NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN JOB

IN NIGERIA CONTEXT: A SYNCHRONIC PICTURE

NATIV UNENEH

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DEDICATION

Respectfully dedicated to the late Hon. Samuel Atser Iorliam my great friend who is reposing on the bosom of Abraham

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FOREWORD

This book, "New Perspectives on the Character of the Man Job in Nigerian Context: A Synchronic Picture" is the product of a critical PhD Thesis research executed successfully at the Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria, by the author, Rev. Dr. Nativ Uneneh. This thesis was jointly supervised by two professors of Biblical Studies, Rev. Professor Emmanuel Ordue Usue and Prof. Godwin Nyijime Toryough whose areas of specialization are Old Testament and New Testament Studies respectively.

As the title of this book implies, the author in eight chapters seeks to bring a new perspective to bear on the conservative and or popular conception of Job as an impeccably perfect Saint, who in spite of the trepidations and the storms of life that battered him, remained totally submissive to God and gave glory to him. Contrary to this often sung portrait of Job, which is exclusively premised on the prologue to the book as exemplified in chapters 1-2 of Job, the author, Dr. Nativ Uneneh, re-reads the entire material of the book of Job with a particular focus on the third chapter and juxtaposes this with the first chapter of Genesis and demonstrates that not everything has been said yet about the person and character of the celebrated Job of the Old Testament.

This book, thus, showcases Job as a saintly mortal, who is encumbered with human limitations just as any other human being. Thus, it is demonstrated from reflections on the contents of the book of Job that the sage reacts to his plight by launching an attack on God's creation as encapsulated in Genesis 1 and 2. Misery made Job to carry out a mental deletion of the creative activities of God such as light, the separation motif, human life/existence, the Sabbath, etc. In the same vein, the frustrated sage takes up legal action against the creator and charges him with being indifferent against his cause.

The concluding chapters of this book showcase the theology of the book of Job, and provide useful clues on reading the book of Job. In all, Dr. Uneneh unpacks the objective assessment of the person and character of Job. The contents of Job's book are

also applied to the life situation of those who live in Nigeria in particular, but to others at large.

The book while exhibiting the technical quality requisite for biblical scholarship at the tertiary education level also encapsulates some devotional material that can serve needs of clergymen as well as ordinary church member who is looking for spiritual food for the soul. I therefore, recommend this book to biblical scholars, to pulpit practitioners and members of the Christian church all over the globe.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to spark new insights that can provoke a thorough appreciation of the person and character of the man Job especially for Christians in Nigeria. For quite a long time the book of Job has suffered a formalized method of interpretation that is narrowly based on the prologue of chapters I and 2, exclusive of the responsorial material from the rest of the book, more especially chapters 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. As a heritage from biblical conservatives, the church for the most part reads the book of Job with tinted lenses that darken her apprehension of his real person and character.

In this book I mobilize a couple of chapter numbers from the book of Job with heavy concentration on chapter 3 to reveal the other aspect of Job's life that is often downplayed by some community of readers. Most Bible scholars in recent times are having an increasing awareness that the character of the man Job in chapters 1-2 is significantly at variance with that of chapter 3 and possibly the rest of the book, excepting the end.

This book complements the study on the character of Job emphasizing the often-neglected traits that most exegetes are afraid can make great violence to the prologue of chapters 1-2. I am approaching Job from the perspective of post adamic humanity and not as Adam before the fall. I will read Job as a godly human being, and not as God. Chapter 3 will receive indebt treatment since it is at this point that Job begins his series of attacks on God and the universe. This whole study will make chapter 3 its basis of analysis for in it Job's response finds its definitive expression. However, several other portions of the book will be evaluated too.

The work is divided into two parts; part one raise a background to the task that would set a scenario upon which the material will bear. Part two contains the crux of the monograph; an analysis of the character of Job as recorded in the book that bears his name. The work is done in a scope of eight chapters; chapter 1 tells what the book is all about, chapter 2 analyzes some early researches and contemporary scholarship on Job, chapter 3 introduces Job 3 as a text of terror, and expounds it employing some of the scientific skills to make clear to readers

what it means. In chapter 4, the matter of a fiat deletion of Genesis 1 and 2 by Job 3 is articulated. Chapter 5 forms a continuous analytical extension of Job's assaults on the great Monarch of galaxies. Chapter 6 shows the implications of Job's aggression for Nigerians. Then, chapter seven proposes an economic approach to the book of Job. Chapter eight concludes the study.

Some portions of the book are exposed using linguistic skills to make clear meaning out of the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. This is done to shed more light on certain exegetical nuances and also, stimulate the fascination of biblical researchers and make the study valuable for Bible translator(s). As an aspiring translation Consultant, use of multifaceted semiotic tools is replete in this work for accuracy in communication of meaning. Average readers should not be scared with the appearance of Hebrew and Greek constructions and structures. Alternative readings in form of transliterations and or interpretation are provided side by side with such constructions to ease reading for ordinary readers.

It is my sincere belief that this work will be a great dividend to all who struggle with hard times and unfriendly climates in their lives, and Christians that are in need of good knowledge of the biblical literature of the book of Job will easily revert to this copy.

I must gratefully acknowledge my Professors: Emmanuel Ordue Usue and Godwin Nyijime Toryough, both of the Department of Religion and Cultural Studies; Benue State University, Makurdi for painstakingly reading this work and offering valid criticisms that have given it its present shape and taste. Cognizance must also be made of the elders and entire Christian community of NKST Ihugh for their support to me while undertaking this project. To my present station; members of NKST Lagos I heartily acknowledge them, since the final proofreading of this book was made when I resumed service with them. My lovely kids Sensha, Keghnen and Cedric, thanks for your provision of familial love and social intimacy which boosted my emotional zest to accomplish this undertaking with relative success. My loving late wife, Atese Maranatha Ternguhiden Uneneh; all these are possible because of the power of a beautiful woman, especially the one with a food flask of your class! Post-humously, I love you.

Blessings.

Dr. Nativ Uneneh

NKST Lagos- Nigeria

September, 2019.

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Conservative biblical scholarship has all the while been inordinately emphatic on the patience of Job and his amazing strength of character. Healthy stress on his virtuous living is quite proper, but downplaying completely his weak points expresses extreme bias. This work seeks to complement studies on Job's deportment. But before getting into this aspect, background issues are crucial.

1.1 NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF JOB

Written by an unknown author, the book of Job is one of the most celebrated pieces of biblical literature and possibly, the most ancient literary account in the Bible (spark notes). Though exercised many pens, and filled many volumes, the authorship of the Book of Job remains in its pristine obscurity and doubt. No man precisely knows who committed to writing this sacred Poem, or how or when it was incorporated into the Hagiographa (the third of the three Jewish divisions) of the Hebrew Scriptures. Revelation alone could disclose the mystery, but revelation is silent. One fact, however, is self-evident that the whole Book of Job, as we now possess it, must have proceeded from one inspired writer. The statement of Abulfaragius has supported the book's historicity that "In the twenty-fifth year of the life of Nahor occurred the temptation of Job the Just, according to the opinion of Ai'udh the Canaanite" (qtd in Rowley 2). Like the book of Joshua and Ruth, it bears the name of its hero. The Hebrew form of the name אִיּוֹב *Iyyob* was represented in the Greek by Ιωβ *Iob,* and then through Latin came the English name Job (Rowley 2). It means the persecuted one. In terms of its place in the Old Testament, Job is the first of five books commonly referred to as **"**The Books of Poetry**"**. These include Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. The books are so-called because they are written in poetic style in contrast to the narrative style of most of the other books. They are also often referred to as "Wisdom Literature" because they are concerned primarily with *moral education* and highly didactic in tone (especially Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes). The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament offers a vision of harmonious community, of mature and wise living, and of communion with the earth, with one another, and with the Creator (O'Conor 10). Oswald Chambers (1874-1917) offered this concise summary of the five books:

Job - How to suffer

Psalms - How to pray

Proverbs - How to act

Ecclesiastes - How to enjoy

Song of Solomon - How to love (qtd. in Copeland 1).

The dialogue segment is written in the most horrible and outdated Hebrew in the Old Testament. In many places Job is difficult to translate because of its many unusual words and its style. For that reason, modern translations frequently differ widely. Even the pre-Christian translator(s) of Job into Greek (the Septuagint) seem often to have been perplexed. The Septuagint of Job is about 400 lines shorter than the accepted Hebrew text, and it may be that the translator(s) simply omitted lines he (they) did not understand. The early Syriac (Peshitta), Aramaic (Targum) and Latin (Vulgate) translators had similar difficulties (Biblica 2). The diction of this Poem is the pure Hebrew of the ante-Abrahamic age…extant in Phoenician characters on the ancient coins and sculptured marbles and stones of Tyrian colonies, extending from Aradus in the extreme north of Phoenicia to Marseilles in France (Full text of Job7).

The few Arabic words, proverbs, idioms, and significations occurring in the Book of Job are Hebrew archaisms still current in Arabic, the sister dialect of Hebrew, but obsolete and no longer found in the fragmentary remains of the Hebrew language now extant. The Book of Job, "unique in antiquity and sublimity, is written in pure archaic Hebrew, a noble specimen of the ancient language, as it was spoken and written more than 4000 years ago" (Full Text of Job 6) .

There is no mention of the Law here, no reference to Abraham or the covenants. It should probably be dated to the time of the patriarchs, sometime between 2100 and 1700 B.C (Bible Knowledge Commentary PC Bible 5).

It is a mixture of both divine and human wisdom that concerns a major life issue of *why do the righteous suffer*? The book of Job is an example of Hebrews wisdom literature that labors with the concept of *theodicy*, which is a defense of the integrity of the justice and righteousness of God in the face of evil, injustice and undeserved suffering in the world (Roger and Bratcher). Some authorities identify theodicy as the theme of Job (Clines qtd. in Waters 437). Southerland describes Job as a provocative theodicy (Para.4), an attempt to justify the

ways of God to man. Thus, the emphasis of the book is on God himself and his relationship to his creation.

Job therefore, is a book dealing with human suffering. It is more than an ancient play written to portray the absurdities of life, the wickedness of man and the prominence of the sovereign God as assumed by Hengstenberg (qtd. in Keil and Delitzsch 248). The book shows that the sufferer can question and doubt, face the hard questions of life with faith, maintain an unbroken relationship with a loving God and still come to a satisfactory resolution. Job is truly a wisdom book; a didactic masterpiece (Keil and Delitzsch 249). From this book readers can learn to challenge false concepts related to suffering and how to maintain a loving and meaningful relationship, in the midst of suffering, with the sovereign God. The principal aim of the book, emphasizes S.R.Driver, is to controvert the theory that suffering is a sign of divine displeasure (qtd. in Rowley 18). It is certain that the friends cherished such a view while Job equally asserted that whereas merit and experience ought to be matched, in fact they are not. The view of Job's friends was the orthodox Old Testament view until the author of Job challenged it. One cannot conclude that Abel, Uriah the Hittite and Nabboth deserved to die.

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF JOB

In terms of the structure of the book of Job "prose begins and ends the book…while the middle is poetry" (Campbell 159). The lament of Job in chapter 3 gets the poetry underway, followed by three rounds of speeches between Job and each of the three "friends" a poem on wisdom marks the closure of these exchanges (Job 28). The following three chapters are given to Job himself (29-31) then Yahweh himself speaks in a storm wind (38-41) Job replies, God speaks again and Job replies again. Finally, Yahweh speaks and the epilogue ends the book (159). For a detailed picture of the structure of the book of Job as a whole the structural analysis of Gregory W. Parson serves a good purpose, the researcher paraphrases it here:

For Parson the unity of the Book of Job will be assumed in the analysis of its literary structure. It is believed that each component of the book has a necessary place in the overall design and argument of Job. Job is a complex literary work in which there has been a skillful wedding of poetry and prose and a masterful mixture of several literary genres. The basic structure of Job consists of a prose framework (the prologue in chapters 1 and 2, and the

epilogue in 42:7-17) which encloses an intricate poetic body. The prologue very concisely narrates how God's servant Job lost his family and his wealth in a rapid-fire succession of catastrophic events.

Then it relates that when Job's health was removed his wife urged him to curse God and die. Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, arrived to comfort Job who remained firm in his devotion to God in the midst of his intense suffering. The reader is taken behind the scenes and informed that the reason for these events is that God was permitting Satan to afflict Job in order to test the motivation for Job's piety. This is done by rapidly alternating between the earthly setting and the heavenly court. The poetic body (3:1-42:6) begins with a personal lament by Job (chap. 3) in which he curses the day of his birth. This introductory soliloquy corresponds to the final soliloquy by Job (chaps. 29-31), and particularly to chapter 31 (his oath of innocence) which includes a self-curse: These two soliloquies enclose three cycles of disputations between Job and his three friends. A cycle consists of speeches by the three friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, in that order) which are interspersed by a reply of Job to each speech.

