

Job 42 — Now Mine Eye Seeth Thee — Job Repents by Encounter, God Vindicates His Servant Over the Friends, Job Prays for Those Who Wronged Him, and the Latter End Is Blessed More Than the Beginning

Job 42: the resolution of the whole book. Out of the whirlwind God has spoken, and Job answers — not confessing hidden crimes but melting before the God he now beholds: 'now mine eye seeth thee.' The LORD then turns to Eliphaz and vindicates Job against the three friends, whose tidy retribution theology God rejects; the friends must bring sacrifice and be saved only through Job's intercession; and when Job prays for them the LORD turns his captivity, doubles his substance, gives him seven sons and three named daughters, and lets him see four generations before he dies old and full of days. In the patriarchal world of Uz.

For forty-one chapters the great argument has raged. Job lost everything in two chapters and then spent thirty-five refusing the one explanation everyone kept offering him: that a man who suffers like this must have sinned like this. His three friends came to comfort and stayed to accuse; each cycle of speeches pressed harder on the same false equation — pain proves guilt, so confess and be restored. Job would not confess to crimes he had not committed, and he would not stop asking God the honest, scandalous question: *why*. Then, at last, the LORD answered — not with reasons but with a whirlwind, four chapters of creation's unsearchable wonder, a God who lays the foundations of the earth and stables the wild ox and rides the storm. The WHY was reframed into a WHO. And now, in chapter 42, the book resolves — and it resolves in a way that overturns almost everything the friends were sure of.

Hebrew Word Studies

shama (H8085) / shema (H8088) / ozen (H241) / ayin (H5869) (שָׁמַע / שְׁמַע / אָזַן / עֵינַן) — **to hear, hearken / a hearing, a report / ear / eye v. 5.** The whole turn of the book is welded into one Hebrew contrast. *Shama* (v. 5) is Israel's great covenant verb — the opening word of the *Shema*, "Hear, O Israel" (Deut. 6:4) — to hear and to heed. But here Job sets *hearing* against *seeing* and names hearing as the lesser thing: "I have heard (*shama*) of thee by the hearing (*shema*) of the ear (*ozen*)." Report reached the *ozen*; it was true; it was not enough. Then the *ayin*, the eye, the organ of direct beholding: "now mine eye seeth thee." This is not Job downgrading revelation — it is Job describing the difference between a creed you were taught and a Presence you have met. The same promise runs the length of scripture: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8); "yet in my flesh shall I see God," Job had already dared to hope (19:26); and the Restoration seals it — "every soul who forsaketh his sins... and calleth on my name... shall see my face and know that I am" (D&C 93:1). The suffering was never going to be explained. It was going to be *out-weighed* — by the sight of the One who suffered it with him.

ma'as (H3988) / nacham (H5162) (מָאָס / נָחַם) — **to reject, refuse, despise, loathe / to be sorry, to comfort oneself, to repent v. 6.** Two verbs carry the confession, and neither means what a casual reading fears. *Ma'as* ("I abhor myself") is "to reject, to refuse" — the very verb for spurning something offered. Its object in the Hebrew is unstated; Job may be rejecting *himself*, or rejecting the presumptuous words he just disowned in v. 3. Either way it is renunciation, not self-loathing — the letting-go of a case he no longer needs to press now that he has seen the Judge. *Nacham* ("repent") is the richer surprise: its root sense is "to be moved to the depths, to draw breath heavily," and it swings between "to be sorry / to repent" and "to be comforted." It is the same verb that ends this very chapter — the friends and kin come to *comfort* (*nacham*) Job in v. 11. So the word for Job's turning before God and the word for the consolation that follows are one root. Biblical repentance, at its Hebrew floor, is not groveling; it is the whole self turning — grief and comfort in the same breath — toward the One now in view. Job does not repent *into* despair. He repents *into* God, which is where all comfort begins.

nakon (H3559) / eved (H5650) (נָכֹן / עֶבֶד) — **to be established, right, firm, fixed / servant vv. 7, 8.** "The thing that is right" translates *nakon*, from *kun* — "to be firm, established, set right, well-founded." It is not merely "true statements"; it is speech that *stands*, that rests on solid ground, the same root behind a heart "fixed" on the LORD (Ps. 112:7) and a throne "established" in righteousness (Prov. 16:12). The friends' theology was orderly but not *nakon* — it looked firm and it could not bear weight, because it made God smaller than he is. Job's speech looked wild and was *nakon*, because it kept its grip on a God big enough to be questioned. And note the title God repeats over Job in these verses like a refrain — *my servant Job*, four times in vv. 7–8. *Eved*, "servant," is the LORD's highest badge of honor: "Moses my servant" (Josh. 1:2), "David my servant" (2 Sam. 3:18), the Servant of Isaiah 53 who bears the griefs of many. It is the same word God spoke over Job to the accuser at the very start — "hast thou considered my servant Job?" (1:8) — and the wager of the whole book was whether that servant

would hold. He held. The accuser is not even mentioned in this chapter; there is nothing left for him to say. God's opening confidence in his servant is God's closing verdict.

palal (H6419) / nasa (H5375) (פָּלַל / נָסָא) — to intercede, pray, mediate / to lift up, bear, carry, accept vv. 8, 9, 10.

