I shall not deal with such views.

Thus, this chapter will deal with passages which place Job in the time of Moses.

Job Was Silent and Was Punished!

Exod. Rabbah 1:9 states:

R. Hiyya said that R. Simon said that three were involved in that advice (to slay the first born of the Jews): Job, Balaam, and Jethro. Balaam, who gave advice (to slay them), was killed. Job, who was silent, was punished. Jethro, who fled, merited that his children could sit in the<sup>2</sup> chamber of hewn stones, I Chron 2:55...

In a parallel, the identical view of R. Simai appears in the Amoraic discussion of that passage in Soṭah dealing with reward and punishment according to what one sows<sup>3</sup>. Thus, the comment on Job fits into a definite pattern of thought. Job was silent; there-

fore, he was punished. This is evidence for one of the possible determinants of the rabbinic view of Job. The visitations which God permitted Satan to execute in Job 1-2 are explained according to accepted thought concerning divine justice.

Satan Incited Against Job so Israel Could Cross the Sea

A pertinent section in Gen. Rabbah 57:4 states:

R. Levi in the name of R. Ḥalafta said (that) he (Job) was born when they descended to Egypt and died when they left....Satan came to accuse (Israel), and He incited him against Job. R. Ḥanina...said that (this is similar to) a shepherd who was sitting and watching his sheep. One wolf came and attacked him. He said, "Give him a he-goat that he may attack it." But R. Hama said (that it is similar) to a king sitting at a banquet. One dog came and attacked him. He said, "Give him one loaf to attack." So Satan came to accuse and He incited him against Job, as it is written, Job 16:11, "God delivered me to the ungodly, and cast me into the hands of the wicked."...

This passage is an expansion of a parable found<sup>4</sup> in Yer. Soṭah 20c-d. Both passages introduce the parable by citing Tannaitic views that Job lived until the exodus from Egypt. But, whereas the parable is anonymous in Yer. Soṭah, it is attributed to R. Ḥanina, an Amora, in Gen. Rab. 57:4. The parable is lengthened here, and an additional parable, R. Ḥama's, is offered here. On the basis of these points, I conclude that the Gen. Rab. 57:4 version is not as old as the version in Yer. Soṭah.

What does the parable tell us? It interprets

Job 16:11, "God delivered me to the ungodly, and cast me into the hands of the wicked." This verse's literal meaning can be shocking. Does God arbitrarily and capriciously permit an individual to suffer? If He does, He is a monster! I contend that rabbinic thought attempts to explain God's actions toward Job and puts them into an acceptable ethical framework.

This is a possible explanation of the parable. Supporting evidence for my contention may reside in a statement by R. Johanan in Bava Bathra. He expounded Satan's words in Job 2:3, "And You moved me against him (Job) to destroy him without cause." Johanan commented: "If it were not written, it would be impossible to say it. (The verse depicts God) as a man who can be enticed and is enticed."<sup>6</sup>

Strack shows that Hanina, Hiyya, and Hama b. Hanina<sup>7</sup> were either students of Johanan or contemporaries. Thus, it is possible that Hama's parable, and Hanina's use of a Tannaitic parable, were attempts to deal with Johanan's comment. God is not a man who can be enticed to permit his creatures to suffer without cause. Whatever God does, even if He delivers Job into the hand of Satan, has a purpose.

Hence, the sheep, Israel, are attacked, and God saves them by throwing the wolf a he-goat. The king saves himself from the dog by throwing it a piece of



bread. These actions are more comprehensible. God is acting in a more acceptable manner. There is a reason why the he-goat is delivered to the wolf.

Exod. Rabbah 21:7 states:

R. Hama b. Hanina said (that) when Israel left Egypt, Samael, the angel, arose to accuse them. And R. Hama...explained it (the statement) in the name of his father. It is similar to a shepherd who was crossing his sheep through a river. A wolf came to attack the sheep. What does a clever shepherd do? He takes a large he-goat and gives it to the wolf. He said, "Let him attack this (he-goat) until we cross the river; afterwards, I shall bring him (the he-goat)." So, when Israel left Egypt, Samael, the angel, came to accuse them. He said before God: "Master of the Universe, until now these have been idolators, and You will split the sea for them?" What did God do? He gave him Job, who was one of Pharaoh's advisors, as it is written, Job 1:1, "And that man was whole hearted, and upright, and one that feared God, and shunned evil." He (God) said to him (Samael), "Here, he is in your power." God said: "While he is occupying himself with Job, Israel is descending into and ascending from the river; afterwards, I shall save Job." This is what Job says, Job 16:12, "I was at ease and he broke me asunder; He took me by the neck and dashed me to pieces; He has also set me up for His mark." Job said: "I was at ease in the world and He tore me asunder, and He grabbed my neck and dashed me to pieces, in order to make me a target for His people." And it is written, Job 16:11, "He delivered me to the ungodly." (That is,) He delivered me into the power of Satan. And, in order that Israel not be found guilty, He cast me into his hand; Job 16:11, "He cast me into the hand of the wicked."...

This passage completes the expansion of the parable. It is late. The use of the name Samael for Satan is late. Brief statements in the parable as found in

Yer. Soṭah and Gen. Rab. are expanded into full paragraphs in our Exod. Rab. passage. Also, our passage incorporates Yishmael's<sup>8</sup> and Hiyya's<sup>9</sup> view that Job was one of Pharaoh's advisors.

Our passage permits an alternative to the possible interpretation of the parable as an attempt to place God's actions into an acceptable ethical framework. The sages may be attempting to make Israel the center of the Job-story. Job is delivered to Satan, Samael, as a diversionary action until God can save Israel. Then God will save Job.

There is evidence in the Mekhilta that a somewhat similar interpretation of Jonah exists. Jonah's actions are explained so that Jonah is motivated to act on Israel's behalf.<sup>10</sup> By refusing to go to Nineveh, Jonah hopes that Israel, warned many times by the prophets, will not be made to look stubborn and foolish. Perhaps the Ninevehites will repent after one warning! Thus, the Mekhilta contains the statement: "And so you find that the patriarchs and prophets offered their lives on behalf of Israel."<sup>11</sup>

Our parable is somewhat similar to this important thought. Job is not a patriarch, and the sages who gave our parable do not consider him to be a prophet, but the thought may be identical. Israel is the focal point. Job is afflicted to save Israel.

## Moses Wrote the book of Job

Bava Bathra 15a states:

You say that Moses wrote his book and the section of Balaam and the book of Job. This supports the opinion of R. Joshua b. Levi b. Lahma who said that Job was contemporary with Moses....(The proof that Moses wrote the book of Job is because) it is written, Job 19:23, "Would that they were inscribed in a book," and it is Moses who is called inscriber. It is written, Deut. 33:21, "And he chose the first part for himself, for there was the lawgiver's (lit. inscriber's) portion reserved."...Raba said that Job was in the time of the spies, Job 1:1, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job." And it is written, Num. 13:20, "Whether there is wood there?" Where is the parallel? In one place it is ~~Uz~~, in the other ~~Uz~~? What Moses said to Israel was this: "(See) if that man is there whose years are as the years of a tree and who shelters his generation like a tree."...

The contention that Moses asked the spies to see if Job was there permits the conclusion that Job was viewed by Raba as a contemporary of Moses.

Furthermore, the sense of the passage is that Job is a contemporary of Moses because Moses wrote his book. The proof text manifests this. Job asked that his case, his words, be put into a book. Moses is the inscriber.

Hence, it is clear that placing Job in the time of Moses may have been prompted by the fact that Moses is considered to be the author of the book of Job.

## Summary

When did Job live?

We can conclude that three passages list the differing opinions. The opinions in Gen. Rab. 57:4, Yer. Soṭah, 20c-d, and Bava Bathra 15a-15b range from Job living in the time of the patriarchs to Job being one who returned from the Babylonian exile.

Of these views only two have other passages which supplement them in detail.

The view that Job lived in the days of Jacob and was married to Dinah is supported by other passages. The reliable passages depict Job as a convert.<sup>12</sup> It is important to note that Job is not the central issue in those passages. What seems to be bothering the sages is why Dinah went forth and had an affair with Shechem. The comments on Job are incidental to explaining that if Jacob had given Dinah to Esau, she would have converted him, or she would not have gone forth.

The passages that depict Job as a contemporary of Moses may indicate either an attempt to explain God's actions or an attempt to make Israel the focal point of the book of Job. Also, Bava Bathra 15b permits the thought that Job is a contemporary of Moses because Moses wrote the book of Job and told the spies to see if Job was still living.

I speculate that Job cannot be the author of his book. Bava Bathra gives a theological pre-suppo-

sition for considering Job a Jew. After Moses there are no non-Jewish prophets. It may be that the sages did not want Job to be a Jewish prophet. Chapter IV will depict Job as one who attacked basic thoughts concerning divine justice. If Job is a prophet, and if he wrote his book, a Jewish prophet would be attacking basic thoughts of the sages!