This pattern is followed for the first two cycles of speeches (chapters 4-14 and 15 21) but breaks down in the third cycle (when Zophar fails to speak following Job's response to Bildad (chap. 26). Rather than subjectively attempting to restore the allegedly jumbled text, one should recognize that this alteration of structure contributes to the development of the argument of the book. There are two basic lines of interaction which run through Job--Job's crying out to God and Job's disputations with his three friends. The absence of the third speech of Zophar is consistent with the fact that each of the speeches of the three friends is progressively shorter in each cycle and that Job's responses to each of the friends (which also are progressively shorter) are longer than the corresponding speech of the friends. This seems to signify Job's verbal victory over Zophar and the other two friends. It is also indicative of the bankruptcy and futility of dialogue when both Job and the three friends assume the retribution dogma (which for the friends implies Job's guilt and for Job implies God's injustice). Consequently, this structural design marks a very gradual swing toward a focus on Job's relationship and interaction with God in contrast to the earlier primary interaction between Job

and his friends. This swing toward an emphasis on Job's dispute with God continues in chapters 27-31.

Following a possible pause Job waited in vain for Zophar's third response, Job concluded his words to the friends in chapter 27 by collectively addressing them and declaring that they had failed to convince him that he was a sinner who deserved his calamity. Chapter 28, a wisdom hymn, may be a kind of interlude which marks the transition between the two major parts of the poetic body the previous dialogue between Job and his friends, and the forth coming long discourses by Job (chaps. 29-31), Elihu (chaps. 32-37), and God (chaps. 38-41) which are almost monologues. Chapters 29-31 are comprised of Job's soliloquies in which he longs for his past blessed state of prosperity (chap. 29) and laments his present state of misery because of God's afflictions (chap. 30, which includes an aside to God in direct speech-vv. 21-23). The concluding chapter (31) consists of Job's loath of innocence (common in ancient Near Eastern juridical cases) in the form of a negative confession complete with self imprecations. Job concludes the chapter with a legal indictment against God to present his charges in writing (31:35-37).The result is a pregnant expectation of God's response. However, the Elihu speeches (chaps. 32-37), which seemingly interrupt the argument of the book, actually set the stage for the Yahweh speeches. Elihu appears as a type of mediator (an impartial witness) who speaks on behalf of God (36:2) by rebuking the three friends (cf. 32:3, 6-14; 34:2-15; cf.35:4) and by suggesting that Job needed to repent of his pride which developed because of his suffering (cf. 33:17; 35:12-16).He recommended that Job should exalt God's works which are evident in nature (36:24-37:18) and fear Him who comes in golden splendor out of the north (37:22-24). These basic ideas of Elihu are either assumed or developed by the Lord in His speeches.

The climax to the Book of Job appears in the symmetrical Yahweh speeches (38:1-42:6)-the two divine speeches with Job's two responses--which are the culmination of the skillfully designed poetic body of the book. This pericope is comprised of two divine speeches (each of which is also divided into two principal parts) and two human responses. The precise symmetrical arrangement is illustrated in a comparison of the two "rounds" of divine-human interaction (see the following chart).Thus except for the summary challenge in 40:2 for Job to respond (introduced by a transitional editorial remark), these two rounds are perfectly

symmetrical in basic structure. That no summary challenge was needed at the end of the Lord's second speech is indicative that Job's second response (42:1-6) was a willing one in contrast to his initial reluctant reply (40:3-5).

First Round

Second Round (38: 1-40:5) (40:6--42:6)

Divine Speech 38:1-40:2 40:6--41:34

Introductory

Editorial note 38:1 40:6

Thematic challenge 38:2-3 40:7-14

Main body 38:4-38 40:15-24(in two principal (Inanimate creation) (Behemoth) (parts) 38:39-39:30 41:1-34

(Animate creation) (Leviathan)

(Transitional Editorial note) 40:1 --

Summary challenge 40:2 --

Human Response 40:3-5 42:1-6

Introductory

Editorial note 40:3 42:1

Reply per se 40:4-5 42:2-6

The epilogue (42:7-17) in prose is basically a counter balance to the prologue. In the prologue Job offered intercessory sacrifices for his family; in the epilogue he offered an intercessory prayer for his three friends. In the former God commended Job as being of blameless character; in the latter God gave a qualified commendation of Job's words in contrast to the three friends. The prologue narrates the removal of Job's family, prosperity, and health, where as the epilogue relates the restoration of Job's family and health and a doubling of his former wealth. However, both Satan and Job's wife (who are prominent in the prologue as agents of evil who try to get Job to curse God) are intentionally omitted in the epilogue. This deliberate omission emphasizes a major teaching of the book, namely, that man's relationship to God is not a "give-and-get" bargain nor a business contract of mutual benefit (para. 6). With this brief background

we shall now move to matters of analyzing early research on the book of Job, and Job in contemporary scholarship.

CHAPTER TWO:

EARLY RESEARCH AND CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP ON THE BOOK OF JOB

The focus of this segment of the book is to reflect upon the current position of Job in today's scholarship. The book of Job presents an inviting prospect. It is a strong theodicy and a singular biblical book about how to survive hard times and manage critical climates in one's life. Its chapters sparkle with fantastic characters and dramatic scenes. The piety of Job, the celestial summon on him, his affliction, aggression, litigation, confusion, destruction of religion, contention, his counselors, and God's charges and warnings. All these are highly attractive nuances that lend colors and interest in the book.

2.1 EARLY RESEARCHES ON JOB

The book of Job provokes a quantum amount of research over the years as a surging interest in scientific literature; especially biblical studies began to develop. Some of the early researches on Job currently at my disposal are the works of S.B Freehof *Book of Job: A Commentary; 1958,* H.H. Rowley *The New Century Bible Commentary* in 1970, Claus Westermann*'s The Structure of the Book of Job A Form Critical Analysis*; 1977, M. Sheldon's "*Suffering and Knowledge" 1980,* John E. Hartley *The International Commentary on the Old Testament; The Book of Job* written in 1988, Rowland E. Murphy and O. Carm's *Wisdom Literature and Psalms; 1988*, L.J. Waters' "Reflection on Suffering from the Book of Job" 1997, All of these laid their emphasis on the amazing strength of the character of Job . Even some of the most recent works namely that of Alisa Nelson and Tony Campbell in 2010 respectively, do not care to hack at the extreme side of Job's character. Although a bit earlier in 1994; Nick Overduin in his *Challenging a Silent God* offers a critical viewpoint about the character of the man Job that may provoke research on this perspective.

Elmer Smick in his *Another Look at the Mythological Element in the Book of Job* tries to express Job's response to his agony. He makes a glib allusion to chapter 3. He mentions the following: invocation of leviathan to curse his birth day (3:8). Smick points out that this constitutes Job's error for which he can scarcely be excused. Job questions the sovereign purpose of God. Job came close to cursing God to his face as Satan predicts. Freehof offers a different sort of observation to this matter,

> The difference between Job's attitude as between prologue and dialogue is in the mood of his reaction. In the prologue he is serene. He accepts suffering without a word of protest. In the Dialogue he is indignant….protest against his fate. But Job… held or holds to his faith (Sheldon 230).

In this observation Freeh of expresses Job's response to his suffering. However, it does not mention the core motive of Job's lament in chapter 3 which this study will consider in the subsequent sections.

2.2 CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP ON THE BOOK OF JOB

The book of Job is a scholarly fascinating document. Many books and articles on Job continue to be published evidencing scholarly fascination in this sage and the book that bears his name. At present, Dell, Katharine, and Will Kynes (eds.), fill a study lacuna in biblical scholarship by studying Job intertextually. This is one of the most recent scholarly approaches to the book. They have produced the first comprehensive treatment of intertextuality in Job in which different contributors submit essays that address intertextual resonances between Job and texts in all three divisions of the Hebrew canon and non-canonical volumes of Ancient Near East to the modern literature. The following is the summary of the content of the treatment:

Part 1-Job in Dialogue with the Pentateuch

Part 2- Job in Dialogue with the Prophets

Part 3- Job in Dialogue with the Writings and

Part 4- Job's Dialogue beyond the Hebrew Bible.

In these dialogues viable intertextual links were made between Job and the Torah (Pentateuch), the Nebim (Prophets), the katabiim (writings), and the extrabiblical literature of the Ancient Near East to modern literature. This shades light on the book of Job and also helps to appreciate it in the ongoing life of the universe as the society struggles and thrives with issues of life and death. The following are contributors to the project of the intertextual reading of the book of Job initiated by *Katharine Dell* and *Will Kynes: Manfred Oeming, Samuel E. Balentine, Markus Witte, Raik Heckl, Hilary Marlow, Christian Frevel, James L. Crenshaw, James K. Aitken, Christopher B. Hays, Anathea Portier-Young, J. Gerald Janzen, Susannah Ticciati, Gabrielle Oberhänsli.* These editors have done a good job for drawing together a strong group of

scholars who have produced varied, largely stimulating, and engaging studies around a unified theme of intertextual studies on the book of Job (Robson, qtd. in Katharine, Kynes). However, critical color on the character and the personality of Job was not portrayed.

CHAPTER THREE:
A TEXT OF TERROR! (JOB 3)

3.1 ABOUT JOB 3

Job 3 is a verbalization of Job's agony. In the words of Samudi, it is "a bitter complaint" that Job directed to the past. It seeks the impossible to erase the past (229-232).This chapter of the book of Job offers the most acute expression of Job's experience of the reality of suffering in the book as a whole (Whybray 40). In terms of literary genre it is a soliloquy, constituting an independent literary unit. This does not mean that it is isolated from the whole book for v.1 commences אַחֲרֵי־כֵן with (afterwards) relating itself to the preceding chapters (1-2, events of his misfortune). Nevertheless, it introduces a new stage in the development of the plot of the book. This is indicated by the shift from prose to poetry, as well as Job's change of tongue from patience to despair in chapter 3. V.1 opens the first speech and closes in v. 26.

Arguments concerning the structure of Job 3 fall basically into one of two categories.The first entails a two-strophe division, namely vv 3-10 and 11-26, with vv 3-10 constituting a curse and vv 11-26 a lament (Driver and Gray 30-40) The second involves a three-strophe division, namely vv 3-10 (strophe 1) constituting a curse, while vv 11-26 as laments are sub-divided into vv 11-19 (strophe 2) and 20-26 (strophe 3) Here the argument is supported that vv 3-10 entail Job's curse of his day of conception and birth, while vv 11-19 express the wish that if he had to be born, he would have died at birth, and vv 20-26 express a wish that what did not happen in vv 3-19, should now happen (Clines 75-76).

3.2 STUDYING JOB 3

The present unit of this book is an exegetical study of Job's soliloquy as disastrously wafted out of the land of Uz. But before the study is conducted, linguistic and translation comments are necessary for a meaningful acquaintance with the synchronic structures of the passage.