Palal is not the ordinary word for prayer; it is intercessory, mediatorial — to plead *on behalf of another*, to stand in the gap. It is what Abraham does for Sodom (Gen. 20:7), what Moses does for rebellious Israel (Deut. 9:20), what Samuel refuses to stop doing for the people (1 Sam. 12:23). To be a *palal* is to be a go-between. Three times the chapter turns on it (vv. 8, 10): Job must *palal* for the friends, and it is *when* he prays for them (v. 10) that his own captivity turns. The companion verb is *nasa*, "to lift, to carry, to bear" — and the KJV renders it "accept": "for him will I *accept*" (v. 8), "the LORD also *accepted* Job" (v. 9). To accept a person, in Hebrew, is literally to *lift up his face* — the same verb used for bearing sin away, "forgiving (*nasa*) iniquity" (Ex. 34:7). So the friends are lifted, their faces raised, their guilt carried — through the prayer of the servant they had crushed. The pattern points past itself. Job the intercessor, praying for the very men who wronged him, is a shadow of the greater Mediator, who from the cross prayed "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34) — the wronged and righteous One made the sole channel of the wrongdoers' acceptance. Job foreshadows in a small key what the Atonement performs in full: God accepts the guilty through the intercession of the innocent.

shuv (H7725) / shevut (H7622) / yasaph (H3254) (שָׁבַע / שָׁבַע / יָסַף) — to turn, return, restore / captivity, fortunes / to add, increase, give again v. 10. "The LORD *turned* the *captivity* of Job." *Shuv* is the great verb of returning — the word for repentance (turning back to God) and for restoration (God turning back to his people). Here God is the one who *turns*: he reverses Job's condition as decisively as a road bends back on itself. The object is *shevut*, an idiom usually translated "captivity" but meaning something closer to "restored fortunes" — it is the phrase used for God bringing exiles home, "when the LORD *turned again* the *captivity* of Zion" (Ps. 126:1). Job was never in literal captivity; the language deliberately casts his suffering as an exile and his healing as a homecoming. And then *yasaph*, "the LORD *gave* Job twice as much" — to add, to increase, to do again and more. It is a verb of overflow, of God giving beyond the former measure. But notice the grammar of grace: the turning comes first (*shuv*), the doubling follows (*yasaph*). God restores the man before he multiplies the flocks. The relationship is healed before the barns are filled — because in this book, unlike in the friends' theology, the man is the point and the property is only the epilogue.

barak (H1288) / acharit (H319) (בָּרַךְ / אַחֲרִית) — to bless, to kneel / latter end, outcome, future v. 12. "So the LORD *blessed* (*barak*) the *latter end* (*acharit*) of Job." *Barak* — to bless — shares its root with *berek*, "knee"; to bless and to kneel are cut from the same cloth, as if blessing always involves a bending, a giving-down from above or a receiving-below. It is the very word the accuser twisted at the start: he predicted Job would "curse" (the text uses *barak* ironically, "bless") God to his face if the hedge came down (1:11). Job never did. And so the last use of the word in the book is the true one: the LORD *blesses* the man the accuser said would curse him. The wager is settled in the vocabulary itself. The blessing falls on Job's *acharit* — his "latter end," his outcome, the after-part of his life — a word that means both the final stretch of a life and the destiny toward which a life tends. "The end (*acharit*) of that man is peace" (Ps. 37:37); "I know the thoughts that I think toward you... to give you an expected end (*acharit*)" (Jer. 29:11). The book that opened by asking whether faith could survive the loss of everything closes by declaring that the *acharit* of the faithful is in God's hands — and in his hands, it is blessed. Job serves God for nought (1:9), finds God enough with nothing, and receives everything back as gift precisely because he was not serving for the gift.

From the Chapter's Architecture

And notice the frame's quiet symmetry. The book opened with God saying to the accuser, "hast thou considered my servant Job?" (1:8), staking everything on a servant's integrity. It closes with God saying to Eliphaz, "my servant Job" (vv. 7–8), that integrity vindicated four times over. The wager the accuser proposed — that Job's faith was bought — is answered not by argument but by a whole life: a man who lost everything, questioned honestly, saw God, and blessed his enemies before he was given anything back. The servant held. That is the book.