There is no further rabbinic development of opinions that place Job after Moses. The opinions that consider Job a convert in the time of Jacob do not explicitly consider him to be a prophet. Passages that make Job a contemporary of Moses are likewise silent on this issue.

However, it can be concluded from the view of Yishmael in Yer. Soṭah 20c-d that Job was a member of Pharaoh's household; Job was viewed as a non-Jewish contemporary of Moses. Recall that Ḥanina and Ḥiyya stated in Gen. Rab. 57:4 that Job was a non-Jew. Our study of passages placing Job in the time of Moses revealed that Ḥiyya, and Ḥanina's son Ḥama, considered Job to be Moses' contemporary. Thus, we may have a link between their views of Job as a non-Jew and their dating of Job; i.e., Job is a non-Jew in the time of Moses.

Hence, we have views that Job was a non-Jew in the time of Moses and a convert in the time of Jacob,



## CHAPTER III

JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, *Midrash*

In this chapter we shall discuss passages, or significant sections of passages, which relate to the issue of Job's righteousness.

Righteousness Clothed Job

An important passages appears in Midrash Psalms.

Psalms 24:1, "A song of David: The earth and the fullness thereof are God's." This is what scripture says by means of Job: Job 29:14, "I put on righteousness and it clothed itself with me." R. Hanina said: there is one to whom clothes are becoming, but whose clothes are uncomely; and another whose clothes are comely, but to whom clothes are not becoming. There is a man who is rich but his character does not go with his richness; and another who is poor, but his character does not go with his poverty. And so Solomon said, Proverbs 13:7, "There is he who pretends to be rich, and yet has nothing; there is he who pretends that he is poor, yet has great wealth." There is one who is a strong man, yet his character does not go with his strength; and another who is weak, but whose character does not go with his weakness. There is one who is youthful, of fine appearance, but whose wife is ugly and repulsive, so that when she is carried in a litter people ask, "Who is the husband of this (woman)?" Others respond, "This is he." When the people see that he is handsome, they say, "This handsome man has thrown himself away on this ungainly woman." But if the bride is pretty, and her husband is ugly and squat, they say, "This bride has thrown herself away on this man." Job said, "I am not this way." Because righteousness is becoming to Job, and Job is becoming to righteousness. (This is the meaning of) "I put on righteousness, and it clothed itself with me."...<sup>2</sup>

What does the passage tell us about Job? It is based exegetically on Job 29:14, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed itself with me." Hanina commented on the verse and presented a series of examples of the meaning of the verse. There are individuals who fit their clothing, and their clothing fits them. There is mutuality of agreement and adherence between individual and quality, or clothing, or wife. The opposite is also true; a handsome man may be married to an ugly woman, or a beautiful woman may be married to a beast. Not so with Job! Righteousness fit Job and Job fit righteousness.

Job was not an evil man who superficially wore the garment of righteousness. It fit him because he had the necessary characteristics that attracted the adjective. Thus, we conclude that the passage informs us that righteousness did not clothe a Job who only appeared to be righteous; righteousness fit a righteous Job.

#### Job Helped the Orphans

Bava Bathra 16a contains the following:

Raba expounded: what is meant by the verse, Job 19:25, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me;" this shows that Job used to rob the orphans of a field and improve it and then restore it to them. "And I caused the widow's heart to sing with joy." If ever there was a widow who could not find a husband, he used to associate his name with her, and then someone would come and marry her....

With this passage, we begin a perusal of passages



which give the details of Job's righteousness. In this case, we have the opinion of an Amora, Raba, that Job's righteousness included the virtues of caring for the orphan and the widow. Our previous passage from Midrash Psalms stated that Hanina, also an Amora, considered Job to be righteous. This is interesting, for we have<sup>3</sup> shown that these two sages viewed Job as a non-Jew. As of now, we can say that they apparently agree with Hiyya's view in Gen. Rab. 57:4 and parallels that Job was a righteous non-Jew.

#### The Judge and Executor

Mayan Ganim contains the following:

Job 29:13, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." What does "the blessing of him that was ready to perish came to me" mean to the sages? Job had many (fine) characteristics; behold how the verse praises him, Job 1:1, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was whole hearted and upright, fearing God, and shunning evil." Thus you find that he was beneficent toward the poor with righteous acts, as it is said, Job 29:16, "I was a father to the needy." And he clothed the naked, Job 31:19, "If I had seen any wanderer in need of clothing, or that the needy had no covering." And he used to support the hands of the orphans and widows. And along with all these great qualities which he had, he used to practice (lit. hold or grasp) a great and praiseworthy attribute, for he used to go about and visit the ill, whether they were poor or rich. He used to lead the rich to the doctor with him. At times the doctor's diagnosis did not permit hope, and he (the doctor) would say, "He will not continue to rise." Immediately he (the sick) and his relatives said

that it was necessary to make a will, for he was in great danger. Because the sick one's wife heard this, she would slap her face, and reveal her face, and loosen her hair, and pluck it. And when Job saw her doing this (lit. all that we have said), he would say ... "My daughter, why do you cry out in his presence? Even now there is yet oil in the lamp." So she would reply to him, "What can I do for my children, and from what shall I feed them?" Then Job would answer her with good words, that were comforting, and say, "You can always trust in the mercies and kindnesses of God Who has not and will not leave you, and Who will support (lit. stand) your husband in this sickness, and Who will sustain you and your children, as is His wont to do. But, and far be it, if your husband should die, I call heaven to witness (my vow) that I shall fill all your needs (lit. lackings), and I shall sustain you from my (possessions) every day, week, and year." Immediately he would summon a scribe, and he (the scribe) would write all the conditions (terms) before him (Job) and before witnesses, and that he would pay their expenses while her husband was ill until he would rise and walk about outside on his crutch. But, if he (the husband) died, I will pay your expenses until the children become adults, or until (the widow) is married, if she desires to remarry. And when the sick person heard that the doctor had little hope (lit. cut off his hope), and what Job had bound himself to do for his children and for his wife, whether he lived or died, he immediately blessed him (Job). Then he said to Job, "May God Who has commanded (help and mercy) for orphans and widows, desire to help you." Thus, when all the chastisements came, he (Job) began to say, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me." (That is,) that ill man for whom the doctor saw little hope, and whose hope had been cut off (blessed me). And I used to make widows happy, as it is said, Job 29:13, "And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

This passages interprets Job 29:13 differently

than did Raba in Bava Bathra 16a. Indeed Raba's view leaves something to be desired in Job's character; i.e., Job robbed the field of the orphan before he improved it. The use of robbery causes me to think that Raba granted that Job was righteous, yet he wanted to see some stains in Job's character.

The Mayan Ganim passage is just the opposite. It goes into great detail as it depicts the care with which Job lived a righteous life. He visited the sick, rich and poor; his righteous deed for the rich man was that he escorted him to the doctor.

Also, the complex agreement by Job to care for the widow, if her husband dies, until she remarries, if she wants to remarry, etc., gives the impression that Job's righteousness was whole hearted and complete. No detail was beneath his dignity or unworthy of his concern.

The passage also manifests an understanding of the situation in which Job spoke Job 29:13. He recounted his deeds after the chastisements befell him. He sought to prove that he was not guilty of any sin that would cause God to afflict him! This passage is the first that we have encountered which depicts Job's righteousness as constitutive of his life before the chastisements.

Similar in thought to the Mayan Ganim passage

is the following passage from the Pesiqta Rabbati.

R. Tanhuma began: this is what the holy spirit said through Job, Job 29:17, "I broke the teeth of the wicked, and I drew forth the prey out of his teeth." You might say that since you find that Job was a great and rich man, and that whoever is rich does not take care concerning the welfare (lit. judgment) of the poor, that he did not pay heed (lit. supervise) the cases of the poor. This is not so. Instead, he gave his attention (lit. soul) to the cases. Not only this, but he was a judge and an officer, for so scripture says, Deut. 16:19, "You are to appoint judges and officials for your various tribes, to judge the people aright."... Job said that the law fully warned the judge that he should do justice (lit. the judgment) and (warned) the officer that he bring forth the stolen article. I did not do this, but I was judge and executor. Although the officer was standing before me, I did not wait until he brought forth the stolen article. But, because I used to decide the cases, I used to stand over the crook and break his teeth (in order) to bring forth the stolen goods from him (lit. from them). Job 29:25, "I chose out their way, and sat as chief, and dwelt like a king in an army, like one who comforts mourners." He (Job) used to seat the judges; and he instructed everyone concerning his tasks; and he sat at the head of all of them as a king. Another interpretation: when the law and the deed were set before me, I used to bring forth the decision (lit. it). But if the deed was unclear (lit. dim), I used to investigate (lit. ask) it and clarify it. "And dwelt like a king in an army." What is (its meaning)? When I declared the guilty to be guilty, and the wicked to be wicked, I used to sit with the officers standing before me. And if the guilty (person) did not want to fulfill the sentence, he would become afraid because of the fear of the band that stood before me. (Then) he would fulfill the sentence. (That is) "And I dwelt like a king in the army." "As one that comforts the mourners." If the evil inclination came to turn me aside from going and comforting the mourners, I did not listen. Instead, (I

behaved in accord with what God expects of one who acts) "As one comforts the mourners." Why? I used to say that I was no better than my Creator. There is no creature, living and existing, like God; nor a King like Him. But He, in His Glory, comforts Israel, Isaiah 51:12, "I, I, am your comforter."...<sup>5</sup>

The passage exemplifies the necessity of a judge to be fair and upright in all cases. Job is the example. Job 29:17 is interpreted in a manner which manifests Job's concern with more than the expected execution of the law. Job acted beyond the mere demands of the law, *לֹא כִּי הָיָה צַדִּיק*. He was a true *צַדִּיק*.