3.2.1 Hebrew Rendering of Job 3

אַחֲרֵי־כֵ֗ן פָּתַ֥ח אִיּ֑וֹב אֶת־יוֹמֹ֥ו וַיְקַלֵּ֗ל אֶת־יֹ֫ומֹו׃ פ [2] וַיַּ֣עַן אִיּ֣וֹב וַיֹּאמַֽר׃ [3] יֹ֤אבַד ׀ יֹום֮ אִוָּ֪לֶד בֹּ֫ו וְהַלַּ֥יְלָה
אָמַ֗ר הֹ֣רָה גָּֽבֶר׃ [4] הַ֭יֹּום הַה֣וּא יְהִ֣י חֹ֑שֶׁךְ אַ֤ל־יִדְרְשֵׁ֖הוּ אֱלֹ֣והַּ מִמָּ֑עַל וְאַל־תּ֥וֹפַע עָ֝לָ֗יו נְהָרָֽה׃ [5] יִגְאָלֻ֣הוּ
חֹ֭שֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָ֑וֶת תִּשְׁכָּ֥ן־עָ֝לָ֗יו עֲנָנָ֥ה יְבַעֲתֻ֑הוּ כְּמְרִירֵ֖י יֽוֹם׃ [6] הַלַּ֥יְלָה הַה֗וּא יִקָּחֵ֫הוּ֥ אֹ֭פֶל אַל־יֵ֣חַד בִּימֵ֑י שָׁנָ֥ה
בְּמִסְפַּ֗ר יְרָחִ֥ים אַל־יָבֹֽא׃ [7] הִנֵּ֤ה הַלַּ֖יְלָה הַה֣וּא יְהִי־גַ֑לְמוּד אַל־תָּבֹ֥א רִ֝נָּנָ֗ה בֹּֽו׃ [8] יִקְּבֻ֥הוּ אֹרְרֵי־֑יֹום
הָ֝עֲתִידִ֗ים עֹרֵ֥ר לִוְיָתָֽן׃ [9] יֶ֭חְשְׁכוּ כֹּוכְבֵ֣י נִ֑שְׁפֹּו יְקַו־לְאֹ֥ור וָ֝אַ֗יִן וְאַל־יִ֥רְאֶ֗ה בְּעַפְעַפֵּי־שָֽׁחַר׃ [10] כִּ֤י לֹ֣א סָגַ֣ר
דַּלְתֵ֣י בִטְנִ֑י וַיַּסְתֵּ֖ר עָ֣מָל מֵעֵינָֽי׃ [11] לָ֤מָּה ל֣וֹא מֵ֑רֶחֶם אָ֥מוּת מִבֶּ֝֗טֶן יָצָ֥אתִי וְאֶגְוָֽע׃ [12] מַדּ֣וּעַ קִדְּמ֣וּנִי בִרְכָּ֑יִם
ומַה־שָּׁדַ֥יִם כִּ֝֗י אִינָֽק׃ [13] כִּי־עַ֭תָּה שָׁכַ֣בְתִּי וְאֶשְׁקֹ֑וטָ יָשַׁ֥נְתִּי אָ֝֗ז יָנ֣וּחַ לִֽי׃ [14] עִם־מְלָכִ֥ים וְיֹעֲצֵ֗י אֶ֫רֶץ הַבֹּנִ֥ים
חֳרָבֹ֑ות לָֽמֹו׃ [15] אֹ֤ו עִם־שָׂרִ֨ים זָ֪הָב לָ֫הֶ֥ם הַ֭מְמַלְאִים בָּתֵּיהֶ֣ם כָּֽסֶף׃ [16] אֹ֤ו כְּ֭נֶפֶל טָ֣מוּן ל֑וֹא אֶהְיֶ֥ה כְּ֝עֹלְלִ֗ים
לֹא־רָ֥אוּ א�ֽוֹר׃ [17] שָׁ֤ם רְ֭שָׁעִים חָדְל֣וּ רֹ֑גֶז וְשָׁ֥ם יָ֝נ֗וּחוּ יְגִיעֵ֥י כֹֽחַ׃ [18] יַ֤חַד אֲסִירִ֨ים שַׁאֲנָ֪נוּ ל֫וֹא שָׁ֥מְעֹ֑ו קֹ֖ול נֹגֵֽשׂ׃
[19] קָטֹ֣ן וְ֭גָדֹול שָׁ֣ם ה֑וּא וְ֝עֶ֗בֶד חָפְשִׁ֥י מֵאֲדֹנָֽיו׃ [20] לָ֤מָּה יִתֵּ֣ן לְעָמֵ֣ל א֑וֹר וְ֝חַיִּ֗ים לְמָרֵ֥י נָֽפֶשׁ׃ [21] הַֽמְחַכִּ֥ים
לַמָּ֗וֶת וְאֵ֫ינֶ֥נּוּ וַיַּחְפְּרֵ֥הוּ מִמַּטְמוֹנִֽים׃ [22] הַשְּׂמֵחִ֥ים אֱ֝לֵי־גִ֗יל יָשִׂישׂ֥וּ כִּֽי יִמְצְאוּ־קָֽבֶר׃ [23] לַ֭גֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר־דַּרְכֹּ֣ו
נִסְתָּ֑רָה וַיָּ֖סֶךְ אֱלֹ֣והַּ בַּֽעֲדֹֽו׃ [24] כִּי־לִ֭פְנֵי לַחְמִ֣י אַנְחָתִ֑י תָּבֵ֥א וַיִּתְּכ֥וּ כַ֝מַּ֗יִם שַׁאֲגֹתָֽי׃ [25] כִּ֤י פַ֣חַד פָּחַ֣דְתִּי וַיֶּאֱתָ֑נִי
וַאֲשֶׁ֖ר יָגֹ֣רְתִּי יָבֹ֣א לִֽי׃ [26] לֹ֤א שָׁ֘לַ֤וְתִּי וְלֹ֣א שָׁקַ֣טְתִּי וְלֹא־נָ֭חְתִּי וַיַּ֣בֹא רֹ֑גֶז׃ פ

(**Bible works**)

3.2.2 English Translation of Job 3

Afterward Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. 2 And Job said, 3 "Let the day perish on which I was to be born, And the night which said, 'A boy is conceived.' 4 "May that day be darkness; Let not God above care for it, Nor light shine on it. 5 "Let darkness and black gloom claim it; Let a cloud settle on it; Let the blackness of the day terrify it. 6 "As for that night, let darkness seize it; Let it not rejoice among the days of the year; Let it not come into the number of the months. 7 "Behold, let that night be barren; Let no joyful shout enter it. 8 "Let those curse it who curse the day, Who are prepared to rouse Leviathan. 9 "Let the stars of its twilight be darkened; Let it wait for light but have none, Neither let it see the breaking dawn; 10 Because it did not shut the opening of my mother's womb, Or hide trouble from my eyes. 11 "Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire? 12 "Why did the knees receive me, and why the breasts, that I should suck? 13 "For now, I would have lain down and been quiet; I would have slept then, I would have been at rest, 14With kings and with counselors of the earth, who rebuilt ruins for themselves; 15 Or with princes who had gold, who were filling their houses with silver. 16 "Or like a miscarriage which is discarded, I would

not be, as infants that never saw light. 17 "There the wicked cease from raging, and there the weary are at rest. 18 "The prisoners are at ease together; they do not hear the voice of the taskmaster. 19 "The small and the great are there, and the slave is free from his master. 20 "Why is light given to him who suffers, and life to the bitter of soul; 21 Who long for death, but there is none, And dig for it more than for hidden treasures; 22 Who rejoice greatly, They exult when they find the grave? 23 "Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in? 24 "For my groaning comes at the sight of my food, and my cries pour out like water. 25 "For what I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me. 26 "I am not at ease, nor am I quiet, and I am not at rest, but turmoil comes" (New American Standard Bible-Bible Works 9).

3.2.3 Grammatical and Translation Notes on Job 3

These notes are based on the insightful highlights from the Net Bible drawn from Bible Works with simplified explanation by the researcher.

3:1 The verb יְקַלְלֶ֣ל "cursed" is the piel preterite from the verb *qalal* which means "to be light" in the qal stem, but here it means "to treat lightly, with contempt", he curse

אֶת־יוֹמֽוֹ -his day (KJV, ASV, NAB). The Syriac has "the day on which he was born." Job meant the day of his birth (Bible Works 9).

3:2 וַיַּ֖עַן אִיּ֣וֹב וַיֹּאמַֽר Job spoke up and said (vaya'an) which literary means "and he answered."The LXX has "saying" for the entire verse. The Syriac, Targum, and Greek A have what the MT has "[someone] answered and said" is phraseology characteristic of all the speeches in Job beginning with Satan in 1:9, only in 40:1 is it employed when God is speaking. No other New Testament portion employs it consistently.

2b. The MT simply has "and the night – it said...." By simple juxtaposition with the parallel construction ("on which I was born") the verb "it said" must be a

relative clause explaining "the night." Rather than supply "in which" and make the verb passive (which is possible since no specific subject is provided, but leaves open the question of who said it), it is preferable to take the verse as a personification. First Job cursed the day; now he cursed the night that spoke about what it witnessed (Bible Works 9).

3:3יֹאבַד יוֹם אִוָּלֶד בּוֹ וְהַלַּיְלָה אָמַר הָרָה גָּבֶר׃

"Let the day in which I was born perish and a night that said a man child has been conceived". The relative clause is carried by the preposition with the resumptive pronoun: "the day which I was born in it" meaning "the day on which I was born". The verb הָרָה "born" is the niphal imperfect. It may serve as preterite representing past action. The word גָּבֶר (gever- a man), distinguishes a man as strong distinct from children and women (Bible Works 9)

3.4a . יְהִי הַיּוֹם הַהוּא חֹשֶׁךְ אַל־יִדְרְשֵׁהוּ אֱלוֹהַּ מִמָּעַל וְאַל־תּוֹפַע עָלָיו נְהָרָה

"That day let it be darkness; let not God on high regard it, nor let light shine on it". The first two words should be treated in the words of Clines as casus pendus (qtd. in Bible Works 9). In this expression Job is negating the event and the decree of the first day of creation "Let there be light". Job wishes that his first day be darkness. Since only God has that prerogative Job adds the wish that God should not regard that day.

4bThe verb דָּרַשׁ (*darash*) means "to seek, inquire," and "to address someone, be concerned about something" (cf. Dut. 11:12; Jer. 30:14, Jer. 30:17). Job wants the day to perish from the mind of God.

4cThe verb is the Hiphil of יָפַע (*yafa'*), which means here "cause to shine." The subject is the term נְהָרָה (*n^{e}harah*,"light"), a *hapax legomenon* which is from the verb נָהַר (*nahar*, "to gleam" (see Isa 60:5). A hapax legomenon is a word that appears once in a text.

3:5 The word צַלְמָוֶת *tsalmavet,* is variously defined as“shadow of death” “dark shadow”, it may also connote “deep shadow”.Idiomatically, it means gloom that is deeper than *choshek.* The verb *gaal “*redeem”, “claim” is the homonymn “polute”. The expression כְּמְרִירֵי יוֹם “the blackness of the day”*kimrire yom* probably means everything that makes the day black e.g eclipses. Job wishes that all ominous darkness would terrify that day.

5aThe verb is simply לָקַח (*laqakh*, "to take"). Here it conveys a strong sense of seizing something and not letting it go.

5bThe pointing of the verb is meant to connect it with the root חָדָה (*khadah*, "rejoice"). But the letters in the text were correctly understood by the versions to be from יָחַד (*yakhad*, "to be combined, added").

5cThe choice of this word for "moons," יְרָחִים (*yᵉrakhim*) instead of חֳדָשִׁים (*khodashim*) is due to the fact that "month" here is not a reference for which an exact calendar date is essential (in which case חֹדֶשׁ [*khodesh*] would have been preferred).

3:6a The particle הִנֵּה *hineh* “behold” draws the reader’s attention on the statement that follows.

6b The irregular noun גַּלְמוּד Probably has the idea of barren rather than solitary.

6b The word is from רָנַן (*ranan*, "to give a ringing cry" or "shout of joy"). The sound is loud and shrill.The verb בּוֹ *bo* in 7c means to enter.

8a Let those who curse the day curse it – those who are prepared to rouse Leviathan.

Not everyone is satisfied with the reading of the MT. Gordis thinks"day" should be "sea," and "cursers" should be "rousers" (changing '*alef* to '*ayin*; cf. NRSV). This is an unnecessary change, for there is no textual problem in the line (qtd. in Net Bible). Others have taken the reading "sea" as a personification and accepted the

rest of the text, gaining the sense of "those whose magic binds even the sea monster of the deep." Those who curse the day are probably the professional enchanters and magicians who were thought to cast spells on days and overwhelm them with darkness and misfortune. The myths explained eclipses as the dragon throwing its folds around the sun and the moon, thus engulfing or swallowing the day and the night. This interpretation matches the parallelism better than the interpretation that says these are merely professional mourners.

3:8aThe verbal adjective עֲתִידְ‘*tid* means ready or prepared. It has a substantial use similar to that of participle in this usage. It is followed by the infinitive construct עֹרֵר *orer* “curser”. The infinitive without preposition serves as the object of the preceding verbal adjective.Job employs here the mythological figure Leviathan, the monster of the deep or chaos. Job wishes that such a creation of chaos could be summoned by the mourners to swallow up that day.

V9a Let its morning stars be darkened; let it wait for daylight but find none, nor let it see the first rays of dawn, יֶחְשְׁכוּ כוֹכְבֵי נִשְׁפּוֹ יְקַו־לְאוֹר וָאַיִן וְאַל־יִרְאֶה בְּעַפְעַפֵּי־שָׁחַר׃ Hebrew "the stars of its dawn." The word נֶשֶׁף (*neshef*) can mean "twilight" or "dawn." In this context the morning stars are in mind. Job wishes that the morning stars – that should announce the day – go out.

3:9 The absolute state אַיִן*ayin*“there is none” is used as verbal predicate “and none”.

3:10 Job finally expresses the crime of that night כִּי לֹא סָגַר דַּלְתֵּי בִטְנִי -it did not shut up the doors of my womb (to hinder his birth).

3:12 The verb קִדְּמוּנִי *qiddemuni* is the piel from *qadam*, meaning “to come before; meet; to prevent.” Here it has the idea of going to meet or welcome someone. כִּי אִינָק *Ki inaq* “that I should suckle.” The verb is the qal imperfect of *yanaq*- to suckle. Here the clause is subordinated to the preceding question and so function as a

final imperfect. This text uses a combination of perfect שָׁכַבְתִּי (I lie down/sleep) and imperfect אֶשְׁקֹוט (quiet/rest)

The participle עַתָּה (‘attah-now)gives to the perfect verb its conditional nuance. It presents actions in the past that are not actually accomplished but seen as possible.

3:16 The noun נֵפֶל *nefel* with the meaning miscarriage is the abortive thing that falls from the womb before the time is ripe (Ps. 58:9).

The word עֹלְלִים *olelim* normally refers to nurslings. Here it refers to infants in general or a stillborn child.

3:17 The word יגִיעִי *agia* means “exhausted, wearied,” it is clarified by the genitive of specification כֹּחַ meaning strength.

3:21 The verbהֶמְחַכִּים here with heavy suffixes and prefixes is the piel of *khakhah*“ to wait” for someone. The verb *khafar* means to “dig,” “excavate”. The sufferer digs to excavate death more than treasures.

