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**THE BOOK OF JOB – THE REAL MEANING OF JUSTICE, FAITH
AND EVILNESS? A BIBLE SCRIPTURE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
ABOUT MAN’S RELATIONSHIP TO GOD, FAITH, EVILNESS
AND THE MEANING OF JUSTICE**

Christensen C.S.

The Book of Job and the story of Joseph, Son of Jacob, are both renowned as some of the greatest masterpieces, not only in the Bible, but also in all of the world literature ever. The text was written down in the sphere of ancient Israel’s perception of culture, religion and understanding of life. However, the Book of Job is one of the most mysterious scriptures in the Bible. Together with the two other Wisdom Books of the Old Testament – Proverbs and the Ecclesiastes – it is a unique text of the fundamental meaning of faith and justice in the Holy Book. In this article, the author tries to analyse some of the most profound theological and philosophical questions raised in the book of Job, by telling the story of Job from the land of Uz in the frame of the culture and religion of ancient Israel. Moreover, the question how the Book of Job is relevant for mankind in our days will be asked. The question will be tried answered through an analysis of the Russian movie “Leviathan” by the director Andrey Zvyagintsev.

Keywords: Book of Job, Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Josef, Leviathan, Book of Genesis, God, Elihu, Satan, justice, evilness, faith, guilt, trial of Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Old Testament, Judaism, Christianity, Andrey Zvyagintsev.

**КНИГА ИОВА – РЕАЛЬНЫЙ СМЫСЛ СПРАВЕДЛИВОСТИ, ВЕРЫ
И ЗЛА? БИБЛЕЙСКОЕ ПОВЕСТВОВАНИЕ В ВЕТХОМ ЗАВЕТЕ
ОБ ОТНОШЕНИИ ЧЕЛОВЕКА К БОГУ, ВЕРЕ, ЗЛУ
И ЗНАЧЕНИИ СПРАВЕДЛИВОСТИ**

Христенсен К.С.

Книга Иова и история Иосифа, сына Иакова, известны как одни из величайших шедевров не только Библии, но и во всей мировой литературы. Эти

тексты написаны в контексте восприятия культуры, религии и понимания жизни древнего Израиля. Тем не менее, книга Иова является одной из самых таинственных в Библии. Вместе с двумя другими книгами мудрости Ветхого Завета – Притчей и Экклезиастом – она представляет собой уникальный текст-основу фундаментальных знаний о смысле веры и справедливости в Священном Писании. В данной статье автор пытается проанализировать некоторые из наиболее глубоких теологических и философских вопросов, поднятых в книге Иова, рассказав историю Иова из земли Уц в рамках культуры и религии Древнего Израиля. Более того, поднят вопрос, насколько книга Иова актуальна для человечества в наши дни. Ответ на этот вопрос дает анализ российского фильма «Левиафан» режиссера Андрея Звягинцева.

Ключевое слово: книга Иова, книга Притчей, Экклезиаст, Иосиф, Левиафан, книга Бытия, Бог, Илия, Сатана, справедливость, зло, вера, вина, испытания Иова, Елифас, Вилдад, Софар, Ветхий Завет, иудаизм, христианство, Андрей Звягинцев.

Who is the author of the Book of Job? – Historical speculations

The Book of Job, possibly the strangest book in the Bible, is based on legends going back thousands of years, and is written in a very unusual form of Hebrew. Some researchers even argue that the text is originally written in Aramaic and not in Hebrew. The Book of Job is quite possibly the strangest book in the Hebrew Bible, and is notoriously difficult to date. In essence, Job is an essay on the problem of evil [6, s. 144)].

The Book of Job is characterized by the fact that there is no claim of authorship or date of composition. In the text, there are no explicit historical allusions that could assist in locating its original setting. To implicate this matter, the story is set outside Israel. Thereby, the Old Testament historical narratives cannot be used as a guide to the temporal background of the Book of Job. The fact, however, is that the originally story could be much older and could even be a several-thousand-year old legend. A legend, dating even back to the Sumer civilization (4500-1900 BC) [3, p. 11].