Job 29:25, "I chose out their way, and sat as chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforts the mourners," is explained in similar fashion. Job appointed judges, instructed them concerning their powers and functions. According to another interpretation, he probed the nuances of the the law and clarified any unclear sections.

The central thought behind the passage is that Job was indeed righteous; righteousness fit him because while some felt that they were too high and mighty to go and comfort a lowly mourner, Job did not feel that way.

#### Job's Pure Prayer

Exodus Rabbah 22:4 contains the following:

R. Joshua, the priest,...said...Job's prayer was pure because he had no stealing among his endeavors. Therefore, Job said, Job 16:17, "Although (understood as because)

there is no violence in my hand, therefore (lit. and) my prayer is clean." That is, because there was no stealing in my hand or endeavors, my prayer was clean....

This section comes from a rather long passage dealing with the requirement of clean hands before one can pray from the depths of one's being. Hence, we have additional evidence that righteousness fit Job as much as he fit it. He could pray in purity because his hands were pure.

### Job, a Real פ'33

Levit. Rabbah 7:3 states:

Gufa (to the main issue): R. Shimon b. Yohai said that the burnt offering is due (only as expiation) for sinful thoughts of the heart. R. Levi said that it is an explicit biblical statement, Ezek. 20:32, "The burnt offering is for your thoughts (פ'33)." From whom can you deduce (that the burnt offering is to expiate for thoughts)? From the case of Job. First (let us consider the verses) "And his sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one upon his day; and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them," Job 1:4....

The passages continues with a discussion of the nature of the festivities. The sages differ on the meaning of the word פ'33 in Job 1:5, "And it was when the days of the feasting had gone round, that Job sent and פ'33." R. Tanhum views the feasts as betrothal parties. R. Meir believes that the feasts were simply royal banquets. This difference of opinion is not basic to our interest in Job. The passage

then continues:

Job 1:5, "And he (Job) arose early in the morning and offered burnt offerings according to the number of all of them."...(Does "the number of all of them") refer to the number of days (of feasting), or to the number of his sons and daughters, or to the number of all the sacrifices in the Pentateuch? When the text states, "For Job said: it may be that my sons and daughters have sinned and blasphemed God in their hearts," Job 1:6, it proves that the burnt offering is to be brought for sinful thoughts of the heart....

The point is clear. Job offered burnt offerings in case his children had sinned; the extra care and punctilious concern manifested in this passage reminds us of the description of Job's righteousness in Mayan Ganim. The basic thoughts of the two passages are identical.

The exegesis of R. Levi is interesting. Ezek. 20:32 states: וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת הַקּוֹל הַזֶּה וְיִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת הַקּוֹל הַזֶּה. R. Levi reads the verse thusly: וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת הַקּוֹל הַזֶּה וְיִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת הַקּוֹל הַזֶּה. Thus, he understands the text to mean that the burnt offering is brought in order to expiate for sinful thoughts.

Thus, applying the general to the specific case of Job, Job offered a burnt offering because his sons and daughters may have sinned.

Before we proceed to an analysis of the remaining passages relating to the description of Job's righteousness, we shall summarize what the six passages perused to this point have taught us.

We have discovered Amoraic teachings that Job was righteous. The specifics are: care of orphans and widows, righteous judging and execution of the law beyond what is required by the law, pure prayer, and pious concern in offering sacrifices in case his children had somehow sinned in thought.

The passages soon to be treated do not fit this description; i.e., they qualify Job's righteousness in some manner.

#### Akiba's View of Job's Righteousness

Eccles. Rabbah 7:8 states:

Job 42:14, "And God blessed Job more than his beginning." This teaches that God doubled all his wealth over what it was in the beginning, Job 42:10, "God restored Job's fortune." He said: Akiba did not teach so, but (Akiba taught that) God blessed Job's end because of the meritorious deeds that he (Job) had at the beginning."...

A parallel in Yer. Hagigah 77b clarifies the speakers. R. Meir was lecturing in Tiberias. R. Elisha came and listened. Meir interpreted Job 42:14 to mean that God doubled Job's wealth. Elisha then commented that Akiba, Meir's teacher, did not teach so. God blessed Job's end because of the command-<sup>6</sup>ments and good deeds that Job had at first.

Thus, we see that Elisha informs us that Akiba, a Tanna, taught that Job was righteous; he had good deeds. For some reason, unknown and not clarified by the text, Meir did not teach as his master had.



The difficulty with Akiba's view that Job had good deeds is his statement in Mishnah Eduyoth 2:10: "Also, he said five things concerning twelve months: the judgment of the generation of the flood was for twelve months. The judgment of Job was for twelve months...."

Can Akiba view Job as righteous and yet say that his <sup>7</sup>Gen was for twelve months? Büchler offers a solution. The word <sup>7</sup>Gen denotes deserved punishment; i.e., Akiba considered Job righteous; but when he was tested, Job rebelled. Then God decreed that his <sup>7</sup>Gen be for twelve months. Hence, Büchler contends that whereas the original visitations were for the purpose of testing Job (Job 2:5 shows this), Job's <sup>7</sup>Gen of twelve months was because he failed the test.

Thus, Akiba views Job as righteous before the test, failing the test, and therefore having a twelve month <sup>7</sup>Gen. This view of Job as righteous before the test, and failing the test, is a major thought pattern of the rabbinic view of Job.

#### Job Kept Far from Ugliness

Avoth DeRabbi Natan states:

What is the fence that Job built around his words? Behold he says, Job 1:1, "A whole hearted and upright man, fearing God, and shunning evil." (The last phrase) teaches that Job kept himself far from anything that brings sin, and from ugliness, and from anything similar to ugliness....Behold he says, Job 31:1, "I made a covenant, how

then could I give heed to a virgin?" This teaches that Job was strict with himself and did not even look at a virgin. Is not the situation one of an argument from minor to major? Since with a virgin whom he might marry for himself, Job was strict with himself and did not look at her, how much the more so concerning a married woman! And why was Job so strict with himself and did not even look at a virgin? Because Job said, "Lest I look upon her today and tomorrow another man will come and marry her, and I will be looking at a married woman."<sup>8</sup>

Job was righteous because he was extra careful; he was strict with himself. This reminds us again of Mayan Ganim's depiction of Job's extra care in being righteous and Levit. Rabbah 7:3's depiction of Job offering sacrifices in case his family sinned in thought.

But, this picture of Job's righteousness is not unqualified. Indeed, Raba in Bava Bathra 16a commented:

Dust in Job's mouth! He did not look at other women. Abraham did not even look at his own, Gen. 12:11, "Behold, now I know that you are a beautiful woman." (Thus you learn that) at the beginning he did not know (because he was so righteous that he did not look at his own wife).

We have discovered another pattern of rabbinic thought. Yes, Job was righteous, but he was not as righteous as others, e.g., Abraham. In this case Job's righteousness in comparison with Abraham relates to the issue of gazing upon women and keeping from ugly or unseemly things. We will see this pattern develop.

Comparisons will be made between Job and others, especially concerning the manner in which they accepted chastisements or argued with God.<sup>9</sup>

### Job and Abraham

Another passage in Avot DeRabbi Natan states:

Let your house be open wide. How? This teaches that a man's home must be opened wide toward the north, south, east and west, like Job who made four openings to his home. And why did he make four openings for the house? So that the poor would not be pained and have to circumvent the whole house (to find a door). One who comes from the north can enter from his way; one who comes from the south can enter from his way; similarly from every direction; therefore, Job made four openings for his house. Let the poor be of your household. Not really of your household, but the poor should speak about what they ate and drank in the midst of your house as the poor used to speak about what they ate and drank within Job's house. Thus, when one met another, one would say to his friend, "Where are you coming from?" "From Job's house." "And where are you going?" "To Job's house." When those great punishments came upon him, he said before God, "Master of the Universe, did I not feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, as it is said, Job 31:6, 'Did I eat my bread alone? Did no orphan eat of it?' Did I not dress the naked, as it is written, Job 31:19,20, 'If I saw a wanderer in want of clothing, or if the needy had no covering, has not his body blessed me, and were he not warmed by the fleece of my sheep?'" Nevertheless, God said to Job, "Job, you have not yet come to half the measure of Abraham! You sit and wait in your house and the guests come to you. Whoever is used to wheat bread is given such; whoever is used to meat, you give him such; whoever is used to drinking wine, you give him such. But Abraham did not do so! But he used to go out and wander about in the world, and when he found guests, he brought them into his house. Whoever

was not used to wheat bread, he gave him wheat bread; whoever was not used to meat, he gave him meat; whoever was not used to drinking wine, he gave him wine to drink. Not only this, but he built great rooms on the roads and placed food and drink (there). Whoever passed by, entered, ate, drank and blessed Heaven; therefore, he (Abraham) was pleased. And whatever the mouth asked for was found in Abraham's house, as it is said, Gen. 21:33, "And he planted an oak in Beer Sheba and he called upon the name of God, the Eternal Lord." (Oak is understood by the sages as a school.)<sup>10</sup>