3:25 The construction in this verse uses the cognate accusative with verb:כִּי פָחַד פָּחַדְתִּי “for the fear I feared” or “the dread thing I dreaded”. The verb *pakhad* has the sense of “dread” and the noun meaning “thing dreaded”. The structure of the sentence with the perfect verb followed by the preterite indicates that the first action preceded the second- he feared something but then, it happened.

3.2.4 Exegetical Analysis of Job 3

The focus of this particular element of the work is to carry out an exegetical analysis of the third chapter of the book of Job. With this chapter Job’s longer utterance now commences by which he involves himself in a conflict, which is his seventh temptation or trial (Delitzsch 284). Job 3 is a lament that this sage of Uz wafted.The theme of *curse* dominates this chapter of the book.

3.2.5 Job Curses the Day of His Birth (3:3-6)

This chapter has a special heading (v.1) before the standard introduction formula of the other speeches (v.2). The first introduction indicates the dramatic shift from Job's silence to his speaking with the sentenceאַחֲרֵי־כֵ֗ן פָּתַ֥ח אִיּ֫וֹב אֶת־פִּ֥יהוּ “After this Job opened his mouth”. This formula is an expression of deliberation and gravity. Compare Psalms 78:2 (Jameison, Fausset and Brown: PC Bible 5). V. 2.consists of only three words, which are separated by a *Rebia* thus: וַיַּ֣עַן אִיּ֣וֹב וַיֹּ֑אמַר. The function of a *rebia* as used here is to divide shorter verses with no '*atnah*,and vymr ,although *milel* is vocalizedוַיֹּ֑אמַר ,which always immediately precedes direct narration, is not well suited to close a verse. Then the nature of Job's speech is defined with the wordsיְקַלֵּ֥ל אֶת־יוֹמ֑וֹ “he cursed the day of his birth”.This wording indicates that the curse motive, rather than the lament, dominates this speech. With verses 1 and 2 serving as background issues the poem commences proper in verse 3. Job directs this curse to that inauspicious day which was responsible for his misery. In the Hebrew thought, according to Blank, a curse was not a mere expression of a wish, albeit it was charged with power to work for its own fulfillment, and once uttered it has passed beyond the power of its utterer, and gone into its evil mission (qtd. in Rowley 39).The reason for this curse lies in the agonizing questions about his being allowed to live in order to experience such a degree of pain he was currently going through (vv11-12). Job wishes that his birth-day may become swallowed up by darkness as into nothing. This is an interesting reversal of God's creative acts: “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3). By praying God above not care about it implies God not noticing him.

Job in this verse refers to himself as גֶּ֣בֶר *geber* .The several Hebrew words for “man” emphasize various aspects of his being eg אִ֝ישׁ*ish* “his strength” *or* אָדָ֗ם *adam*, “his earthiness and limitation”. But *geber* connotes a powerful man, particularly in contrast to a child or woman. In the darkest hour of his crisis, Job

refers to himself as a full-blooded man, a stalwart person (Hartley 92). Job considers himself in this context as a distinguished person who has been shamed by misfortune.

In seeking to remove the day of his birth from the calendar of existence Job commandsהַיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִי חֹשֶׁךְ “That day- let it be darkness”. Any day or block of time that remained in darkness never came into being. That is why Job piles up words for darkness in vs. 4-6 חֹשֶׁךְ *hoshek*-darkness (vs4a, 5a),צַלְמָוֶת *tsalmavet*-deep dark (v.5a). עֲנָנָה ‘*nana*- cloud mass (v5b), *kimriri*-blackness(v.5c), the kimriri would *baat*-terrify that day,אֹפֶל‘*opel*-gloom(v.6a). Job reinforces this injunction by entreating אַל־יִדְרְשֵׁהוּ אֱלוֹהַּ מִמָּעַל וְאַל־תּוֹפַע עָלָיו נְהָרָה “Let not God above seek it; let no light shine on it”. This phrase has exalted God’s lordship (cf. 31:2,28: Dut. 4:39). Whatever God seeks *darash* or (attend to) realizes its fullest potential. Conversely what God does not seek or support perishes. To make sure that day returns to chaos Job says וְאַל־תּוֹפַע עָלָיו נְהָרָה“Let not light shine on it”. Where there is no light there is no life. All of life is stagnant and dormant.

Job continues his curse by charging the powers of darkness to claim the day of his birth. If they hold it fast, that day would cease to exist.

3.2.6 Job Curses the Night (Job 3:7-10)

Job next addresses the night of his conception. It was a night when his life was conceived. But because of his present pain Job orders the gloom (‘opel) of primeval thick darkness to קָחָה *seize* or *abduct* that night. Job also directs a curse to rub the night of his conception of all fertility. He asked that it be “barren” or “sterile” גַּלְמוּד *galmud.* This means of course that his mother had been barren or unproductive as stony ground. If gloom has its way, that night would no longer even be counted among the days of the year or enter the number of monts (v.7). In the Near East it was their custom to shout when גֶּבֶר “boy” was born often not so

of females, but Job said “may no shout of joy be heard in it” (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: PC Bible 5). To ensure the vitality of the curse Job importunes the most skilled sorcerers in the ancient world to perform the curse against the day of his birth. These sorcerers are known as הָעֲתִידִים עֹרֵר לִוְיָתָן “those ready to stir up Leviathan”The Hebrew לִוְיָתָן Lewyaataan (v.8) denotes an animal, a crocodile or some huge serpent (Isa. 27:1). Leviathan continuously seeks to turn beauty into dust and order into confusion (Hartley 94). Whoever possesses the magical power to arouse him could activate the curses of destruction against anything good and noble. Job does not say they had the power they claimed; but, supposing they had, may curse the day.

3.2.7 Job’s Motive: Why Born (Job 3:11-`12, 16)

Because Job’s desire to blot out his night of conception and the day of his birth could not be fulfilled, he longed to have been a stillborn. That he said would have been better than his present condition. After cursing his birthday, he subsided into a quieter reflection on the trouble-free condition he would have enjoyed if he had been born dead. For Job, a stillbirth or a miscarriage would have resulted in rest in death (11-12 and 16). A whole strophe vs. 11-12 contains strong reason for his cursing the night of his conception or birth. He said that if he had been given no breath, he would have expired in the womb. He would simply have transported from the womb to the grave. Next Job asks *why did the knees*, most likely his father’s but possibly his mother’s *receive him*? He even questions why the parents could *suckle* him with the *breast*? He wishes that he had been discarded, or left to die unattended. Had this been the case, added Job in v.13;כִּי־עַתָּה שָׁכַבְתִּי וְאֶשְׁקֹוטָ “I would have lain down and been quiet”. This phrase expresses the intent of Job’s curse- he wants to be at rest. This rest recalls the ideal rest that God experienced on the seventh day of the week of creation (Gen. 2:1-3) (Hartley 95). If

Job had such a rest he certainly would not have been in such a state of turmoil. Instead he would disturb his rest. The intensity of his longing for rest is indicated by the use of four different terms: שָׁכַבְ*shakav*-"lie down",שָׁקַטוֹ *shaqat*-"quiet", יָשַׁנְ*yeshen*- "sleep",and נוּחַ*nuakh* "rest". Perfect rest is the goal of Job's curse-lament, for v.13 is reiterated in v.16. He further hacked back to the same idea in 10:18-19; 20-23; 6:8-9; 7:15:14:13. Having been born dead would have been far better than his present existence in extreme turmoil. This is more attractive to Job.

3.2.8 He Curses the Sabbath (Job 3:26)

In Genesis 2:2-3, God instituted the Sabbath. When all of creation work was finished God said "I will rest from my creative exercise on the seventh day. Job deliberately reversed this standard in verse 26 when he said לא־נָחְתִּי"I am not at rest." This is an indication that Job was filled with deep agitation. He was in the agony of mind and social discomfort to the extent that he would not repose in his series of curses.

3.2.9 His Personal Distress (Job 3:20-26)

In the style of a lament Job asks a very disturbing questionלָמָּה יִתֵּן לְעָמֵל אוֹר וְחַיִּים לְמָרֵי נָפֶשׁ "why is light given to the wretched and life to the bitter of soul?At this point in his anguish Job's wish he had died is heightened. He is referring back to the subject of light and darkness as indicative of life and death. These unfortunate creatures are characterized as wretched or miserable עָמֵל*amel* andמָרֵי נָפֶשׁ *mare nepes*-bitter of soul. To Job it seems incongruous that people like him who are physically miserable and inwardly bitter are "given" life when they really do not want it. When sufferers finally reach the grave, Job said, they rejoice because death releases them from pain. The light of a beautiful day only makes sufferers more aware of their sorrows and increases their longing for death. In vain they search for death more eagerly than miners who מַמַּטְמוֹנִים יַחְפְּרֵהוּ"dig for

hidden treasures". When they finally come to the grave "they rejoice greatly". Job's question is a strong complaint against God. Since it is God who gives them life and allows them to suffer so, he should recognize their sad state and let them die, if he has any compassion at all.

In v.23 Job applies his general complaint to his own situation. That is, the *why* of v.20 is implied here: לֶגֶבֶר אֲשֶׁר־דַּרְכּוֹ נִסְתָּרָה "why are light and life given to a man whose way is hidden?" The word *derek* refers to his destiny. That it *is hid* means his present life has no purpose at all. The losses that have befallen him have undercut any sense of meaning he has for life and have left him frustrated and miserable. Light and life, God's greatest gifts to any person, only serve to compound Job's distress beyond measure.

Job imagines that God has surrounded him with a fence so that he cannot find any way of escape from his painful state. His complaint functions as an ironic twist to Satan's suspicion (1:10). Satan argued that God had fenced Job in to keep him safe from any harm and thus Job grew prosperous without any hindrances. But now an anguished Job complains that God has fenced him about to keep any help from reaching him. To Job God has locked him in turmoil and has thrown away the key. In v 24 Job expresses the height of his distress thus: כִּי־לִפְנֵי לַחְמִי אַנְחָתִי תָּבֹא וַיִּתְּכוּ כַּמַּיִם שַׁאֲגֹתָי: "...sighing comes to me instead of food; my groans pour out like water" This was the bad food upon which Job was being fed on a daily basis. The word '*anaha* is often translated "sigh" but that word is far too gentle in meaning. The Hebrew root refers to the loud wails or moans that arise from those doing oppressive, slave labour or a people devastated by a tragedy (Ex.2:23;Lam.1:4,8,11,21,22) (Hartley 101). The wailing that Job wafted daily were those of one in the most serious of anguish. In v .25 Job lamented that כִּי פַּחַד פָּחַדְתִּי וַיֶּאֱתָיֵנִי וַאֲשֶׁר יָגֹרְתִּי יָבֹא לִי: "what I dreaded has come upon me; what I feared has

come to me”. This statement reveals that before his trial Job had dreaded that some ill might befall his household. His understanding of this is evident in his constant offering of sacrifices and on behalf of his children in case they have cursed God in their hearts (1:5). וַאֲשֶׁר יָגֹרְתִּי יָבֹא לִי “what I feared has come to me”. He had also feared that some tragedy might end his prosperity. Job’s qualms about some calamity had eventually become a terrifying reality.

Job’s pain restricted him freedom of movement. Therefore Job was שַׁאֲגָתָֽי “sighing” rather than “eating” his illness had made him lose his appetite. And his שַׁאֲגָתָֽי “groaning” was unending like the water of a waterfall (Bible Knowledge Commentary: PC Bible 5).

Job’s restlessness, turbulent condition is summarized in the conclusion of this soliloquy. Though he longed for peace and rest, he experienced only *rogez* turmoil. In this lament Job is not voicing the injustice of his plight, but the intensity of it. Later in the book as his agony wore on he spoke of its injustice. This note ends the exegetical analysis of Job 3. On this background we can now see clearly in the chapter that follows how Job disastrously dragged the entire universe into his personal suffering.

PART TWO

CHAPTER FOUR: A DELETION OF THE PENTATEUCHAL COSMOGONY AND THEOGONIC CREATION OF GENESIS 1 AND 2

4.1 A TERRIFYING PSALM

Job 3 is a psalm, a stylized poem that is metered just like any other Hebraic song. It contains some degree of repetitions and symmetries strophic structures. It is designed to convey a powerful message of Job's anguish.

However, nobody uses it in worship. A worshipping congregation makes use of the Davidic and other psalms in liturgies of prayer, singing and private times but no one uses Job 3. Neither have I heard someone preach from it. It "expresses raw grief, utterly hopeless terror, pain, sorrow, fear and rage" (Overduin 6).

We have heard so much about the amazing strength of the character of Job in the midst of his pain. Everything Job had, including his health, was lost. God allowed the devil to release real pain for Job. This nearly wasted him away. His marriage suffered too. Job's wife told him to curse God and die. Job refused. But his problem kept on. At a point Job decided he must see God face to face (23:3). He searched for him in vain (cf.vs 8,9).