Since the story lacks any historical context and no historic individuals are mentioned, it is very hard to date. With this in mind, it is not surprising that evangelical scholars have suggested a wide variety of dates for the written book, ranging from the time of Moses, around 1.500 BC, to the eight century BC. nonevangelical scholars argue for dates well into the Persian period (600-300 BC).

In fact, archaeologists have uncovered quite a few written tales from the ancient Near East about gods punishing an upright man: they could be equivalent to Job in some ways, or even be the origin of the story. Such stories dating from as early as 4500 years ago have been found in ancient Egyptian, Akkadian and Sumerian. It is likely that in the very cosmopolitan world of the Persian period – sometime around 550 to 350 BC – a Jew, living anywhere from Egypt to Palestine and Babylonia, whose mother tongue was Aramaic, took one of these oral legends and wrote it in Hebrew. Who exactly he was we cannot know, but considering he wrote a book, he was probably a scribe.

The Jewish Talmud (redacted at about the year 500) has several versions of a possible author to the Book of Job. The Talmud (Bava Barta 14b) says it was written by Moses, but then on the next page (15a), rabbis Jonathan and Eliezer say Job was among those who returned from the Babylonian Exile in 538 BC, which was about seven centuries after Moses' supposed death. The very same page of Talmud suggests that Job is not a real person and that the whole book is just an allegory; also, that Job was the contemporary of Jacob or Abraham.

Modern biblical scholars on the other hand think they could have a clue. There are no historic reference points but they can analyse the language and theology, and compare them with other Hebraic writings of known provenance. Some researchers are even arguing that the text in the Book of Job was written originally in Aramaic.

The language in Job is unlike any other text or psalms found in the Bible, or outside it. True, the book is written in Hebrew, but it is very strange Hebrew indeed. It has more unique words than any other book of the Hebrew Bible. The language is archaic, which would indicate that it was very ancient: but Aramaic, which would make it relatively late, also heavily influences it.

However, there is no question that the book was already written by the second century BC since an Aramaic translation of the Book of Job was discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. This again supports dating the book to the early Second Temple period, as the belief in reward and punishment in the afterlife appears clearly for the first time in the Book of Daniel, in a section believed to have been written in the second century BC [9, p. 1-16].

Even if the story of Job was written down during the early Second Temple era (late 6th century BC to the early 4th century BC), that does not mean the story was a new one. In fact, we know that it was extremely ancient.

Ezekiel (about 622 to 570 BC) mentions Job together with Noah and Daniel as men of ancient renown (Ezekiel 14:14). This means that for Ezekiel, Job was one of those mythological characters that people told stories about throughout the Near East, and not particularly Jewish, just as a story of a Noah-like character appears in the Epic of Gilgamesh, and a mythical Daniel is known from the ancient Semitic city of Ugarit.

However, the role of Satan could play a role in the dating of the Book of Job. More telling are the religious beliefs presented in the book, which features Satan as a member of God's council. However, Satan is not mentioned in pre-exilic biblical books. That, taken alone, would indicate that the book was written after the Babylonian Exile [5, s. 259-260].

On the other hand, Satan is not presented as an all-powerful force of evil, as he is in Chronicles. As Chronicles is believed to have been written in the 4th century BC, Job would have been written before that. If anything, Job's Satan is most similar to the Satan of the Book of Zechariah, written in the early Second Temple period, which may indicate that Job was written during the same period – the late 6th century BC or the early fifth BC.

Similarly, the Book of Job does not mention reward and punishment in the afterlife. If the author had been aware of these beliefs, surely the possibility of Job receiving his just reward after death would have been presented.

Prologue – the story of Joseph, son of Jacob (Book of Genesis)

In the story of Joseph, son of Jacob, and his brethren in the Book of Genesis, chapter 39-50, the reader meets the pious and righteous Joseph, who must first go through so terribly very unbelievably evil before everything goes well again. He is sold as a slave by his other brothers and ends up in an Egyptian prison. However, because of his innocence, faith in and fear of God, he ends up surrounded by honour and as an Egyptian Prime Minister, so he can act as the benefactor of his brothers [4, s. 390].