There is a passage which contains a similar thought. Tanhuma Buber Toldoth 13, p. 133, points out that "Job's house was open for the passers-by; he learned it from Abraham." The passage comments upon Job 29:19, "My root was opened toward water." Because the text states פִּתְּחָהּ לַמַּיִם, the anonymous sage commented that Job's house was opened for students. Daniel 8:4 states that the חֲזָקָה, the strong one, understood as the student, was bursting forth toward the water, knowledge. Thus, פִּתְּחָהּ לַמַּיִם in Job 29:19 means that Job's house was opened for those students thirsting for knowledge. אֵלֶּיךָ יְהוָה אֵלֶּיךָ פִּתְּחָהּ לַמַּיִם!

The Tanhuma Buber passage does not make the comparison between Abraham and Job that appears in our Avoth DeRabbi Natan passage. When the chastisements came, Job began to argue with God that he had acted righteously. God's reply is significant; "Job, you have not come to half the measure of Abraham!" True, Job, you are righteous, but do not think that

you are as righteous as Abraham. Abraham's dealings with students and travellers were superior to yours.

We have encountered a new area of rabbinic thought. It is therefore best to summarize our findings and devote the next chapter to that new area.

### Summary

We have seen that the sages did view Job as righteous. We have also discovered, beginning with R. Akiba, that the sages recognized a major flaw in Job's cloak of righteousness. That is, Job was righteous in Akiba's view yet he did something that deserved twelve months of Gem.

We have noticed the tendency to compare Job and Abraham. We have seen Raba's view that Abraham was more strict concerning gazing upon women. Job and Abraham were also compared with respect to caring for the traveller and the student.

## CHAPTER IV

## JOB'S DEFECTS

In this chapter we shall analyze those passages which manifest Job's major faults.

Job Rebelled

Bab. Semahoth 8 states:

R. Akiba said (that) a king had four sons: one is smitten and is silent; one is smitten and rebels; one is smitten and supplicates; and one is smitten and says to his father, "Smite me." Abraham is smitten and is silent, as it is said, Gen. 22:2, "Take your son, your only son, the son whom you love, Issac, and sacrifice him." He (Abraham) should have said, "Yesterday You said to me, Gen. 21:12, 'You shall have seed through Issac.'" But scripture says (of Abraham), Gen. 22:3, "Abraham arose early in the morning." Job is smitten and rebelled, as it is said, Job 10:2,3, "Do not condemn me; inform me why You contend with me! Is it good that You oppress, that You despise the work of your hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?" Hezekiah is smitten and supplicates, as it is said, II Kings 20:2, "And Hezekiah prayed unto God." There are those who said that he is smitten and rebelled; afterwards he should have said, "Do what is good in Your sight!" David said to His Father, "Smite me," as it is said, Psalm 51:1,2, "In Your abundant mercies, wipe out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly of my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin."<sup>1</sup>


The Hebrew GA is used for the word which I have translated, "rebelled." It means more than mere non-acceptance. Bichler makes this clear.

R. Akiba himself terms Job's criticism of, and his rebellious attitude to, God for inflicting leprosy upon him, kicking, ba'at,

as he reproached God in unseemly, un-  
measured and offensive expressions, like,  
 Thou condemnest me, Thou contendest with  
 me, meaning: without justification. If  
 he did not attain to king David's standard  
 who, while suffering, had asked God for  
 additional visitation, nor to the degree  
 of Abraham's piety who had submitted in  
 silence to the terrible demand of God to  
 sacrifice Issac, nor approached the reli-  
 gious level of king Hezekiah who had prayed  
 for the removal of the decree of his im-  
 pending death, Job should have pondered  
 his sins and repented, but should certain-  
 ly not have called God an arbitray Judge,  
 nor have dared declare himself free from  
 all sin and demand of God the reason for  
 smiting him.<sup>2</sup>

Of particular importance is the underlined  
 point. Job did not merely refuse to accept the di-  
 vine judgments and visitations; he reacted in an  
 offensive manner.

An additional proof that the sages viewed Job  
 in this manner is found in a passage in Exod. Rabbah.  
 That passage compares Job's act of non-acceptance to  
 the actions of a drunken palace guard. After rebell-  
 ing, reviling the king, and being rebuked, the drunken  
 guard apologized for his actions using his drunken-  
 ness as an excuse.<sup>3</sup> Surely such a description of  
 Job's action presents more than the picture of one  
 who does not accept; his non-acceptance is coupled  
 with base behavior and base language.

Whereas the passage in Exod. Rabbah is anony-  
 mous, it is clear that Semaphoth informs us that R.  
 Akiba, a Tanna, held the view that Job .

### Job Compared Himself to Abraham

A passage in Tanhuma Buber is relevant but quite long. Therefore, I have not present is beginning or ending. Let me summarize them. The passage begins with a student's question concerning the coming of the Messiah. This leads to mentioning Obadiah and his prophecy concerning the destruction of Edom (Rome). The question is asked about why Obadiah should have so prophesied. The answer is complex. It involves the following: Eliphaz rebuked Job, so God decided to raise up a prophet (Obadiah) from Eliphaz who will speak of God's eventual rebuke and destruction of Eliphaz' father (Edom).

It is important to note that the passage is permeated with thought concerning divine justice applied in an orderly and comprehensible manner.

Now, to the issue at hand. What do we learn about Job? The passage begins: "Woe to the kingdom of Edom! When God shall see its deeds, He shall arise and obtain retribution." The passage shows how God had punished Egypt, Assyria, the Medes, and Greece by means of a human agent. But, Obadiah 1:1, "God alone, by Himself, shall punish Edom." The passage continues:

Berakhya said: what did Obadiah see (that he prophesied) retribution against Edom? He saw that God pays rewards to them that love Him; how much the more so to them that hate Him! The holy spirit says, by means



of Eliphaz the Temanite, Job 4:1, "Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: 'If one venture a word to you, will you be weary?'" Eliphaz said to Job, "Behold you say, 'Why am I not like Abraham?'" So you say Job 30:19, "He has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes." Do you think that He is comparing you to him (to Abraham who spoke of himself as dust and ashes)?" Beranya said: reverse the order of the verse and interpret it thusly, "You have become like dust and ashes," for He judges you like the generation which built the tower of Babel, of whom it is written, Gen. 11:3, "And they had brick for stone and slime for mortar." That is Job 30:19, "He has cast me into the mire (slime)." Eliphaz said to him, "Are your deeds like Abraham's?" Job 4:2, "If one tests you, will you be weary?" Abraham passed ten tests, but you are weary after one test!" Job 4:3, "Behold you have instructed many." You used to comfort all those afflicted with chastisements. When the blind man came to you, you used to say to him (that) God already knew what was destined to be when He blinded that man. You used to comfort him and say to him (that) if he wanted to build a house and did not want to open the windows, who would restrain him? So God, in the future, will be glorified through you, as it is said, Isaiah 35:5, "And the eyes of the blind shall be opened." When a deaf man came, you used to comfort him and say (that) if he wanted to make a glass without ears, who would restrain him? So in the future, God will be glorified through him, Isaiah 35:5, "And the ears of the deaf shall be opened." You used to tell the lame, Isaiah 35:6, "The lame shall skip," and you used to comfort him, Job 4:4, "You have strengthened the feeble knees." But now that He touched you (with chastisements) you are afraid, Job 4:5, "But now it has come to you and you are weary, it touches you and you are afraid." Job 4:6, "Is not your fear of God your confidence, and your hope the integrity of your ways?"...You have said, "I am a righteous man and why does He afflict me?" (I say) Job 4:7, "Remember, I pray, whoever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright cut off?" Noah, who was

righteous, was saved from his generation. Abraham was saved from the furnace, Isaac was saved from the knife, Jacob was saved from the angel, and Moses was saved from Pharaoh's sword; (thus), Job 4:7, "Whoever perished being innocent?" And He saved Israel from Egypt and destroyed the Egyptians, Job 4:8, "They that plow iniquity, and sow mischief, reap the same." Job 4:9, "By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of His anger are they consumed," as it is said, Exodus 15:10, "You blasted with Your wind and the sea covered them." Similarly, all the wicked who shall arise; (i.e.,) Job 4:10,11, "The lion roars, and the fierce lion howls, yet the teeth of the young lions are broken. The old lion perishes for lack of prey, and the lioness' whelps are scattered abroad." Job said to him "Look at your father Esau." He responded, "I have nothing to do with him, for, Ezek. 18:20, 'The son does not bear the father's guilt.'...Job said to him, "So what are you here for? (lit. what is yours?)" (He answered), Job 4:11, "Now a word was secretly brought to me, and my ear received a whisper of it." I am a prophet and I have nothing to do with him (Esau), (but I have come to) rebuke you with, Job 4:12, "Thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men." God said to Eliphaz, "you have rebuked my servant Job; (therefore), I shall bring forth (lit. stand up) a prophet from you who will speak of your father's retribution in a vision, as it is said, Obadiah 1:1, "The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord concerning Edom."...