The present enquiry is another dimension that Job took as a response to his personal agony. The attitude displayed at this stage of Job's difficulty is simply terrifying. Job engages the whole universe here. Job becomes a committed verbal deconstructionist of the biblical, and both of the Jewish and the Christian celebrated doctrine of *creation ex-nihilo.* Brutality finds its wide range expression in Job 3. What God constructed in seven days, or in wide range of geographical eras as some teach, Job undid in a speech unit. God created with the use of his word. Job also, uncreated with his word. Bits by bits, God established the world. Job, also

in a systematic fashion, bits by bits extirpates it. A passage that seeks to delete the substructure of the Bible, it is quite "simply overwhelming" (Overduin 6). Let us see how far Job's rage could go.

4.2 GOD'S CREATION DEFABRICATED

Job is very much aware of the foundational biblical assertion that God is the creator of the universe. Of the really seven creation passages in the Old Testament, Job's passage (Job 38-41) is the longest (cf. Gen. 1, Gen.2, Psalm104, Prov. 8:22-31, Eccl. 1:2-11, 12; 1-7 and excerpts from Isaiah 40:-55) (Creation). In Job 2:9 his wife tells him to curse God and die but Job refuses. In Job 3 he comes awfully close to cursing God. Now the walls of good talk and righteousness are crumbling down. The servant of God is no more what he used to be as we can see in the subsequent happenings.

4.3 JOB'S ATTACK ON THE LIGHT (3:4-6)

To realize how cruel Job becomes one needs to see the way Job tries to reverse the creation account in Genesis 1 which we studied in the foregoing chapter. Job 3 defabricates Genesis 1. This makes this chapter scaring. Job does not curse God, but he does try to waste away the whole creation and to implicate the universe into his problem with the creator. The first reality that God's word brought into being was light (Gen. 1:3). The first thing that Job exerted a verbal attack upon was the light. In his destructive exercise, he followed the creation order of God! In Job 3:4 he said, "Let there be darkness". Light or power (electricity) is very crucial in human economy. God knew this and the first thing he created for humanity was light. Light is a substance. It dispels darkness, we prefer it from darkness. The Psalmist appreciates it very well when he says darkness brings about weeping but light brings joy (Ps. 30:5). Light illumines our planet earth. It is responsible for the ongoing of most of the life's activities including plants and

animals. Note the importance of light to a photo chemical process that is responsible for the production of plants in the presence of sunlight and chlorophyll. Without light this scientific process would not take place resulting to un-productivity in plant or even extinction of plants' life. The implication of this disruption would be impossibility of human and animal life as well. Job knows that uncreating the light is accordingly, undoing human and animal life on earth. Job wanted to frustrate God's efforts at the fullness of the universe. Because Job experienced pains he wanted to rob God of his glory.

4.4JOB ATTACKS THE SEPARATION MOTIF (1:4).

The second thing God did was to separate the day from the night (cf Gen. 1:4). He also separates the land and the sea. At this point Job says "Let day and night jumble up in form of a *terdium quid* so that they become indistinctive (cf Job 3:3-9). To mix light and darkness is a very dubious chemistry. It may result to neither darkness nor light (Erickson 729). This is accordingly making a serious confusion of the divine economy. Darkness is simply the absence of light. But if it were a reality, Job's conjunction would have resulted to a crude chemical equation like this common one: $H_2 + O_2$ – two parts of gas hydrogen and one part of the gas oxygen. This results in a liquid. This indicated a mixture of light and darkness, so that it would neither be both. This design was to contradict reality. By this proposal Job wanted to stop all human activity; those activities in which he was engaged; farming, grazing, business, ceremonies and even worship which often depends on light which is preceded by a reasonable period of darkness. Separation is a fundamental concept both to creation and to Israel's existence (Gen. 3:15; 12:1; Lev. 20:24-25; Num. 8:14). God calls them to separate from the pagan nations (Waltke 69). Job is hereby collapsing this divine social order in his chemistry.

4.5JOB ATTACKS HIS BIRTHDAY (3-10).

Job says, “I wish I had never been born or conceived”. He wishes he were a still born child or had died quickly afterwards. In v. 3 he says “may the day of my birth perish, and the night it was said, ‘A boy is born!’. He says “that day – may it turn to darkness; may God above not care about it. Here he even invokes in the absence of his silent God, leviatan to help him cure his birthday. He even calls upon light to help him frustrate his birthday (3:4c). From vs 3-10, Job heaps attacks upon attacks on his day of birth. Job is turning the popular “Happy birthday to me” upside down and inside out. He is saying “Unhappy birthday to me” (Overduin 7). He even wishes his birthday be removed from the calendar (3:6).

4.6 JOB ATTACKS LIFE (3:3)

In Genesis 1:26 God says, “Let us make man” but in Job 3:3, 11, 20, 23, Job says “I wish I was not there” “Let us not make man”. Job wishes he were dead at birth. In his critical hour, Job is displaying a serious disregard for life (cf. Ex. 20:13). This sage by this wish encourages murder and abortion which were serious moral issues among the Israelites. This pronouncement contradicts the righteousness claim for Job (1:1).

To wish to die as Job does here disrupts marriage. If Job were dead as his children, his marriage would have suffered. Job goes even beyond the first creation story to Genesis 2:18. Here he damages marriage as a structure of creation. He even underscores God’s purpose for marriage – companionship, sex and children. In Genesis 1:28a God commanded humanity to increase. Job turns increase upside – down and inside – out. To wish to die is to wish to decrease. This wish deconstructs the cultural mandate in Genesis 1:28. The Biblical account of creation is pivotal for Old Testament theology; there are many rich theological issues embedded in this narrative, Job systematically deconstructs them. Job attacks the entire purpose of God at its core!

4.7 JOB'S ATTACK ON THE SABBATH (3:26)

After the creative activities, God finally said, "I am going to rest. The Sabbath has come" (Gen.2:2-3). At the end of his speech, Job attacks the Sabbath. He uses four different words to emphasize that he is not going to rest –אַנְחָתִי my sighing, שַׁאֲגֹתָי my groanings, לֹא שָׁלַוְתִּי I am not quiet, and רֹגֶז turmoil (vs 24-26). He concludes that "he cannot relax" (V. 26). The Sabbath of God, correctly argues Ridderbos, is to be regarded as creation climax, and this rest was expressed by mentioning the seventh day (qtd. In Young 77). But in verse 26, Job would not reach climax in his grief.

This aspect of Job's brutality over God's creation is also awful. To destroy the Sabbath is to assume a continued destructive activity, it is an open attack on an important aspect of Hebrew religious practice. This also frustrates God's worship. This is a serious darkening of God's design with words. Job who lacks knowledge of where these foundations were sunk now stands out to destroy them. Job is given the freedom to challenge the traditional notions about God. No Israelites would dare do and say what Job did and said. Job dismantles the whole creation including the Sabbath.

Why would Job drag the whole universe into this serious mess? Why on earth would he express this degree of wickedness over God's creation? Job was in pain, but he gave the reason that by the time of his extreme pain God was missing (Job 23). When Job wanted to take God to the court of justice, God was away from all the cardinal points (23:1-9)! There were no footprints of God on the sands of Uz. The only option left for Job was to waste his life and God's world (cf. 23:11). This portrays an improper attitude towards God and creation, especially from a great hero of faith like Job. These are the harshest words Job utters against himself in the entire book. They startle us. The friends too are shocked. They fear that his

faith in God has melted into distrust (cf. 4:5-6). Why would the one who refuses to curse God become so hostile to him and the creation? The contrast between the Job of the prologue and the Job of the poem could not be sharper. The former Job "did not sin or charge God with wrong" (1:22), but this Job verbalizes his bitter feelings. This is a display of human limitation and impatience. Other nuances of Job's personality and character can be analyzed in the subsequent segments of this write-up.

CHAPTER FIVE:

AN EPITOME OF POOR MANAGEMENT OF PAIN

5.1 LITIGATION AND LEGAL METAPHORS IN THE BOOK OF JOB

Job exhibited mixed emotions in his management of pain. Conservative biblical scholarship and popular preaching does not seem to notice this. Job is always portrayed as being patient throughout his ordeal (Hartley 339). The patience of Job and his amazing strength of character is often emphasized. Overduin, however, pointed out without mincing words that "…,Job … is far from patience" (5). He is hurting and he is so upset that he comes dangerously close to cursing God. He even invited the priests of Leviatan; ancient Near-Eastern magicians to help him curse, not exactly God, but his creation (cf 3:8), which is tantamount to cursing the creator.

The trouble is, Job thirsts for the presence of God but he gets no sense of it. He further seeks to take God to court but unfortunately for him he could not find the creator (cf 23:1-9). Job 23 contains legal metaphors. By metaphors here I simply mean *words.* Take notice of vs. 3 and 4 where Job says

מִי־יִתֵּן יָדַעְתִּי וְאֶמְצָאֵהוּ אָבֹוא עַד־תְּכוּנָתֹו: אֶעֱרְכָה לְפָנָיו מִשְׁפָּט וּפִי אֲמַלֵּא תוֹכָחוֹת

" If only I knew where to find him (God); if only I could go to his dwelling! I would *state* my *case* before him and fill my mouth with *arguments*." This idea is heightened in v.6 and 7 where Job says he will *win* the *case* and not God. Job wanted to enter into some legal arguments with God (Hartley 339). Job is the first and only Bible character to initiate *litigation* with God, the Great Monarch of the galaxies. But then, he ran into a big problem. The God whose hand he sought into judgment was both his *opponent* and *judge* of the same court of justice (v. 6)! In Job 9:15-16 he refers to God as 'my judge', Job contemplated summoning God to court but then believes he would not be given "fair hearing*"* by the one that is both his opponent and judge. A series of legal metaphors appear in the book of Job. In 9:19 he is a God of 'justice' and in v. 20 Job talks of himself being 'innocent', but then, 'condemned', 'blameless' and being pronounced 'guilty'. The metaphors are replete down the line through the rest of the chapter; from vs.21-24 each verse bears a legal terminology. Matters of *confronting* God in *court*, seeking for someone who would *arbitrate* between him and God, and even *speaking* without *fear* of God are said by

Job in 9:32-35. Where is this God he has believed in all of his life? Job leaves no stone unturned in his search for God, attacking everything God has left his mark on: creation, tradition and wisdom. (Overduin). Job complained vehemently maintaining his innocence throughout the book.

5.2 CRUMBLING CONCEPT OF GOD

In his hour of anguish, true and authentic concept that Job held of the creator some of which he frequently hacks to seem to be crumbling down. There are several internal textual particulars alluding to this fact as we can see below:

5.2.1 A Missing God! (Job 23)

Some segments of this chapter of Job (23) are quite frankly, both startling and mind boggling. Especially when composed by sage Job who is known to have been nurtured in a strict tenor of religious life. Job 23 is a deliberate depreciation of the divine attribute of *transcendental* and *immanence* of God, or better still, attribute *omnipresence* of God. This doctrine asserts the saturative presence of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit everywhere, all the times simultaneously. To ask where is God, when was God, and how does God are grossly inapplicable to God. Job violates this core tenet of Christian doctrine when he claimed in vs. 8,9 that

I have searched in the East, but God is not there;
I have not found him when I searched in the West.
God has been at work in the North and the South,
but still I have not seen him.GNT

To seek to locate God from the east, west, north and south, as Job does here indicates that something terribly goes wrong with Job. The one who is pretty aware that God pre-existed all of space and time and, accordingly, cannot be localized in a particular special geographical location and time boundaries. Now he comes announcing to the entire universe a missing god! This incident reminds me of a movie I once watched in the late 90s, in which a certain Nigerian community had a village problem with a class of rascally and vagabond persons. They resolved to consult a particular village god who would reveal the culprits. The offenders secretly went and stole the god who was the only of the community. As they arrived at the shrine the priest came back from the inner chamber reporting the god to have been missing! This is the situation of Job

now but it still constitutes the poorest concept of the Hebraic God he now deals with. Will Job get away with this notion of God?

We can make a personal application of this matter. We live in the days of iniquity when most people hold poor concepts of God. Some look at God as a heavenly policeman who stands at crossroads to harass erring individuals. Some consider him as an old fellow that can be freely manipulated, while some think they can blindfold him and get away with their iniquity. Others like Job do think he travels sometimes. In this corrupt context sometimes one's circumstances makes the divine presence dull and dim. Whatever is one's cause of this poor concept of God, man is highly responsible for his religious error and amazingly poor view and relationship to God. You cannot successfully manufacture God of your choice at your whims and caprices. Accept and relate with God as disclosed in his word to mankind.