At first glance, the narrative of Joseph resembles that of Job, who, even after undergoing severe suffering and humiliation, returns many of his former wealth and reputation. However, it is only at first glance. The equality is more overcharged. The Book of Job is a so-called frame story, with an introduction, chapter 1 and 2, and an end, chapter 42:7-17. Which the story of Joseph is not. That is, most of the Book of Job is about Job's desperate struggle to grasp God's apparent evil and unjust treatment of him, a battle that turns into a battle against evil and the unjust.

The characteristic of the story of Joseph is that it definitely wants something more than just to be a good story. It has a specific purpose or moral that can be learned from the story. When, after the many hardships and strange events, the brothers finally recognize Joseph, he says to them that they should not mourn for the fact that they sold him to Egypt in due time, for it was in fact God who sent him there to family life could be maintained for its time. Thus, we see how Joseph suggests the confused and irreversible events as deliberate acts of God, which in fact were intended to save the chosen people from destruction. God accomplishes His purpose regardless of human evil plans and actions, which God can even take in His plans and turn to good. Clearly, it emerges in the final chapter 50:20 in the Book of Genesis, where it is completely proverbial sounds: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive".

God, even where no one would have believed, still held all threads in his hand. The intentions of God and the intentions of men stand here completely unconcerned. God is the strongest and leads his plans through what people think or do, and so

comes that God's action is hidden from people. But in the case of the story of Joseph, it does not matter as long as one has the particular chosen one, that is, Joseph, who can decipher the incomprehensible events, can see their coherence and can put it all in the righteous world order. His bright faith is permeated with confidence that God turns everything to the best and that the world is and can only be just.

Wisdom Books

Historically, the story of Joseph belongs in the same context as the Book of Job; it belongs to the so-called Wisdom Books in the Old Testament. That are the Books of Proverbs, the Ecclesiastes and the Book of Job. To understand the last-mentioned book completely, we therefore has to start with the content of the Book of Proverbs and the Ecclesiastes.

What will happen when a prophetic person of the strange events, such as Joseph, is not present, like in the abovementioned story of Joseph, when man stands alone without explanation for all the incomprehensible? It is one of the fundamental questions in as well the Book of Job as in the other Wisdom Books.

Already in the Book of Proverbs, this question begins to emerge. Here, the above-mentioned question is attempted to be answered. In the book, we encounter a weak resignation in relation to Joseph's bright and optimistic conviction of God's good and just providence. Passages like the one's in Proverbs (16:9): "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his way", in Proverbs (20:24): "Man's going are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?" and in Proverbs (21:30-31): "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord. The horse is prepared against the day of battle; but safety is of the Lord". In other words, man's plans and actions are impotent to God's rule of everything. God acts completely freely and independently of man, and all the powers man possesses, spiritual as material, are nothing to God. The logic says well to man that God turns everything to the good of his faithful servants, for such must and must be, but in the Book of Proverbs, it is difficult to spot [1, p. 183; 5, s. 141-142; 7, s. 114-116; 9, p. 15].

However, the coherence of the existence and the creation of the aforementioned logic can be maintained and found by fearing God's wisdom.

Proverbs (2:5): “Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God” and Proverbs (9:10): “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding”. In the Ecclesiastes, however, the resignation has taken over. Also in this book, the Preacher preaches that the fear of the Lord will save you from the vanity and gives a meaning in the existence of God’s universe [1, p. 199; 9, p. 49-52].

In the Ecclesiastes, the reader sees what happens when man does not get a sense of life's strange remarks, but is left alone with the realization that God's action is hidden and incomprehensible. Everything is vanity. Ecclesiastes (1:2): “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity”. Further Ecclesiastes (1:14): “I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit”, and at last stated in Ecclesiastes (2:11): “Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun” [1, p. 337, 348; 5, s. 192-193; 7, s. 116-118].