A major flaw in Job's clothing of righteousness was his inability to accept divine chastisements.

Hence, Eliphaz rebuked Job for thinking that He is like Abraham, "Are your deeds like Abraham's? Job 4:2, 'If one tests you, will you be weary?' Abraham passed ten tests, but you are weary after one test!"

The exegesis of R. Berachya is complex. Eliphaz

rebuked Job for thinking that he was like Abraham on the basis of Job 30:19, "He has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes." וְהָיִיתִי כִּדְּמָעִים is understood as a reference to Abraham's self appraisal in Gen. 18:27.

R. Beraḥya said: וְהָיִיתִי כִּדְּמָעִים, reverse the order of the verse and read, "I have become like dust and ashes," before, "He has cast me into the mire." Having reversed the order of the verse, R. Beraḥya gives it another meaning. Because Job compared himself to Abraham, וְהָיִיתִי כִּדְּמָעִים, he became כִּדְּמָעִים. Because Job thought that he was like Abraham who passed ten tests, while he could not pass even one, he was judged like the generation which built the tower of Babel. That is, Job 30:19 uses the word וְהָיִיתִי, and so does Gen. 11:3. Thus, because Job thought that he was like וְהָיִיתִי כִּדְּמָעִים, he was judged like כִּדְּמָעִים.

Job had comforted the blind, the lame, and the deaf, but when God touched him with chastisements, he could not pass his test. Instead, he maintained his righteousness and asked to know why God afflicted him! Eliphaz responds by pointing out that no innocent man perished; Abraham, Issac, Jacob, Moses, and Israel were all saved. Similarly, getting back to the question raised in the וְהָיִיתִי כִּדְּמָעִים section, God will consume all the wicked, Edom included, according to divine justice and plan.

Thus, we see that Job questioned why he was afflicted and was answered. God's ways are just and orderly. God knows what He is doing. Thus, Job should not ask why he is afflicted. Rather, let him accept the chastisements of God, and if he is really innocent, he will not perish!

Our Amoraic passage is evidence for a determinant of the rabbinic view of Job. The rabbis had accepted theological views concerning God's justice and acceptance of chastisements. Job does not accept.

Further evidence for this view is contained in a passage from Pesiqta Rabbati.<sup>5</sup> The passage has as its central theme, "Happy is the man, who, when chastisements befall him, controls his anger and does not complain<sup>6</sup> concerning the divine attribute of justice."

R. Hanina b. Papa, an Amora, then applies this statement to Job and says, "If Job had controlled his anger and had not complained concerning the attribute of justice when the chastisements came upon him, he would have reached a higher and more praiseworthy level."

And what is that level? "If Job had not complained, (then) as we now say in the 'Prayer' (שמונה עשרה), 'God of Abraham, God of Issac, God of Jacob,' we would have said, 'God of Job.'"

The Pesiqta Rabbati passage continues:

When God consulted with the holy ones of above, He said to them, "This my servant Job, has four great characteristics, Job 1:1, 'A whole hearted, upright man, fearing God, and shunning evil.' Let all these chastisements come upon him: if he accepts them, and does not complain, I shall cause my name to rest on him as I caused my name to rest on the forefathers." Job did not (accept without complaining). When the chastisements came upon him, he rebelled (kicked) and said, Job 23:2, "Even today is my complaint bitter; my hand has become heavy because of my groaning." God immediately said to him, "Job, see how you have discredited (lit. darkened) the counsel I had with the ones above!" (That is), Job 38:1, "And God answered from the whirlwind and said." And what did he say? Job 38:2, "Who is this that discredits (lit. darkens) counsel by words without knowledge!" (That is), how have you darkened My counsel "with words without knowledge," with the words which you brought forth from your mouth! You said, Job 23:4, "I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments," (That is), if I (Job) could grab hold of Him, what could He answer me (concerning my outcry relating to His unwarranted testing of me)?!...

Notice the exegesis on Job 38:2. "Who darkens counsel by words without knowledge!" is applied to the counsel that God gave concerning Job. God said that He would test Job, and if Job passed the tests by accepting the chastisements, God's name would rest upon Job. But, by not accepting, Job darkened (I translate: discredited) God's counsel.

It is clear that this passage attempts to place God's actions within an acceptable framework. That is, God did not indiscriminately test Job. Instead, He saw that Job had certain praiseworthy character-

istics and was prepared to rest His name upon him, if Job would accept the chastisements.

It is also clear that Job's function was to justify the ways of God! That is, if Job did accept the chastisements, Job would prove God's counsel in deciding to test Job. By failing to accept, Job discredited God's actions.

Bichler states, "An original idea seems to be the duty of the righteous to justify God in affliction, an obligation so prominent in Rabbinic statements of the first and second centuries."<sup>7</sup> Whereas it is clear that the sages in our Pesiqta passage lived after the second century<sup>8</sup>, it is quite possible that an idea prominent in the first and second centuries has weight in the third centuries. If so, we have discovered, at least according to this Pesiqta Rabbati passage, that another of Job's defects was his failure to justify God through his acceptance of chastisements.

#### Job Spoke Offensively

Gen. Rabbah 49:9 states:

R. Levi said: two men said the same thing, Abraham and Job. Abraham said, "Far be it that You slay the righteous with the wicked," Gen. 18:25. Job said, "It is the same: therefore, I say that He destroys both wicked and righteous," Job 9:22. Abraham was rewarded for it, and Job was punished for it. (Why)? Abraham spoke deliberately while Job spoke rashly; i.e., Job 9:22.

In order to determine the meaning of this pass-

age the Hebrew must be clarified. The Hebrew is:

אֶתְּכָּה אֶתְּכָה אֶתְּכָה אֶתְּכָה אֶתְּכָה.

I have translated on the basis of Jastrow and Theodor-Albeck. Jastrow gives the translation which I have adopted.<sup>9</sup>

Theodor-Albeck's notes to Gen. Rabbah 49:9 are extensive. The notes reveal that manuscripts read אֶתְּכָה אֶתְּכָה אֶתְּכָה. That phrase clearly means, "Abraham spoke deliberately." The note also points out that אֶתְּכָה can be used in the sense of רָשָׁע. As such it means unripe, sour, or rash; the word denotes a repulsive acid taste.<sup>10</sup>

Jastrow points out that אֶתְּכָה is used in that sense in the Talmuds and in the Sifre.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, on the basis of the above evidence, I suggest that the above translation manifests the correct meaning of the passage. The essential difference between Abraham's statement and Job's was that Job spoke offensively, in an unacceptable and unaccepting manner. Abraham spoke with respect.

This clearly fits into rabbinic thought concerning chastisements and divine justice. We see that Job differed from Abraham in these areas. He refused to accept: he complained; he demanded to know why. Gen. Rabbah 49:9 adds one additional factor. Job was bitter and offensive; his remarks were understood by the sages as containing the repulsive

acidity of unripe fruit.

Job Blasphemed

Bab. Bava Bathra 16a-16b states:

"In all this Job did not sin with his lips," Job 2:10. Raba said: he did not sin with his lips, but he did sin with his heart. What did he say (that showed that he harbored sinful thoughts)?<sup>12</sup> "The earth is given into the hands of the wicked; He covers the faces of the judges; if it be not so, where and who is he?", Job 9:24. Raba said (that) Job sought to turn the dish upside down. Abaye said: Job was referring only to Satan. The same difference is found between Tannaim. "The earth is given into the hands of the wicked." R. Eliezer said (that) Job sought to turn the dish upside down. R. Joshua said to him: Job was only referring to the Satan. "Although You know that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of Your hand," Job 10:7. Raba said: Job sought to exculpate the whole world. He said: Sovereign of the Universe, You have created the ox with cloven hoofs, and You have created the ass with whole hoofs; You have created Paradise and You have created Gehinnom; You have created righteous men, and You have (also) created wicked men, and who can prevent You? His companions answered him: "Yea, you do away with fear, and (you) restrain devotion from God," Job 15:4. If God created the evil inclination, He also created the Torah as its antidote...."O, that my vexation were but weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together," Job 6:2. Rab said: dust should be put in the mouth of Job, because he makes himself the colleague of heaven. "Would that there were an umpire between us, that he might lay his hand upon us both," Job 9:33. Rab said: dust should be placed in the mouth of Job; is there a servant who argues with his master?... "As the cloud is consumed and vanishes, so he that goes down to Sheol shall come up no more," Job 7:9. Raba said: this shows that Job denied the resurrection of the dead. "For He breaks me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause," Job



9:17. Rabbah said: Job blasphemed with (mention of) a tempest, and with a tempest, as it is written, "For He breaks me with a tempest," Job 9:17. Job said to God: perhaps a tempest has passed before You and caused You to confuse אֱלֹהִים with אִי. He was answered through a tempest, as it is written, "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, ...Gird up now your loins like a man, for I will demand of you and you declare unto Me," Job 38:1,3. I have created many hairs in man; for every hair I have created a separate groove, so that two should not suck from the same groove, for if two were to suck from the same groove they would impair the sight of a man. I do not confuse one groove with another; and shall I confuse אֱלֹהִים with אִי?...