Of still further importance to this wing of the treatment is the identity of the reason for which Job was searching for God. Verses 3 and 4 supply that reason thus: "If I only knew where to find him; if only I could go to his dwelling! I would state my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. Job launches a case against God, his maker and that of the universe! Of particular interest to an orthodox critic is his proposal to *argue* a hopeless *case* with the ruler of both the macrocosm and microcosm! In the following set of verses, Job reveals his pride as he states, "…an upright man will state his case", take particular notice of the phrase *upright man* as applied to Job, by *him,* and for *him*. What is more interesting here is that no other character in this entire drama applies this appellation to Job. Read the comment of Eliphaz in Job 4 and you will note that self- righteousness and aggrandizement was his practice. Verses 17-19 capture this fact very well when the Temanite asks:

'Can a mortal be more righteous than God?
Can a man be more pure than his Maker?
If God places no trust in his servants,
If he charges his angels with error,
How much more those who live in houses of clay,
Whose foundations are in the dust,
Who are crushed more readily than a moth! Vs 17-19 (NIV)

Job's assumption of perfection takes an unhealthy level. Eliphaz ends his speech calling Job a fool in claiming an inordinate status of moral perfection. Compare 4:21 and 5:2. Although Job

receives hard facts from Eliphaz in Job 4, they are truths one can apply somewhere, sometime, even to some extent on the case in point.

5.2.2 God as an Oppressor- A Blasphemy? (Job 9:22-24)

This is another wrong notion that Job held about the God he believed in all of his life. He calls God an *oppressor.* This is a terrible concept of God. In v.22 Job accuses God of injustice for he is capable of carelessly smashing both the blameless (the good) and the wicked. He charges God with the sin of mockery of the innocent. That is he sends an epidemic somewhere and then laughs at the dismay of the innocent victims (v.23b), and God can even go as far as blindfolding judges of the land of Uz! (Job 9:24c). The implication is that God, for Job can also allow a land to fill with corruption. All the official bribery, patronage and the sin of nepotism by Samuel; are condoned by God. Job asserts the certainty of God's oppressor ship when he asks: "if it is not he, then who is it? (V.24c).

What a terrible risk to undertake at the hands of a blameless God! This language is a dejection of God. As already asserted in the beginning of this chapter, Job is the first and only Bible character to ascend the level of *legal indictment* of God. Now, Job accuses God of things mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. Many Bible characters went into terrible traumas according to their respective capacities to bear: Joseph, Israel as a nation, David's 12 years as a fugitive, Jeremiah, Jonah, in the Old Testament, Jesus and Paul in the New Testament- all would have excessively blamed God for allowing great and prolonged evil to cave in on them. Yet there is no hint at unhealthy complaints and uncontrolled running of the mouth. In 10:3 Job prods "Does it please you to oppress me?" As rightly observed by Overduin "This is the only place in the Old Testament where the verb "to oppress" is connected to a subject referring to God"(21). God does not oppress. Oppression is a vice that cost God almost a decade of (Amos) prophetic ministry to condemn in Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah, and Israel. This is the ill deemed right by the proverbial righteous Job to associate with God.

5.3 POOR COLLOCATION AND VIOLATION OF HEBREW POETIC METERS

There are a lot of literary violations in the book of Job. The facts of poor grammar for most parts and style of presentation were treated in the introductory material. Suffice it at this point to note that Job in his state of pain breaks the patterns of poetic images.

For one, many words have a natural paternal. In the science of translation we say they collocate, they go together. You cannot make a good communication when you mismatch words that are supposed to be used in pairs. For example in Genesis, (though in a reversed arrangement) 'evening' and 'morning' are paired together to communicate the completion of the creative work of the creator for each day, (compare Genesis 1:13, 19, 23, and 31).The Psalmists often paired *day* and *night* in one sentence, for example, Psalm 92: 1-2 "it is good…to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night." That happens repeatedly in the psalms- day and night; morning and evening; dawn and dusk; the sun rises and the sun sets. These regular pairs always belong together in biblical constructions. In 7:3 Job mocks this grammatical pattern by pairing together terms that are unnatural partners. The unfortunate and miserable Job says: "I have been allotted *months* of futility, and *nights* of misery have been assigned to me." The normal collocation of the word *months* is *years*, and that of *nights* is *days*. Again, poetic distortion is achieved in 7:8, where *morning* is paired with *moment* instead of *morning* and *evening*. This is a deliberate violence to the poetic style of Genesis creation account as shown above. This is a strange literary innovation. Though Job could not locate the creator with his *case* and mouthful of *arguments*, he could assess God's creation and do a series of deconstructions. This is a serious involvement of the entire creation in the problem of his suffering.

5.4 LITERARY MOCKERY OF PSALM 8 !

One other literary achievement Job effected during his painful experience is the textual deconstruction of Psalm 8. In terms of what kind of literature one is reading, psalms 8 is a famous *creation Psalm*. Job's pain as far as one can perceive is highly allergic to divine structures. Job verbally extirpated the universal structures reported in Genesis 1 and 2, popularly tagged the creation stories. Now he faces to erase Psalm 8! The creation of God is possibly in trouble with the afflicted man of Uz. Job is highly at odds with the universe. Chapter

10 of the book of Job reveals the sin of God; the reason why Job is in conflict with God's creation, God had condemned him, and is now in a quarrel, strife, contention, prosecution, and fight against him (job) (v.2), as understood by different versions.

Job in the words of Overduin "turns Psalm 8 upside down and inside out." Man who is the crown of all of the creative act of God is reduced to meaninglessness by Job! "what is man," mocks Job, "that you have made so much out of him, that you have given him so much attention, that you examine him every morning and every moment? Will you never look away from me, or leave me alone for an instant?" (7:17-19). In his anger Job portrays God's providence as if it were a nuisance.

In the same vein, Job makes mockery of the earth God built and designed for human beings. The earth becomes for Job the domain of the oppressed human beings whose life is like a hard day's work for no pay (7:1-6). The earth is a place of mysery. Job is more comfortable in sheol. It now becomes for him a place of relief for in death one is out of God's reach (7:7-10). The heaven according to Job is the place where the divine tormentor of humans lives (6:4; 7:20). The worst place to live for Job is heaven and the second worst place is the earth. The best place one can be is sheol!

5.5 PERPLEXING METRICS IN JOB 6:2

Job in his expression of grief does not only violate poetic routines, he does as well engage a terrible invention of a dubious mathematical standard, he vouches for a quantification of psychic facts! Job wishes that his *anguish* and *misery* be weighed on a *scale* (6:2)! Of particular importance is that most translators I noted punctuated this wish with an exclamation mark. In science, facts are always brute, crystal concrete, and therefore, can be qualified and quantified but in religion or broadly speaking, in quasi-sciences where facts are abstract, no way could one quantify them. However, in his anguish Job turns things upside- down and inside-out.

Now Job makes an impossible request that his friends weigh his pain. With what scale shall they balance his sorrow? Which scale can balance a broken heart? Ears? Eyes? Laughter? Indifference? Sympathy? Tears? Or is it a BP apparatus or stethoscope? Whichever scale, Job is

only deepening his pain and asking others a question he can only answer himself. In the chapter that follows we will consider the implications of Job's aggression.

CHAPTER SIX:

IMPLICATIONS OF JOB'S AGGRESSION

The intent of this weave of the book is to identify the theological themes that are imbedded in the passages of Job that express dry grief over pain as portrayed in the previous three chapters. These texts contain essential theological axioms that are central for supplying the whole framework within which one's Christian life can be lived and one's Bible study can be conducted. It may accordingly lend coloration to the style of service and belief system for Christians in Nigeria. What then, are the theological claims of Job 3 and other similar segments that have separate messages for Christians in Nigeria?

6.1 SOME THEOLOGICAL CLAIMS OF THE BOOK OF JOB

There are a lot of truths one can glean from the book of Job that are of paramount importance to Christians in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world.

6.1.1 God is not aloof from His Creatures

God permits the troubles that we have. But usually, he protects us from troubles. In his Son and the Holy Spirit God is always present with those in anguish.

6.1.2 We must not Probe so Hard on Our Plight

There is no final answer to the question of why the righteous suffer as Job would insist to know in his response to pain. When one is in the most difficult of circumstances one must not necessarily insist on knowing "why" as Job does. (Cf 3:11, 12, 16, 20 and 23). If one must insist on knowing why one suffers one should logically insist on knowing why one enjoys. One should learn to endure bitterness with full patience but less questions because it has its good side.

Suffering purifies one's earthly life and even beyond. Paul says. "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

6.1.3 There will be no Utopia here on Earth

One must take the fact that not everything will always end up very well as one usually expects. Life is like photography, you need the negative aspects too to develop. It is splendid that the book of Job ends in a positive way; God's goodness is appreciated given the way the book ends. But one must not infer from Job that this applies to all instances. Jeremiah's life ended up in difficult circumstances. He suffered embarrassment, imprisonment and deprivation. He died in Egypt as a tired old man (Mc Cain 240). John the Baptist proved to be faithful in the most precarious of circumstances but was executed at the age of thirty- one. Jesus too in the best of his deportment was nailed to the cross at the age of thirty- three. All of the disciples suffered imprisonment or martyrdom. Things do not always end well as they do in Job. This may shape one's response to hard times.

6.1.4 God does not Always Heal Man from all his Diseases

The rest of the Bible is abundantly clear that God does not always choose to heal everyone (Cf 1kgs 15:23, 24; 2kgs 13:14, 2Chron. 21:19). From the above instances: Asa, Elisha, Jehoram were not healed and died of all their diseases.

6.1.5 Satan is Limited

Satan is the fiercest enemy of God and his creation but he has limited power to harass humans. He cannot cause any havoc without obtaining permission from God. Yet he cannot exceed the limits God assigned to him (Job 1:12; 2:6). Satan cannot operate beyond the limits that God has set for him. Today we see a lot of suffering and pain, natural disasters around the world such as persistent flood, typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and hurricanes. We have evils like human trafficking and terrorism. With all these terrible things happening seemingly unabated, Satan is not unlimited. He has limits the Lord has set for him.

6.1.6 A Man does not have to be Absolutely Perfect to please God

Job complained, challenged God, demanded taking him to court and even urged God to put his accusation against him (Job) in writing (31: 35 -37). He became an agitated bee yet the Bible makes it clear that he passed God's test (42:10 – 16). Though he needed some corrections, God was pleased with him in the end (Mc Cain 242).

6.1.7 Faith is a Great Tool for the Godly

With this lament Job does not renounce his former faithfulness. Later on he set his eyes back on God. Godly people can experience pain but faith can keep them with their God. Pain does not come to separate us from God it comes to draw us to him. It strengthens the sufferer than weaken him.

6.1.8 Expression of Human Frailty

This lament may be regarded as weakness on the part of Job. If a man on account of his sufferings wishes to die early, or not have been born at all, he has lost his confidence in God, who, even in the severest suffering, designs his highest good, and this want of confidence is sin, however, circumstantial.

6.1.9 One does not Cry to Please Anyone

One can learn from Job that one does not cry to please any one. Laments are issued out of the depths of their causes. If anyone is crying to please others, he or she is a hired mourner. Job almost wasted the creation (Job3) even as Jesus vouched for the postponment of his event; the Easter (Matt. 26:39).

One does not normally cry to please anyone else but to satisfy his expression of anguish and also relieve himself. However, we should take care how we express grief else we appear like Job; implicating the entire universe in our personal problems.

6.1.10 Suffering Should not be Trivialized

Suffering is not a trivial matter. All of us face the realities of this life with tears. The joy we have even in Jesus is interwoven with tears but this is the way God made it. There is no joy unmixed with sorrow in this world. The Bible describes the Christian as, 2 Cor. 6:10 “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything” (NIV). Life is not simple. There is pleasure and there is great pain. But we should know that pain comes with a purpose. It does not work against but for us.

6.1.11 Job’s Lament should not Set a Model to be Copied

Though one does not cry to please people, Job’s expression of grief should not set a model for Christian response to anguish. Christ is the faultless model to copy. His example of patience should be followed. He was not threatened by pain but rather committed himself to him that judges righteously.

6.2 AFFINITY BETWEEN JOB’S CHARACTER AND THE PRESENT SOCIAL CONTEXT IN NIGERIA

This segment purports to relate Job’s situation as portrayed in this work to the local context of Nigeria. The wise King Solomon asserts that there is a lot of wickedness and madness in the hearts of men (Eccl. 9: 3). There is a lot of insanity in the world system. The natural proclivity of humanity is towards selfishness, apathy and violence. Though a few manage to rise above this nature and become something better, the kernel of darkness is still inborn. Wickedness increases with the world’s population (Gen.6-9). The book of Job contains harsh, brutish and inhuman deportment over the universe. This has its roots from Genesis 3 where humanity was first poisoned by sin. The African experience tasted this portion.

6.2.1 Crime and Public Safety Problem

This is one of the biggest problems we face in Nigeria today. The tendency of crime is to rub and destroy as exactly as intended by Job. Robbery constitutes hot topics in our Newspapers, indicating that there is a lot of crime in our country. Crime gives citizens sleepless nights. There is great fear of unsafety in neighborhoods. Nigeria is a great failure in public safety. She has a high murder rate. We record 17.7 homicide cases per every 100,000 people ("Ozochukwu" 2). There are crimes of smuggling and piracy, crime against foreigners is also on the increase. There are rampant cases of armed robbery on our highways and urban and semi-urban cities. In 1998 Nigeria was ranked number 81 in the world crime level. In 2000 she had 1.2 on Corruption Perception Index, she became number three in crime level by the year 2004 (Uwolabi 81).