Furthermore, the Preacher explains three disturbing things about life. 1) The march of time, 2) we are all going to die and 3) Life’s random nature. The march of time means that we are all just a star in the night sky and will be forgotten very quickly (Ecclesiastes 1:4): “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever”. Furthermore, it is a fact we are all going to die and turn to dust (Ecclesiastes 3:19): “... as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity”. At last the most important: Life’s random nature (Ecclesiastes 9:11): “... the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all”. In other words, destiny is not in your hand and life thereby seems meaningless and unjust [1, p. 382].

Vanity, meaninglessness and injustice – what a man going to do to live in such a dystopia? The Book of Ecclesiastes gives the answer in (12:13-14): “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is

the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”. In other words, lay your destiny in the hands of God and you shall be rewarded even if something seen very dark and unfair [1, p. 391].

Actually, one should think that the preacher might end up writing God, even becoming an atheist and even writing off God. Nevertheless, in ancient Israel, no one who was in full use of his mind could deny God's existence. That possibility was simply not available in ancient Israel. No reasonable man or woman could deny the existence of God. The faith in God was a condition for everything in life. If the Israelite denied God, he denied his own existence. It was a truism for all things. It was also substantiated as well in the Book of Proverbs (1:7): “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” as in the Book of Psalms (14:1; 53:1): “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good”.

Ancient Israel – culture, religion and understanding of life

Another important piece in the puzzle to understand the Book of Job is to understand the life in ancient Israel. In the ancient Israelite, culture related things together. Culture and religion were the same thing. It was not possible to distinguish between the spiritual and the material, as one does in 2019. Morality and happiness also coincided. If a man is pious and righteous, it must necessarily be expressed in health, well-being and prosperity. One can even end up conversely: if a man is well, thrives and becomes rich, he must necessarily be pious and righteous [10, s. 607-608].

One of the basic concepts in Israeli life understanding – in recent centuries in ancient Israel – is the covenant. The fact that God and man make a covenant with each other means that both parties undertake to do certain things and that both parties also receive certain things. If the parties are not equal, it provides stronger protection and friendship, and the weaker must then obey obedience and faithfulness. If the parties are equal, the benefits are mutual assistance in every situation and unbreakable solidarity.

Thus, Covenant will say a life-communion with those you belong to, family, friends, tribe, people, and the covenant is known to have the same mind set and same ideals, same morals, same rules of law, same worship and same honour and soul. You have shared responsibility and common happiness. The covenant is a religious relationship and it does not merely encompass the Israelites among themselves. The people also have such a covenant with God, and of course, it plays a major role for the individual Israelite. In this covenant, God demands that the people fear and worship Him, submit to His will, and obey His laws. On the other hand, the people can count on God maintaining and protecting the community that he acquires it its right, gives the people a place in the sun and provides the power and happiness of the people of a covenant society marked by his law and his will, is entitled to.

Being fair means living in accordance with the covenant one stands in. The righteous lives and acts on solidarity as a guideline and with God's will known through the law, as in its superior body. Justice is a trait, an ability of the soul that speaks in covenant actions, and thus necessarily has to create happiness both for the trader himself and for the covenants. The happiness of the Israelites is not just a coincidence. The happy one is happy because, as a just man, he has the ability to create happiness. Justice and happiness are in fact two sides of the same cause.

The thoughts of God's righteousness were in line with those of human justice. Justice is the very essence of God, identical to His will and power. If God were not righteous, he was not God at all, and the righteous God must necessarily assert and protect the righteousness and happiness of the pious.

Book of Job

Somewhere on the line that has the Story of Joseph at one end and the Ecclesiastes at the other end of this spectrum, we find the Book of Job. For the author of the Book of Job, the firm belief in a just world where everything is governed by the righteous principle of retaliation is breaking down. He takes over the teachings of ancient Israel, but apparently, it comes contrary to the realities of life, or, in other words, to God's unimaginable dealings in the world of daily life, and this crisis threatens the very basis of his faith. Therefore, he must critically think through the

tradition he has taken over, and therefore the survivor must have a new interpretation, if not the foundation of faith, which for an Israelite is identical to the very basis of life, must be burst. Nowhere is the attempt to find a new life story portrayed as vibrant and life-like as in the Book of Job. Nor is the pain of having to give up all the accustomed and obvious thinking and stand without explanation for all the other horrible portrayals as intense and poignant as here [2, p. 100; 4, s. 378; 11, p. 449-473].