This long passage contains material similar to what we have already encountered. It also contains thoughts that we have not encountered before.

We have already seen that Job refused to accept the divine chastisements. Exod. Rabbah 30:11 depicted Job as a drunken palace guard who attacked the king; Bava Bathra presents Job as a "blasphemer" who accused God of confusing Job with His enemy<sup>13</sup> (אֱלֹהִים with אִי).

There are many passages which depict Job as arguing with God.<sup>14</sup> Bava Bathra relates the similar teachings of Rab that dust should be put in Job's mouth because he argued with his Master.

Bava Bathra contains some new elements. Gen. Rabbah 49:9 informed us that Job spoke rashly. Bava Bathra gives details. Raba expresses the view that Job sought to turn the dish upside down. Abaye re-

sponds that Job was only referring to Satan when he said, "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, He covers the faces of the judges; if it be no so, where and who is he?"

The interpretation of this verse as a reference to Satan leads to the conclusion that Raba considered it a direct frontal attack upon God himself! This is a new element. Job is not merely attacking God's justice; he is attacking God Himself!

Raba explained that "Although You know that I am not wicked and there is none that can deliver out of Your hand" is Job's attempt to "exculpate the whole world." What does the last phrase mean? The passage makes it clear. The context of Raba's explanation of what Job said leads to the conclusion that Job was attacking God for determining that Job would err and then punishing him for that error. God implanted the evil inclination within man; it prompts man to sin; thus God is ultimately responsible for man's sin! This is also a new element in the description of Job's defects. Not only did he speak rashly and argue with his Master, but he attacked God Himself by blaming God for the impulse which causes man to sin. Where is man's freedom? God is responsible for man's sin! Yet God punishes!?

A third new element is contained in Raba's statement that Job also denied the resurrection of

the dead. There is no other reference to this in the other passages studied for this thesis.

Thus, we conclude that Bava Bathra makes the following points. Job argued with his Master. He accused him of confusing <sup>אֱלֹהִים</sup> with <sup>אֱדֹמָיִם</sup>.

Also, Job attacked God Himself. He accused God of creating the impulse for sin and then punishing man for sinning!

Job attacked accepted rabbinic doctrine concerning acceptance of divine justice and the workings of divine justice. He did it rashly; he blasphemed. These are the major defects, the blemishes, which marred his righteousness.

Bava Bathra 16a-16b obviously is Amoraic. However, it is interesting that they sight a Tannaitic disagreement similar to the Amoraic disagreement concerning whether Job referred Job 9:24, "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked" to God or to Satan. It was then mentioned that R. Eliezer and R. Joshua also differed on the same issue. This is important because we see that Tannaim did discuss the issue. Thus, we see that R. Akiba in Semaphoth 8 is not alone in viewing Job as one who <sup>נִבְּלָה</sup>, rebelled, and spoke offensively. We see that R. Eliezer viewed Job as referring Job 9:24 to God.

### Summary

What can we conclude from the passages studied

in this chapter?

Job was righteous. He failed to pass his test. He was unlike Abraham in this respect. He was also unlike Abraham because he reproved, argued with God and used offensive language. He blasphemed against God. He denied accepted rabbinic thought concerning divine justice, Torah as the antidote to the evil inclination, and resurrection of the dead.

We also have clear evidence that Tannaim viewed Job as an aguer, a rebel. We have the opinions of R. Akiba and R. Eliezer.<sup>15</sup>

We also have discovered similar Amoraic depictions of Job. We have the view of R. Levi in Gen. Rab. 49:9 that Job spoke rashly, and the views of Rab, Raba, and Rabbah in Bava Bathra. We also have passages in the Pesiqtot and in Exod. Rab 33:11 that Job rebelled and challenged God's justice.

Thus, it is clear that the Rabbis did view Job as one who rebelled, spoke offensively, and blasphemed.

## CONCLUSION

Having perused four separate areas of interest, what can be concluded? Further limiting the question, what are the dominant themes which have been discovered?

First, it is clear that Job is not a major subject within rabbinic literature. Abraham, or Moses, for example, serve as focal points for midrash. Job is not a focal point. There are only two passages that have Job as their central issue; i.e., Gen. Rabbah 57:4, and its parallels, and Bava Bathra 15a-16b. In other passages, comments on Job are manifestations of larger themes; e.g., when pointing out Job's rebelliousness, Semahoth 8 does not deal with Job per se as an area of major interest. Instead, its comments on Job fall into a pattern of thought concerning chastisements.

Second, comments on Job do fall into a number of larger patterns of rabbinic thought. When the Amoraim in Bava Bathra discussed the dating of Job and the question of his Jewishness, they did so on the basis of their notions concerning the time when prophecy became limited to Jews. Placing Job in the time of Moses may have been prompted by the necessity to put God's actions into an acceptable ethical framework. Furthermore, the other possible explanation for placing

Job in the time of Moses may be the desire to make Israel the focal point in a way analogous to rabbinic interpretation of Jonah. Jonah's actions are explained in a way that makes Israel (and not Nineveh) Jonah's main interest.

The depiction of Job's righteousness manifests the characteristics which the sages approved. The delineation of Job's defects fits into the rabbinic pattern of thought concerning chastisements.

Thus, it is clear that the comments on Job fit into several patterns of rabbinic thought. Those accepted patterns of thought are the determinants for the rabbinic views of Job.

It has not been the purpose of this paper to investigate the historical or theological causes for the development of those principles. What prompted a concern for determining the time after which Jews alone were prophets? Although such an interest has not been central in this paper, I suggest that there are historic and economic causes for the rabbinic attitude concerning chastisements. To be more specific, the sages cited in this paper lived in centuries marked by Roman oppression, war, rebellion, and the Hadrianic laws. Therefore, it is possible that such conditions sired the rabbinic attitude toward suffering and acceptance of divine judgments. Job's non-acceptance may have been a threat to a real

life situation. People were suffering, accepting, and living according to principles which they considered to be divinely ordained. A rebellious attitude, a rash tongue, a Job-like blasphemy was not the answer for a people in such conditions. To survive demanded acceptance of the judgment, not rebellion like Job.

Thus, the rabbinic view of Job may have been determined by more than a theological antipathy toward the ideas in the book. They may have been prompted by a real need of their time to strengthen a Weltanschauung that would give the people more hope. To be told that the evil that was then happening was part of God's divine plan, and that one should accept, for a variety of reasons, is better consolation and inspiration than the skeptical, offensive attitude of Job. Hence, it may have been a conscious effort on the part of the sages to depict Job as a drunken palace guard, as an irresponsible dust-thrower. The motivation may have been a conscious attempt to discourage such approaches by their contemporary Jews.

The above is a possibility. But I do feel that there is more to the rabbinic dislike of Job's attitudes than theology.

Fourth, there is a history within a rabbinic view of Job. Thus, we saw in Chapter I that there

were Tannaim who viewed Job as a Jew as well as Tannaim who viewed Job as a non-Jew. But, it was the Amoraim in Bava Bathra who associated the issue of Job's Jewishness with his status as a prophet. Although I do not know why this occurred, the change in century and location may be linked with associating Job's Jewishness with the question of his status as a prophet.

Another example of the history of views of Job is the development of R. Akiba's description of Job's attitude toward suffering. The Pesiqta Rabbati describes Job as <sup>וְהָיָה</sup> and delineates in detail his arguments with God. Bava Bathra calls Job a <sup>שֶׁהָיָה</sup> and discusses in great detail the extent of his blasphemy and non-acceptance. R. Akiba's views in Semahoth 8 is the earliest passage showing Job who <sup>הָיָה</sup>. The later passages are expansions of Akiba's thought and other Tannaitic attitudes toward suffering.

What is the overall view of Job gained from this study? Despite the variety of opinions, and noting that there are a number of theological views that serve as determinants for specific views, it is clear that the sages were interested in the question of whether Job was a Jew or not. There is evidence that Job was converted by Dinah. There is also evidence that Job was a non-Jew who lived at the time of Moses.

Job was a righteous man, <sup>אֲדָמָה</sup>, a person who



acted *Job's* *His*. His prayers were accepted, his actions in judging and caring for the needy were exemplary, and his concern for wayfarers and students was excelled only by Abraham.