There is another big threat in Nigeria security, the *Boko Haram;* a well-known agent of destruction. They pose a deadly threat to humanity. This is an Islamic sect that emerged from Northern Nigeria in 2012 advocating for the cancellation of Western education and Islamization of Nigeria. It is a militant Islamic movement with ties to Al-Qaeda whose name translates into Western Education is forbidden ("Uzochukwu" 1). They are Sunny Islamists desperately wanted to establish an Islamic State in Nigeria. They first launched their bombing campaign in 2009 ("Uzochukwu"). The group first attacked Bauchi police station, Eagle Square in Abuja and bomblasted the UN office where 26 expatriates lost their lives ("Boko Haram"). 15th April 2014 is one of the darkest days in the Nigeria's human rights history. On that day, 234 female students were abducted from a secondary school at Chibok, Borno State, where they went to acquire Western education. Their crime was pursuance of knowledge (Hagher 4). This abduction is a brutality too terrible to contemplate, opening 234 innocent girls to dreadful possibilities of physical and emotional brutality (Hagher 5). The Nigerian

government in her normal administrative poise, this was a crime worth waging war against any nation that offers asylum for these girls to be prepared for evil and even become sexual slaves in their arena. By the time these girls are set loose to invade the country the republic will witness the most dubious of evils against humanity. Our leaders should not insinuate that they have no idea where these our daughters are. Where were the Army, the Air Force, the Navy, the Police, the SSS, the SARS, and the Immigration? Why are humans just disappearing in Nigeria like frogs? On May 1, 2014 they launched a car bomb blast on a Worker's Day in Abuja which killed 19 people at a Bus Station. In June 18, 2014, they killed 15 students in a bomb blast in a secondary school in Kano State. During the summer of 2014, they committed terrible violence on a weekly basis. In July 2014 it was estimated by Human Rights Watch that 2,053 were killed in 95 separate attacks by the Boko Haram in the first half of 2014 alone (qtd. in Uzochukwu 22). The number is by far higher now.

Some government policies of the colonial and even the postcolonial Africa constitute serious attack on human dignity or grave degradation of human beings. Enslavement, homocentricism, terrorism, murder, extermination, torture, political, racial or religious persecutions are practised here and in other societies of the world.

Acts of violence and insecurity are replete in Nigeria. There is a recent killing of security officers by the *Ombatse* Cult in Nassarawa State of Nigeria. This cult was formed and invigorated by the fetish potency of Baba Alakyo as a response to the constant harassment, murder and rape of the defenseless Eggon tribesmen by the Fulani herdsmen. The cult killed over 100 policemen and security officers ("Ombatse"). Not only do we have insecurity and terrorism, there are also numerous instances and facets of crisis. We shall turn to them in the next section.

6.3.2 Communal Crisis

Many churches, communities, property, many other lives, offices and human dignity are open to untold brutality. Ethnic killings of the Tiv people in Central Nigeria by the Jukuns, the Fulanis and even the Nigeria Army in 2001caused high untold casualties on the Tiv people in Benue, Nassarawa and Taraba states (Tiv Killings). There are also indiscriminate killings with impunity of Nigerians in general by Fulani herdsmen which has now attained an annoying dimension. This mayhem took its inception from 2007 (Global Times 5). No day passes at present without reports of such bloodshed from the North to the South of the country. Middle belt states like Taraba, Plateau, Nassarawa and Benue are suffering untold human brutality. But in reality the agrarian nations like Nigeria where the population has swollen and farmland grossly inadequate have gone beyond a situation where herdsmen would wander without control.

In Benue state, the Nigeria Conflict Security Analysis Network (NCSAN), a non-Governmental establishment, shows that Benue among the aforementioned Middle belt states is targeted for destruction (qtd. in Global Times 6). They pointed out that a lot more than 853 Tiv lives are lost to the Fulani militia since June 2014, while the Fulanis claimed to have lost 214 lives in addition to 3200 cows. The same report revealed that six Nigeria military men were killed in the cross-fire that took place between the warring groups; five and 1, in Agatu and Guma respectively. The same report continued that 458 deaths and more than 350 communities were ransacked in Guma, Gwer-West, Makurdi and other gatherings at the border with Taraba state. The report captured a Catholic Priest in Makurdi pronouncing that by June 2013 there were 175 deaths and 35 villages set ablaze by the herdsmen, and multitudinous school property belonging to the government and the worshipping

communities in the areas destroyed. Agatu, Guma, Gwer-West, Makurdi and Logo Local Government areas were mostly affected.

In the same vein, the House of Representatives' Committee on Police Affairs in May 2016 at Abuja during their public deliberations learnt that well over 984 lives were claimed by the Fulani wanton massacre between 2014 and 2015 (qtd. in Global Times 6).The president of the Mzough u Tiv (MUT), Chief Edward Ujege who appeared at the public hearing is quoted in Telegraph Newspaper pages one and two of the May 26th issue presenting the facts and figures of the killings perpetrated by the vicious herdsmen as thus in 2014: 142 people in Guma, 54 people in Logo, 484 in Makurdi, 15 people in Gwer, 168 people in Gwer West and 20 people in Katsina Ala, 28 in Buruku, 58 in Logo,15 in Tarka and 101 in Ukum. He estimated property destroyed to be N40 billion and over 29,974, people rendered homeless (qtd. in Global Times 6).

In Taraba, southern part of the state with a thick Christian concentration received the most brutish attack. Over twenty settlements were destroyed with loss of many lives, property and farmlands. Nassarawa, Plateau and Kaduna states witnessed great loss of lives and property too.There are reports of similar attacks in Igbo area and some states in the South west (Global Times 5).

6.2.3 Evil Unionisms

The security situation now has become even more complicated with the resurgence of the Niger Delta Avengers. This group started on Feb. 23 1966 when one Isaac Adako Boro and his militia group declared the Niger Delta Republic. The Nigeria Force crushed them after twelve days of fighting ("Ochonu"2). They came together to fight for Oil Control. Nine Ogoni activists lost their lives in the quest for resource control on Nov. 10,1995 resulting to Nigeria's suspension from Commonwealth of Nations. Then in 2001 Alhaji Muhaji Asari Dokubo, under the

auspices of Ijaw Youth Council began to insist on “Resource Control or Self Determination by Any Means”, and then he reverted to arms struggle; founding the Niger Delta Volunteer Force which took over from where Boro left (“Ochenu”)

This is the background to the new largest militant group which emerged in the Oil-rich region and announces openly their existence in March 2016. They are causing a lot of havoc to the oil facilities due to dissatisfaction with the share of the oil proceeds.Job too committed a lot of blunders on the economy of God when confronted with the problems of life. If Job were allowed to he would have torn the creation into shreds. The activities of the Niger avengers too are disastrous to the political and economic life of the nation. Job too invoked the wizards of his time; those that are able to stir Leviatan to come over and help him curse the day of his birth (3:8).

6.2.4 Corruption

Another problem that confronts Nigeria, which has an affinity to Genesis 1 and Job 3 is corruption. It was human corruption as a result of the fall that influenced Job to attempt to defabricate the creation. It accordingly corrupted the leaders of our nation. Corruption takes many forms and infiltrates all political institutions and economic sectors. The ruling government is not performing its functions as promised. Officials are too busy enriching their pockets to govern effectively. The Nigeria leadership is alleged of corrupt practices. It is alleged that during the tenure of General Sani Abacha (1993-1999) the country lost 3-4 billion and that from 1960- 1999 well over $400 billion cannot be accounted for (Political corruption).

In 2013 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index deemed Nigeria one of the most corrupt nations in the world ranking as 144th in Corruption Perception Index. Out of the 177 corrupt nations measured (nig.observernews 1).

Among the surveyed countries in 2013, Nigeria has ranked 136 out of 174 in corruptions. That is Nigeria is 38th most corrupt country in 2013 (nig.observernews). In 2015 she was number 136 on Transparency International Corruption perception Index (Corruption in Nigeria).

There is a lot of bribery and nepotism. Our judicial system is not also free from this evil trend, justice is ultimately perverted. Election rigging is disastrously a common phenomenon. During elections, the contestants hire thugs who go round the election polling stations to highjack the ballot boxes. When they steal these boxes, they then use their hands to vote for their candidate. In the recent times, the new tactics that the contestants have adopted is buying voter's cards so that they can manipulate and use the cards for their own advantages. On many occasions politicians have bribed some top officials to do wrong things to their favour. Some political leaders, including governors and presidents, have been sued by opponents, but the sued followed the back door, bribing barristers and judges. At the end of the judgment, the leader who bribed won in the case

Our Presidents, generals, executives, middlemen, accountants, bureaucrats, policemen and anyone else that has access to our wealth steals it (Hagher 17). In Goodluck Jonathan's administration 76% of Crude Oil revenue was unaccounted for (nig.observernews).Our law making offices have now sources of personal enrichment for members.

A former president of the country, Olusegun Obasanjo, on November 24, 2016 while speaking at the first Akintola Williams Annual Lecture in Lagos, reacted negatively on the level of corruption going on among the members of the House of Assembly and House of Representatives. Quoting from the writings of Jola Sotubo "Former President, Olusegun Obasanjo has described the National

Assembly as a den of corruption" (qtd. in Uzochukwu 41). Part of the speech delivered by the ex-president which hammered on the level of corruption among the members of the house has it thus:*"Members of the National Assembly pay themselves allowances for staff and offices they do not have or maintain. Once you are a member, you are co-opted and your mouth is stuffed with rot and corruption that you cannot opt out as you go home with not less than N15 million a month for a senator and N10 million a month for a member of the House of Representatives" (qtd. in Uzochukwu 82).*

According to Lewis Obi, the National Assembly is nothing but a business enterprise and the primary objective of the members is to make money for themselves. He went further as he explained that the National Assembly of the country is the highest paid legislature in the world. The Chamber earns more than that of United States of America and yet American economy is far much better than that of Nigeria. According to the documentation, United States senators make approximate annual income of $174,000.00 while that of Nigeria is $2,183, 685.00 (qtd. in Uzochukwu 83). You cannot imagine the degree of disparity between the two.

6.3.5 Gross Unemployment

This is another hot problem that confronts the Nigeria citizenry. Over 24% of our youth are jobless (Uzochukwu). Sixteen people were killed in stampedes when 500,000 desperate job-seekers rushed to apply for only 500 vacancies at Nigeria Immigration Service! Students are graduating from our Universities into joblessness and low morale. Poor training worsens the situation where most students read books without applying because of lack of facilities.

6.2.6 Inadequate Infrastructure

One of the greatest problems we now face in Nigeria is poor power supply. In Genesis 1, the Creator put on light but in Job 3, the sage opted for light-off! How can a country succeed without a reliable power supply? Power sector is the most corrupt and the mismanaged sector. Seemingly ill-equipped personnel worsen the whole situation. Road network is also poor in many parts of the country. Roads declared constructed by our leaders are partly done or not done at all. Embezzlement keeps roadways unrepaired. Water resources are shamefully inadequate. Railways have become a history of the far past. Nigeria needs more roads and power.

There are various infringements on human rights of worship, ownership and expression in many parts of Africa. There are crimes against peace, war crimes and various strands of inequalities. There is great injustice and self-seekers in every land, tensions in land policies; these give rise to continued unrest and animosities in our communities. This creates untold implications and ill-effects on the creatures.

6.3 THE GENESIS OF HUMAN INSANITY IN NIGERIA

As indicated in the foregoing treatment there is affinity between what is observed in Job 3 and Genesis 1 and the present social trend in Nigeria. As we have learnt, Job's brutality over the creation stems from the pains afflicted upon him by the devil. Satan looses some real pain on Job. But the common genesis of human predicament begins accordingly with Satan from the fall described in Genesis 3. The devil over the ages has been the source of all of human wickedness over the universe. We have presented specifically a grim picture of the wicked social, political and economic context in Nigeria. One would naturally ask, what are the causes of this insanity in Nigeria? The event of the fall recorded in the book of Genesis 3 exactly captures the basic answer to the question under consideration.

But a detailed account of how the fall has affected this situation will be in place for the purpose of this book.

6.3.1 Amalgamation- main Genesis of Violent Insurgencies in Nigeria

Nigeria as a nation was carved out of the merging of two British colonies in 1914. The amalgamation was both for administrative and economic convenience of the colonial masters. Traditionally, the North was more submissive and prepared for an organized administration while the south down there was a revenue drive site (Ochenu 1).

This amalgamation is the foundation for the rancorous relationship that subsists between the two regions of Nigeria. No decade of post-independence Nigeria has been conflict-free: there are several coups, general strikes, communal crisis, election violence and civil war. Nigeria has experienced some of the most sordid tragedies arising from difference of opinions and distrust here and there (Staff Writer 2). Northern Nigeria is predominantly Muslim while the South is largely Christian. These differences have been a source of political disagreement and suspicion between the two regions since colonial times. Each of the two contains ethnic and religious minorities who harbor grievances against ethnic and religious majorities they see as hegemonic oppressors. These grievances result to violent insurgencies. There is gross mismanagement of national resources and misrule by multi-ethnic and multi-religious coalitions of successive rulers since independence which has made life difficult for majority of Nigerians.