Such a simple view of life means that life in its inner core is just so to understand that God, in all circumstances, punishes fortitude, sin, rewards piety, and justice. On the other hand, it is clear that illness, poverty and all other forms of misery are self-inflicted. There is therefore a legal relationship between a person's worth and its destiny. A seemingly just person may be punished, because without knowing it himself has committed sin or incursion, but such unknown sins can be freed by ritual cleansing or sacrifice. In 1:5 it also appears that the Book of Job precedes this possible explanation of Job's suffering by telling that Job has brought guilty sacrifices for possible, unknown sins: "(Job)... rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings, according to the number of them all..." [7, s. 109-112].

The book starts with God and Satan discussing Job, a "perfect and upright" man who "feared God and eschewed evil" (1:1). Satan tells God that Job is only virtuous because he is well off; were he to suffer, he would surely "curse thee to thy face" (1:11). God accepts the challenge and gives Satan permission to expose Job to biblical trial. Satan kills his children, destroys his house, bankrupts him and gives him a terrible skin disease. Job's unnamed wife says to him: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die" (2:9), but Job stands firm [8, p. 33-34].

The story then stops being a narrative and takes a philosophical bent, with Job's friends: Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, each in turn, saying that all reward and punishment comes from God. God is just. Job was punished. Therefore, Job must have sinned grievously. The three friends relate very much to the teachings of traditional retribution. They explicitly refer to the unbroken tradition of the fathers, who say that the wicked suffer while the righteous lives in peace and happiness.

Therefore, if Job had lived untiringly, he would also have lived happily, for it is inconceivable that God can make a difference between people by harming them. Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, in addition to the old tradition, also refer to their own experiences, and they repeat, has one ever seen that it went a wickedly good or a righteous evil? [2, p. 106-107].

Several places in the Old Testament, e.g. in the Book of Psalms and in Book of the prophet Jeremiah, there are verses that complain that happiness follows the wicked, those who have God in the mouth, but not in the heart. As long as one did not have the problem of suffering in life, one could cope with it by a stronger retention of the survivor, but the tighter the dogma of the righteous retribution became, the more difficult the problem became of course. Changes and upheavals in the social life of ancient Israel had caused the old solidarity to be more or less disintegrated, so that in society there were several examples of open crime among the devoted, while pious and righteous people were oppressed. Other Israelites had at least experienced it. One could therefore claim that Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar have become dogmatists. Their alleged reality experience has leapt out of the dogma that it should be. They should have observed the above-mentioned social changes and upheavals in ancient Israel. The basic view that life in its inner core is fair must therefore eventually be disrupted.

One of the explanations for their dogmatism is the fact that the question of the bursting of their perception of life, culture and religion becomes extremely complicated for Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. As the question becomes extremely complicated for the individual Israelite man, because, as mentioned earlier, it is not the way that would be natural for the Jews to doubt God's existence. The only question that can be addressed is whether God is righteous, if he intervenes at all, if he at all respects his creatures, man.

In fact, the three friends speak untrue about God in the absence of wisdom. They do not see God as He really is, but only see their own opinions and attitudes toward God. In addition, the friends demand that Job bow to them as if they were God. As it is not Job who has caused the suffering itself. It has God. God has

destroyed him and made him unjust. God answers Job, as he is an enemy to him [2, p. 106].

The poet describes a man who has lost his footing in life, a man who is in a fierce spiritual struggle to preserve his self-esteem, even his whole reality. His distress and controversy are not only due to the external suffering, because the external concrete distress, due to the identity of the exterior and the interior, indicates that he has lost his basis of life. At Job, we see all the emotions and moods that master a destabilised man. A poet with much artistic grace draws the image of Job. A personal experience of suffering and a grasp of God must be the material the poet processes.