But Job erred by refusing to accept divine judgment. He rebelled. He blasphemed. He used offensive language. And, in the moment of pain, he denied basic doctrines, like the resurrection of the dead and divine providence.

Thus, it can be concluded that this study shows that the sages abundantly depicted Job's errors. They were interested in revealing how Job negated their concept of suffering. That concept involves rabbinic thought on life after death, resurrection, divine providence and judgment, and piety. Job was an iconoclast; he may have been a threat to their pattern of thought and to their way of life.

## INDEX I

## WHERE JOB VERSES ARE IN THIS THESIS

(The first two numbers refer to chapter and verse; the following numbers refer to the page in the thesis.)

1:1, 11, 2, 23, 25, 39, 51.	15:4, 54.
1:4, 36.	16:11, 21, 22, 25.
1:5, 5, 36, 37.	16:12, 23.
1:6, 37.	16:17, 35.
1:17, 5.	19:23, 4, 30.
1:20, 1, 2, 4.	23:2, 51.
2:3, 22.	23:4, 17, 51.
2:5, 39.	27:12, 5, 6.
2:9, 14.	29:13, 31, 32, 33.
2:10, 5, 54.	29:14, 29, 30.
4:1-7, 47, 48.	29:16, 31.
4:8, 47, 48.	29:17, 34, 35.
4:10-11, 47, 48.	29:19, 42.
6:2, 54.	31:1, 39.
6:14, 14, 16.	31:6, 41.
7:9, 54.	31:19, 31.
9:17, 55.	31:10-20, 41, 47, 49.
9:22, 52.	38:2, 51.
9:24, 54, 57.	38:1 and 3, 55.
9:33, 54.	42:10, 38.
10:2-3, 44.	42:14, 38.
10:7, 54.	42:15, 5.

## INDEX II

## WHERE PASSAGES ARE FOUND IN THIS WORK

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Avoth DeRabbi Natan, I,<br>Chapter I, pp. 12-13 is found<br>herein pp. 39-40. | Gen. Rabbah 80:4,<br>14, 15.                               |
| Avoth DeRabbi Natan, I,<br>Chapter VII, p. 33 is found<br>herein pp. 41-42.   | Levit. Rabbah 7:3,<br>36-37, 40.                           |
| Bab. Bava Bathra 15a-15b,<br>4-13, 19, 25, 26, 59.                            | Mayan Ganim, p. 92,<br>31, 32, 40.                         |
| Bab. Bava Bathra 16a,<br>30, 33, 40.  | Mekhilta DeRabbi Yishmael,<br>Pisqa, 12:1, pp. 4-5,<br>24. |
| Bab. Bava Bathra 16a-16b,<br>54, 55, 57, 59.                                  | Midrash Psalms 24:1,<br>29.                                |
| Eccles. Rabbah 7:8,<br>38.  | Mishnah Eduyoth 2:10,<br>39.                               |
| Exod. Rabbah 1:9,<br>20.  | Pesiqta Rabbati, 33, pp.<br>149b-150a,<br>34-35.           |
| Exod. Rabbah 21:7,<br>23.   | Pesiqta Rabbati, 47, pp.<br>189b-190a,<br>50-51.           |
| Exod. Rabbah 22:4,<br>35.   |  |
| Exod. Rabbah 30:11,<br>45, 55.  | Semahoth 8,<br>44, 45.                                     |
| Deut. Rabbah 2:4,<br>17, 19, 28.  | Tanhuma Buber, Wayishlah,<br>8, pp. 166-167,<br>46, 47.    |
| Gen. Rabbah 19:12,<br>14.   | Tanhuma Buber, Wayishlah,<br>19, p. 175,<br>14, 15.        |
| Gen. Rabbah 49:9,<br>52, 53, 55.  |  |
| Gen. Rabbah 57:4,<br>1-3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 21,<br>24, 26, 27, 59.             | Tanhuma Buber, Toldoth,<br>13, p. 130,<br>42.              |
| Gen. Rabbah 76:23,<br>14, 15, 16.   | Yalqut Job, 900,<br>14.                                    |

Yer. Hagigah 77b,  
38.

Yer. Sotah 20c-d,  
2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 21,  
24, 26, 27.

# Yer. Hagigah 77b, 38.

1. אמר ר' חנינא בן חנניא  
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11. אמר ר' חנינא בן חנניא

12. אמר ר' חנינא בן חנניא

## FOOTNOTES

Introduction

1. A. Marmorstein, The Old Rabbinic Concept of God, Vol. I, London, Oxford University Press, 1927, pp. 194-195. He cites three passages: Lam Rabbah 3:1, Midrash Psalms 102:8, and Bab. Pesachim 26b. They compare Job and Israel, or Jerusalem. They show that Israel will be rewarded in the end for enduring its chastisements as did Job. However, I will show in Chapter IV that the dominant theme is that Job did not bear his chastisements; he rebelled and blasphemed.

Chapter I--Was Job a Jew?

1. An anonymous Baraitha in Bab. Bava Bathra 15b states that Job was a non-Jew who thought that he would be rewarded in this world. When he was chastised, he rebelled. God therefore doubled his reward in this world but would not let him enter the next world.
2. Bab. Bava Bathra 15b.
3. Exodus 9:19.
4. Rashi comments on Num. 13:20 and explains that when Moses said to the spies, "See if there is wood in," he meant Job, the man of the land of Shinar. Also, see the comment of the Tosafists to Bava Bathra 15b beginning with: "R. Hananel's exclamation." Both Rashi and the Tosafists apparently understood Raba's statement to imply that Raba viewed Job as a non-Jew.
5. Bab. Bava Bathra 15b.
6. Ibid.
7. The pagination differs in the Vilna and Warsaw editions. Gen. Rabbah 76:23 in the Vilna edition is Gen. Rabbah 76:9 in the Warsaw edition.
8. Gen. Rabbah 19:12 has parallels: Gen. Rabbah 57:4, and Yer. Sotah 20c-d. Also, Bava Bathra 15b states that Job was married to Dinah; however, it attributes that view to "some say."
9. Tanhuma Buber, Wayishlah, 19, p. 173, note 77.

10. The Hebrew reads: נח.
11. J. Theodor-H. Albeck (eds.), Bereschit Rabba, Vol. I, Berlin, 1912-1929, p. 908.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. M. M. Kasher, משנת ר' יוחנן, Jerusalem, 1927, p. 1281, note 107.
15. J. Theodor-H. Albeck, loc. cit..
16. Ibid.
17. M. M. Kasher, loc. cit..
18. Gen. Rabbah (Warsaw edition) 76:9.
19. The Warsaw edition of Deut. Rabbah 2:4 reads: ו. The Vilna edition reads: Rabbi Johanan. Meharzo, in his comment to Deut. Rabbah 2:4, Vilna edition, accepts that reading. This Rabbi Johanan cannot be the same one who taught that Job was a Jewish sage. That view is reported in three places: Gen. Rabbah 57:4, Yer. Soṭah 20c-d, and Bava Bathra 15a. Thus, that view is well supported. It is possible that the reading ו could have stood for Joshua, etc., and that someone erroneously understood it to denote Rabbi Johanan.
20. See above, Chapter III and Chapter IV.
21. Bab. Bava Bathra 15b.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.

#### Chapter II--When Did Job Live?

1. See below, p. 11.
2. Bab. Sanhedrin 106a and Bab. Soṭah 11a are the parallels. Soṭah 11a attributes the statement to: "R. Ḥiyya b. Aba (who) said that R. Simai said...." There is a difference in attributing the statement to different sages; R. Simon or R. Simai. It suffices for our purposes to note that either sage is an Amora.

3. Bab. Soṭah 11a discusses Mishnah Soṭah I:7-9.
4. Yer. Soṭah 20c-d contains the following passage:  
 "Yishmael taught: Job was one of Pharaoh's advisors and one of the grandees of his household....R. Jose b. Halafṭa said that he (Job) was there when they descended to Egypt and died when they ascended. It is a parable to a shepherd: a wolf came and attacked his sheep....He caused a he-goat to stand against it, as it is written, Job 16:11, 'He delivered me to the ungodly.'" Both sages are Tannaim. Yer. Soṭah 20c-d also contains Akiba's view that Elihu was Balaam. If so, Job his contemporary, is viewed as living in the time of Moses. Hence, it is clear that some Tannaim did view Job as a contemporary of Moses.
5. The reading in Gen. Rabbah 57:4 and Yalqut Job 891 differs slightly. The Yalqut reads: one limb. The point is the same in both readings. Also, Ḥama's parable is similar in point although different figures are used.
6. Bab. Bava Bathra 16a.
7. Hermann L. Strack, Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash, Philadelphia, Meridian Books and Jewish Publication Society, 1959, pp. 123, 125.
8. Yer. Soṭah 20c-d.
9. Exod. Rabbah 1:19.
10. Mekhilta DeRabbi Yishmael (ed. Horovitz), Pisqa, 12:1, pp. 4-5.
11. Ibid.
12. See below, pp. 15-16.