A fourth character then enters the story – Elihu, who accuses Job as well (chapters 32-37). Biblical scholars suspect him to be a later addition to the book, mostly because while the first three friends are mentioned in the introduction, Elihu appears from nowhere. In his speech, he introduces the idea that God can bring a short-lived suffering over a righteous man to slow down a starting arrogance (33:13-33). However, these weaknesses to come by do not really challenge the doctrine of the just relationship between guilt and destiny. Thereby Elihu appears, neither as a helper nor as the messenger for what Job's future is.

Job has simply lost everything, has been ejected from the society, and was unclean. When he says his honour is taken from him (19:9): “he has stripped me of my glory and taken the crown from my head”, it does not simply mean he has lost people's respect and his position in society, but his soul is deprived of its core, its personality content. Job has been done unfairly, rejected by God and people, and therefore his life-style is broken and the personality is disintegrating. Yet he knows with himself that he is righteous and that his innermost soul is sun, and therefore he cannot enter into the minds of friends when they claim that he has sinned. He knows he is innocent and that Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar speak untrue.

Then there is only one possible conclusion for Job: God must be unjust. Therefore, Job simply challenges God for a trial. In 31:35: “Oh, that one would hear me! Behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine

adversary had written a book". This leads inexorably to the core of the problem: Is there justice at all in God's rule of the world? Does he make any difference to the just and unjust? Does he regard his creature? Alternatively, is it that God, for his pleasure, crushes people? What really holds Job's life up? The problem of Jobs is an alienation in relation to life itself.

Job knows that he cannot call witnesses in a lawsuit against God. Therefore, lacking witness, he swears an exculpatory oath, as was standard in such legal cases in the ancient Near East. He swears to his own innocence and lists numerous wrongs that he has not committed. In doing so, Job challenges God to provide the evidence against him and prove his guilt. Yet, Job cannot release God. However, it requires God finally to show that he is a righteous God. Thus, Job's complaint goes over to becoming an appeal to God. No one other than God can restore his life and by presenting his case to the highest judge, then God had to justify Job and bring him back to what he was and still is.

The requirement to be heard by God does not release him throughout the book. Therefore, it must end in a confrontation – in a trial. After that, Job must be made either fair again or perish. There is by no means talk of Job's side, so that a victory in the trial could be perceived as a victory for the indomitable human spirit. It is simply a fighting man's cry to God out of deep distress, a prayer of meaning in life.

Way, Job either denies sinning, or calls on the heavens to testify on his behalf. At this point (38:1) God appears from the whirlwind and answers Job's explicit implication that he is unjust. Finally, God responds. However, in legal terms, he throws out Job's case on a technicality. In his oath, Job claimed to know everything about God, and how the universe works. Therefore, God reprimands him. Where was Job, questions God, when he laid the earth's foundations? If Job is so wise, he must have been present at creation, God adds sarcastically. Job has no reply. By suing God, Job gets an answer, even if it is not the one, he wanted [2, p. 125].

The reader gets no theoretical and thought-provoking problem solving. The theoretical problem is as unresolved by the end of the Book of Jobs as at its beginning. The thoughtful reader must find the solution himself. The reader gets no

theoretical and thought-provoking problem solving. The theoretical problem is as unresolved by the end of the Book of Jobs as at its beginning. The thoughtful reader must find the solution himself. One can say that God gives Job a little right. Job is truly righteous and has suffered from indifference. However, he has been wrong when he claimed that God was unjust and his rule of the world foolishly.

There is much in God's righteous rule that can, for human beings, look like injustice, but, in reality, expresses a sense that goes far beyond human comprehension. This is God's main argument. This recognizes Job. In other words, he gives God the right. Theoretically, the problem of suffering and Job's problem is not a step closer to its solution, but Job has been given an answer that allows him to live on. What gives Job the most peace is that he has met God. In the exterior, nothing has changed. Job is still sitting on the ash dung when he gives God the right. Inside, everything has changed [6, s. 129].

Again, many scholars believe this part was not in the original book but was added by a later editor, this time because it seems oddly out of place. God's explanation – if you can call it that – is that Job, being a mere human, cannot hope to understand his actions. He asks Job a rhetorical question – did Job kill the Behemoth and the Dragon, as he has? Moreover, embarks on an extremely long, poetic ramble describing these two mythological creatures that lasts until the end of chapter 41. The book then wraps up with a happy conclusion – Job's fortunes are restored and he is given a new set of children and a beautiful wife.

Leviathan – a modern film adaptation of the trial of Job

Does the Book of Job have meaning today – in our modern society? The 21st century is a profoundly different context from that envisioned by the original author of Job, and people today bring to the book the questions, assumptions, and values that characterize our contemporary culture. So how can the Book of Job influence literature and movies today? Although commentaries most often do effective work in

explaining the ancient world of Job, they do not always do as well in communicating to the present time with its distinctive concerns. In fact, the scholarly literature rarely addresses how the book of Job speaks to the world in which we live today. Consequently, as hard as it has always been to interpret Job, in the 21st century there are additional challenges that must be overcome when one teaches or preaches this book.

The big question is how is the Book of Job relevant for man in the year 2019? In 2014 the trial of Job was reborn in a Russian movie “Leviathan”. “Leviathan” directed by Andrey Zvyagintsev is a movie about faith. Heroes who are confronted with power and faith, the two spiritual components (but also historic institutions) whose combination and close relationship has always dominated the lives of Russians both nationally and personally populate Russian literature and cinema. The last century has challenged this historic symbiosis. For seven decades after 1917 the communist regime destroyed churches and monasteries and tried to establish atheist Marxism-Leninism as a state doctrine instead of the Orthodox Christianity.

The fall of the Soviet regime led to the resurrection of the religious institutions, the rebuilding of churches and the building of many new ones. Does it also represent a return to faith? This question is acute in Russia and all over Eastern Europe. Corruption is the other main theme of the film. There is corruption at the level of the institutions (including the church), but especially there is corruption in the souls of the people. On the other hand, the movie could take place anywhere in the world.

Russian screenwriter and director Andrei Zvyagintsev's fourth feature film, which he wrote with screenwriter Oleg Negin, is inspired by real events, theological tales and a novel called “Michael Kohlhaas” (1810) by a German 19th century poet, named Heinrich von Kleist. Furthermore, “Leviathan” has been described as a contemporary Russian version of the Book of Job and this seems reasonable, although the story does have some variations from the Old Testament fable. The crooked mayor of a hardscrabble coastal community stands in for Satan as he conspires to steal a plot of land from a mechanic called Kolya. The mayor is aided in this conspiracy by a collection of venal bureaucrats, lawyers, judges, priests, police

and hired thugs. God may not be immediately apparent in the god-forsaken Russian coastal town near the coast of the Barents Sea (shot in the coastal town of Teriberka – 130 kilometres north east of Murmansk), but the devil surely resides there. Alternatively, let us just say the proletariat suffers for Politburo politics rather than God to an extent that is disruptive of daily life and lethal in the wrong circumstances. If you cross “Crime and Punishment” with a dollop of “Doctor Zhivago”, you might get a hint of how bleak and fateful this rugged world is, relieved by the beautiful timelessness of the landscape.

The film's hero, Kolya is not exactly poor, he owns a house at the bend of a river, a boat, a car, has friends, a teenage son, and is also at his second marriage to Lilya. Like Job, Kolya has three friends (Dmitri, Anzhela and Pasha) that try to guide him. In addition, like Job's friends, they all failed. All his life is destroyed in a short time after the local mayor decides to take possession of the land where his home is located and puts in move the justice and police system for this purpose. Kolya will not only be defeated in an uneven struggle with a system that does not hesitate to resort to any method to destroy him, but he realizes that he remained without any moral or spiritual support. Fallen in alcoholism, with his life and family destroyed, he asks why. The answer has nowhere to come from.