### Chapter III--Job's Righteousness, נִיְיָ3

1. William G. Braude's translation of this phrase, based on Yalqut Job, 917, and Jastrow, Vol. I, p. 659 has been adopted. His translation is also the basis for the majority of the translation of this passage. See his work: The Midrash on Psalms, Vol. I, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959, p. 336, and note 1.
2. Midrash Psalms (ed. S. Buber), 24:1, pp. 202-203.

3. See below, p. 18.
4. Mayan Ganim (ed. S. Buber), p. 92. This work is a commentary on the book of Job by R. Missim Masnuth of Aleppo, twelfth century. Buber comments on our passage, p. 92: "I have not found (the source of) the entire statement. But there is no doubt that the compiler had some lost Midrash before him; perhaps it was the Yalqut."
5. Pesiqta Rabbati 33 (ed. M. Friedmann), pp. 149b-150a.
6. Another parallel in Ruth Rabbah 6:5 adds that God blessed Job's end because of his repentance.
7. A. Büchler, Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinical Literature of the First Century, London, Oxford University Press, 1928, p. 131.
8. Avoth DeRabbi Natan (ed. S. Schechter), Version I, Chapter I, pp. 12-13. The parallels are: Tanhuma Buber, Wayishlah, 12, p. 170, and Tanhuma, Stettin, 1865, Wayishlah, 5, p. 42.
9. See above, Chapter IV.
10. Avoth DeRabbi Natan (ed. S. Schechter), Version I, Chapter VII, p. 33.

#### Chapter IV--Job's Defects

1. Tractate Semahoth (ed. M. Higger), p. 156. The parallels are: Yalqut Job, 505 and Midrash Psalms 26:2. Midrash Psalms used different proof texts in two cases; however, it does use Job 10:2,3, to prove that Job rebelled. The passage is also anonymous, while Semahoth states that Akiba, a Tanna, is the teacher.
2. A. Büchler, op. cit., p. 181, and note 3.
3. Exod. Rabbah 30:11.
4. Tanhuma Buber, Wayishlah, 8, pp. 166-167.
5. Pesiqta Rabbati (ed. M. Friedmann), 47, pp. 189b-190a.
6. The Hebrew is: וְיִשְׁלַח. Büchler, op. cit., pp. 182-184, and notes, points out that the phrase is used mainly in the Pesiqta Rabbati (although it does appear elsewhere). He contends that it has the same meaning as וְיִשְׁלַח.



7. A. Büchler, op. cit., pp. 173-174.
8. Hermann L. Strack, op. cit., pp. 125 and 127 for the dating of R. Asi and R. Hanina b. Papa.
9. Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature, New York, Pardes, 1950, Vol. I, p. 199 under לִּפְתָּח, and Vol. II, p. 132 under לִּפְתָּח.
10. J. Theodor-H. Albeck, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 109.
11. Marcus Jastrow, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 132 under לִּפְתָּח.
12. The majority of this translation is based upon the translation in the Soncino Talmud. I have incorporated the point made in parentheses because it is clarifying. Is there a contradiction in saying that Job did not sin with his lips, and then quoting what his lips uttered? If you say that Job sinned in his thoughts, you have a way out. Whatever his lips uttered shows that he harbored evil thoughts. See the footnotes in: Isidore Epstein (ed. and tr.), The Babylonian Talmud, London, The Soncino Press, 1939, in Bava Bathra 16a-16b.
13. Rabbah in Bab. Bava Bathra 16a or Raba in Bab. Niddah 52a.
14. See Tanhuma Buber, Tazria, 8, p. 35, and Pesiqta Rabbati, pp. 124b-125a, as well as Pesiqta DeRav Kahana, Shema Rabbati, 32, pp. 187b-188a.
15. We also have the view in Sifre DeBe Rab, Numbers, (ed. M. Friedmann), Shema Rabbati, 12:9, Pisqa 104, 28a that God informed Miriam of her sin so that she would not speak like Job. This shows that the Tanna, R. Nathan, did not approve of Job's behavior. See Büchler, op. cit., p. 181, note 1. We also have the opinion of R. Shimon b. Yohai in Levit. Rabbah 4:6 that Job denied the communal effects of his error. Job is there described as one who drilled a hole in his part of the boat and told the others not to worry; he was only drilling in his part of the boat. They informed him that he extends his sin to them.

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Mayan Ganim. Ed. S. Buber, Berlin, H. Itzkowski, 1889.

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Pesiqta DeRav Kahana. Ed. S. Buber, New York, Om Publishing Co., 1949.

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Tractate Semahoth. Ed. M. Higger, New York, Bloch Publishing Co., 1931.

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Tanhuma. Stettin, 1865.

Tanhuma. (S. Euber, 2 vols.), Ed. Rabbi H. Horowitz,  
New York, 1946.

Tosefta. Ed. M. S. Zuckermann, Trier, 1982.

Yalqut Shimoni. (Two volume edition), Vilna, 1898.

### Secondary Sources

William G. Braude (ed. and tr.). The Midrash on Psalms.  
2 vols. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959.

This work offers a fine translation with helpful notes which give parallels and elucidating information.

A. Büchler. Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinical Literature of the First Century. London, Oxford University Press, 1928.

This is a worthwhile source. It has a section dealing with Job's attitude toward suffering and his rebellion. Some of his footnotes helped me discover more primary sources. However, the book suffers in two ways. It lacks clear organization, and the author has an obvious tendency to build his case on supposition without much evidence to concretize his contentions.

Isidore Epstein (ed. and tr.). The Babylonian Talmud.  
London, The Soncino Press, 1939.

The translations are reliable and clear in most cases. At times the work interprets within the text and footnotes; this is helpful. However, certain Hebrew or Aramaic terms must be checked; there is a tendency to err in translating the clearest meaning of the original.

Louis Ginzberg. The Legends of the Jews. 8 vols.  
Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1938.

Index and text are valuable. However, the reader must be careful in determining the source of a legend; i.e., is it from a Midrash or an Apocryphal work? Hence, notes must be carefully read.

Emil G. Hirsch, and Max Seligsohn. "(Job) in Rabbinical Literature." (Jewish Encyclopedia Vol. VII).  
New York, Ktav Publishing Co., 1964.

This article lists the rabbinic comments and briefly comments on their main points. Since it makes no attempt to probe why the sages held such views, its value is minimal.

Aaron Hyman. אורח חיים. Tel Aviv, Dvir, 1939.

This is an excellent tool. With few errors, it informs the reader where any biblical verse is found in rabbinic literature, and later works, including the Kuzari and Moreh Nevukhim.

Marcus Jastrow. A Dictionary of the Targumim, The Talmud Babli, and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature. New York, Pardes, 1950.

This is an excellent tool that is generally reliable.

Menahem Mendel Kasher. מנחת מנחם. Jerusalem, 1927.

This work contains significant rabbinic comments on Pentateuchal verses. The notes are clarifying.

Alexander Kohut. פירוש חזקוני. Hebraischer Verlag "Menorah" G.m.b.H. Wiln-Berlin, Vindokona, 1926.

This is very helpful in translating and discovering the correct meaning of a word. The work also points out parallels.

Jacob Z. Lauterbach. Rabbinic Essays. Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College Press, 1951.

This work was helpful in providing a background of rabbinic attitudes.

A. Marmorstein. The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God. Vol. I. London, Oxford University Press, 1927.

The book has useful information on the concepts of God and suffering. As such, it helped provide a general background, but the author did not deal with Job in depth.

C. G. Montefiore, and H. Loewe (eds.). A Rabbinic Anthology. Philadelphia, Meridian Books and Jewish Publication Society, 1963.

The section on suffering and sin helped develop my general background. The work is generally good. However, particular translations and specific comments must be checked.

George Foot Moore. Judaism (In the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim).

3 vols. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958.

This work is excellent. It is clear, comprehensible, and well organized. It enriched my general understanding of rabbinic attitudes.

Raphaelo Rabinovicz. מגוון מלכות (Variae Lectiones in Mishnam et in Talmud Babylonicum). Munich, H. Roesl, 1867-1897.

This is a basic tool. It was most useful in treating Bava Bathra 15a-16b. It gives the variant readings of the various manuscripts.

Solomon Schechter. Aspects of Rabbinic Theology. New York, Schocken Books, 1961.

This work enriched my general background. The chapters on sin and atonement, suffering, and acceptance of divine judgments were helpful.

Hermann L. Strack. Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash. Philadelphia, Meridian Books and Jewish Publication Society, 1959.

This is the best source in English for quickly ascertaining the date of a certain sage. Introductory remarks on the primary sources are helpful and clear.

J. Theodor-H. Albeck (eds.). Genesit Rabba. Berlin, 1912-1929.

I have classified this superb work under secondary sources because the comments of the editors were the most important facet of their work. This work has to be consulted by any student analyzing a passage from Genesit Rabbah. The comments give variant readings and clarify the exegesis and meaning of the passages.

I. H. Weiss. מגוון מלכות. 5 vols. Vienna, 1883.

This work was most informative. It contains information about the times of the sages. It helps the student understand the sages, their students, and some of their views on basic issues.