In a cinematography, spectacular and full of symbolism, director and co-screenwriter Andrey Zvyagintsev is attacking front-level corruption at the local level, and the desolate image of the scene where the action takes place is not flattering. His political criticism however stops at the periphery. The critical approach also targets the institutions of the church. However, there is also some hope. The only positive character is a priest from the ranks, whom we see helping his poor priest, a man who tries to make sense, console and provide an explanation to the film's hero about what is happening to him. Here he compares his life with Job's life. The poor priest represent God just like in the speech of God in the Book of Job (chapter 38-42) to Job. In the movie, the poor priest emphasised that all power come from God, as long as it suits him and as long as man fear him. Hope is restored. Furthermore, in a church service in the local church, the bishop extols the virtues of God's truth versus

the world's truth, and says that good intentions do not excuse evil acts. He urges the congregation not to act with force or cunning, but to put their trust in Christ. To fear God and his commandments is the saviour from the god-less coastal town area near the Barents Sea. The mayor and his henchmen, however, drive out in the god-less coastal town area in the last sequences, all lost in absence of fear of God and his commandments.

For Kolya the answer comes too late, but perhaps for others there is hope in returning to the human foundations of faith. It is maybe the only positive message in this remarkable, but not very optimistic movie.

Conclusion

The Book of Job is perhaps the most mysterious book of the Bible. The role of God is apparently meaningless, even tending to evil. Satan is not the evil adversary like many other places in the Bible – here he is God's tool. Nevertheless, well, to think of a tool to put meaning and good in relief. The Book of Job is also a place for a trial between God and man. One role man does not get many other places in the holy book. Even though, God does not sit down on the human level, man has the right to defend his situation on an equal footing with God.

Along with the rest of the Wisdom Books, the Book of Job forms the core of the Bible, as these books take taboos as: Why is there evil in the world? Why do some people suffer while others do not? And why does injustice exists? The answer in the Book of Job: if you fear God and his commandments and put your destiny in his hands, even is everything looks very dark, you will be rewarded.

The researchers do not agree on the interpretation of the book. What role does Satan play? Is he God's tool or God's adversary? Why does Job finally bend? If Job is simply convinced by the contents of God's speech, he simply bends over to the power of the power or is the meaning of the text that it is actually God who bows to Job by setting up a trial, and by answering him. Is the Book of Job an attempt to defend God's actions? In any case, the book thematises the experience that things happen in the world that raise the question of God's righteousness and God's care for the world.

There are many questions, but there are far fewer answers. God is mostly interpreted as a king who meets with his counsellors in heaven. Here you will also find Satan whose task it is to report to God about the people on earth. Incidentally, only a kind of tool is in God's hands. Another interpretation is that God is the Father and the sons of God and Job are His sons. Satan and Job are described in the Book of Job as two brothers, one of whom is envious of the other. Satan will hurt God's favourite son, Job. God is here the common ground, while the two sons represent good and evil.

However, even not, there is a no clear answer to the interpretation of the Book of Job, the text of the ancient legend of Job is still very relevant to man in the year 2019. With his movie “Leviathan”, the Russian director Andrei Zvyagintsev shows that he is able to answer a very complex question regarding a 21st century society in Russia by the help of the several thousand years old legend of Job. The whole thing can be compressed into that part of the conversation between the Dostoyeskiian-looking poor priest and the main character, Kolya, where the priest endures Kolya's trials to the trials of Job, submitting to God's will, as mighty as the great sea beast of Leviathan: “Can you draw out Leviathan with a fish-hook?” and Kolya must admit not without the help of God.

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Data about the author:

Christensen Carsten Sander – Doctor of History (PhD), curator of Billund Museum (Billund, Denmark).

Сведения об авторе:

Христенсен Карстен Сандер – доктор истории (PhD), куратор Музея Биллунда (Биллунд, Дания).

E-mail: csc@billund.dk.