Corruption and incompetent leadership as reviewed in the foregoing section have added another wrinkle preventing the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities and making politics, religion and ethnicity more appealing. This is the main genesis of much of the problems facing Nigeria as a republic. There are other issues to be identified in addition to this issue of North-South dichotomy.

6.3.2 Tribal Excitements

From as early as 1950s the desire to favour one's tribe manifested among the ruling class of Nigeria (Staff Writer 2). This kind of nepotism is a common, but harmful mistake many leaders make (1Sam.8:1). Contract award and national politicking is constantly controlled by ethnocentric motives. The riot in the Western Region and the event of 29th may 1962 in which the House of Representatives deliberated and approved a State of Emergency in the Western Region is an example of tribal sentiments. Similar instances occurred in the Northern and Eastern Regions, when riots broke out in Tiv and Orika Divisions respectively. States of Emergencies were not declared on them. When Chiefs Obafemi Awolowo and Enahoro cited this as an act of discrimination, they were arrested (Staff Writer). These were the first symptoms of ethnocentrism in Nigeria. Ethnocentrism gave birth to several bloody coups: the Igbo- led coup on the 15th Jan. 1966 and the Northern retaliation which gave birth to yet another bloody coup in July 1966. In this coup most of the Igbo indigenes living in the North were singled out and butchered. As a result of this act the then Governor Odumegwu Ojukwu returned home to safety, marking the Igbo's secession from Nigeria. This resulted to the outbreak of a fierce civil war in May 1967.

6.3.3 Resource Control

This matter of resource control shall not detain us so long since it was discussed under evil unionism in Nigeria. The emergence of Niger Delta Volunteer Force and eventually the Niger Avengers was a bid to control oil resources in the Eastern part of the country. Isaac Adako Boro believed that they deserve a fairer share of Oil proceeds. On Feb. 23 1966 he and NDVF declared the Niger Delta Republic (Staff Writer 3). This resulted to 12- daybloodshed with the Nigeria army, after which the group was brutally crushed. Kenule and eight other Ogoni Activists

lost their lives in the quest for resource control on Nov. 10, 1995 (Staff Writer). This led to the suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth of Nations. Insistence on resource control in this part of Nigeria caused untold havoc that led to a 60-day amnesty programme of Shehu Umar Yar' Adua from Aug. 6th -4th Oct. 2009 (Staff Writer). Recently on several times there were conflicts that resulted to loss of lives, brutish injuries and destruction of property at Benue Cement owing to indigenes insistence on rights of at least a partial control of the plant. Minor out- ragings around our communities as a result of people insisting on the right to control resources around them are simply rampant. For one example Ipav community and the NKST establishments at the Reformed Theological Seminary, Mkar, NKST Seccretariat Mkar, NKST School of Nursing, Mkar, the NKST Rehabilitation Settlement Mkar, etc. Resource control still remains a highly controversial issue in Nigeria.

6.3.4 Religious Misgivings

Since her formation as a Nation in 1924 religious prejudices have been the fountains of an endless and conflagrated conflict, particularly between Christians and the Muslims.The Kano riot of May 1, 1953 was the beginning of a series of violence against non- Muslims (Ochenu 4). In addition to bad governance religious intolerance is the main cause of conflicts in Nigeria. The institution of the Sharia as the main body of civil and criminal law in twelve Northern States in Nigeria is a clear pointer to a step for a purely Islamic Society in that part of the country (Staff Writer 3). However it remains a controversial issue since its proposal in 1999 by Zamfara Governor, Sani Ahmad Yerima. Christians attacked its proposal in Jos which led to a severe conflict between both religions. The republic has witnessed with disgust ugly groups like the Maitatsine, Durul Islam and the most anti-Christ; Boko Haram over the four last decades. Within the Christendom in Nigeria there

emerged groups from minor doctrinal disputes leading to the nascence of several denominations.

6.3.5 Land Disputes

The issue of land has generated a lot of tension across the country. Elsewhere in this write up communal crisis were discussed extensively, this segment aims at land as the cause of most of them. The communities of Mbaduku and the Igwe of Benue and Cross River states respectively, the Tiv and Jukun of Taraba and Benue states, the communities of Aguleri and Umuleri in Anambra state are a few typical examples of fratricidal conflicts from boundary disputes ensuing between these neighbours. We are aware of the Bakassi peninsula international boundary dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon which almost evolved into a war when Cameronians opened fire and killed Nigerian military men patrolling the River Apka Yafi on 16th May, 1981. Cameroon apologized but later won the case at the International Court of Justice (Staff Writer 4).

6.3.6 Economic Frictions

The Aba Riot of November 1929 is an example of an economic related tension. The dispute was a reaction against tax levied on the market women in Aba by the colonial masters. Twenty years later on 18th Nov. 1949 colonial policemen shot 21 coal miners during a peaceful wage protest (Staff Writer 5). Industrial actions are rampant in the country. There was a strike in 1993 which caused Gen. Ibrahim Babangida's step aside. There were chains of industrial actions during the fourth Republic under Obasanjo's regime most of which pertains to general hikes in fuel prices. The removal of Fuel Subsidy by the then Government ushered in another trade related tension in 2012. This affected both the Nigerians at home and those in the Diaspora as most people had interest in the matter.

6.4 EFFECTS

There are quite a number of ill effects which human wickedness has left as footprints on the society. Conflicts and brutality cause so many damages on humans and the society, ranging from poverty, food shortages, economic recessions to gender inequality. The following represent some of these effects:

6.4.1 Rise in Poverty Level

Civil war and other forms of constant unrests have been known to have caused a loss of many lives, leave people with little or no time to practice farming and other income generating activities thereby causing poverty and hunger in a given community of people. For example there was extreme hunger and poverty in Benue state in 2015 and 2016 because most of the food producing Local Governments were torn down by the Fulani massacre. The result was a severe shortage of food and extreme poverty. It brings about exorbitant medical costs, poor investments and poor national development.

6.4.2 Slow Development

Many families, societies, villages, towns and cities are extremely finding it difficult to recover from the previous loss incurred as a result of human brutish activities (Charter of the UN). With several coups, general strikes, civil wars and various religious upheavals, Nigeria has experienced some of the most sordid experiences in her life as a republic. Numerous corrupt practices, greed, crime, and suspicion that we have are as a result of human wickedness and persistent conflicting nature. Our assets and resources are dwindling like an unkindled fire.

6.4.3 Lack of Trust

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic country with over four hundred tribes. The majority tribes: being the Hausas, Yorubas and the Igbos. The Tivs fall under the semi-majority. There is a very strong sense of mistrust among the Nigerian tribes. The minority looks at the majority with great suspicion of being down-trodden because

this is the ongoing practice in the country. It is always risky for a Northerner to find him or herself in the midst of the Southerners in isolation and vice versa. This can affect growth tremendously. Many Southerners and Middle-Belters are no more willing to work in the North because of the persistent religious confusion by the Muslim bigots and the Boko Haram.

6.4.4 Others are, first, Depression of humans- it can push someone over the edge. One can notice that many persons are depressed when there is unhappiness, negative thinking about life, decrease in concentration and memory disturbance. There are so many cases of suicide in the more severe depressions (Archibald 59).

Second, Debasement of African dignity. Many of the third-World African countries have or are experiencing hardship as a result of human wickedness. Most persons in the developed nations look down on Nigerians because of debased dignity resulting from human corruption (“Charter of UN”).

Third,Persistent conflicts: Human wickedness is the main cause of the continuous global conflicts ranging from communal crisis to international wars.

Fourth, Destruction of confidence in the continent’s democracies and legitimacy of governments; Government is the machinery responsible for followers’ security, but her failure to protect human life and establish peace in a given locality and situation loosens peoples’ confidence in such a government. This can lend capacious room for untold disorder and eventually revolutionary measures.

Fifth, Poor quality of learning can result from all these inhuman activities the society experiences. Crisis capably demolishes academic facilities thereby disrupting the academic programmes and learning.

6.5 SOLUTIONS

Many solutions to human brutality, selfishness, greed and apathy have been attempted. They take different aspects and dimensions from academic, legal, judicial, economic, philosophical, and agricultural to military aspects. Efforts are made both locally and globally. At the global level, the International Crime Court (ICC) was put in place in 2002 by the UN to check human mistreatment ("Charter of the UN"). The International Military Tribunal for the Far East (MTFE) was convened in 1946 to try leaders of the empire of Japan (Tokyo Trial). We are all aware of the UN Security Council and the establishment of courts to stop mistreatment of the humans and the universe all seemingly looms behind the point. Many economic, social and academic solutions have been proposed and implemented. Even the International and National Human Rights Commission have been working tirelessly to help matters but success is recorded at a minimal level if not at all.

At the local level there have been many attempts to curb human brutality.The Ortom administration in Benue State has recently introduced the amnesty programme in order to control the rate violence and armed robbery in the society. Many weapons have been recovered and hardcore criminals arrested and imprisoned in Benue state, yet bloodshed and crime raises their ugly heads in the society. In order to put an end to the Fulani menance there is the proposal that ranches be established by the federal Government so that cattle will be tamed thereby restricting the nomadic roaming of the Fulani's which often opens them into conflict options resulting to brutish activities.

D.T. Anyam proposes a number of some glaring philosophical solutions to human brutality in his book *Understanding the Philosophy of Conflict.* He lays emphasis on the reality of wisdom instrumental to logical reasoning over human contentions (167). He cited Dewey celebrating wisdom as "the rational exploration of those aspects of the problem which are theoretical and capable of being

resolved or at least elucidated by rational dialogue" (qtd. in Anyam 167). He strongly asserts that the problem bedeviling our society is her dire need of "ethical conflict resolution professionals with critical attitude and rational temper of mind for the social and behavioral transformation of the society". Based on this assumption he recommended a catena of methodological approaches to resolving human misunderstanding.

i. Negotiation: this has to do with an interface discussion of opinions and values to arrive at a common consensus devoid of violence. It is a voluntary activity between persons that are involved. It provides room for dialogue leading to peace.

ii. Mediation: it is an extended fashion of negotiation. He understands it to be the intervention of the third party in a tumultuous context (172). The third party according to Genn helps the parties in disagreement to reach an acceptable consensus (qtd. in Anyam172).In a legal setting a professional mediates between the parties to metamorphose a dispute into an agreement avoiding resultant acts of brutality.

iii. Arbitration: this is another method of resolving tension in the society. This involves the parties concerned and an arbitrator who proffers and implements a solution. It is an archaic method of resolving issues.

vi. Conciliation and Reconciliation: is a peculiar method of settling human misunderstanding. Here a mediator works to correct the party's deficiencies and help them to reach a tenable realization of the factors that have generated the problem. When this is done justice is then restored. Parties are said to be reconciled. The above methods, if followed may resolve tension in a locality.

Moses Ochenu in his paper, titled; "Colonialism by Proxy: Hausa Imperial Agents and Middle-Belt consciousness in Nigeria", proposes a rather fascinating solution to the multi-faceted problem of our country, Nigeria. For him the problem

of our country is not directly the citizens but the present Legal Code; the constitution. He identifies a wide gap in it. It has failed to “define rights and privileges of citizens in terms of residency” rather it based its definition of such rights and privileges on “nativism, ancestry, and religion. If a new constitution is drafted that would emphasize residency, rather than nativism, ancestry and religion the present mess in the country would be corrected. He further provides a mechanism of how that will work. The new constitution, he added, “needs to devolve power over resource distribution and development from an-all-powerful central government to local constituencies”. According to him, this will ensure economic justice and equity. It will make central political power less attractive and less corrupt then contests over national political offices will become less contentious. The use of religious and ethnic appeals as tools of political mobilization will become less attractive and find a diminished reception in a climate of justice, equitable resource distribution, and equal opportunities for all.

This is a beautiful solution proffered to the tumultuous state of the country. To put in place a constitutional provision that would interpret Nigeria out of her core of religio-ethnocentric chauvinism that has jeopardized her polity. It sounds quite a pretty good solution. However, the proponent of this solution fails to point out specifically which segments of the constitution that have defined our rights as citizens in terms of “nativism”, “ancestry” and “religious” needs rather than “residency”. The researcher thinks that the problem of our country is not exactly the constitution but Nigerians themselves. We do not lack government polity. The constitution has clearly made provision for a democratic polity. There is no aspect whereby democracy has defined Nigeria human rights in terms Moses Ochenu is reading into the constitution. We do not lack a legal code neither does our constitution make provision for the alleged ethnocentricism but that most of us

are dishonest. We lack integrity, we lack discipline. We need more than the constitution. If the best constitution is put in place but citizens have not been re-oriented to its provision it makes no sense. To locate the problem of the country from the constitutional document would be a begging round the issue.

Solution to human wickedness begins not exactly at theories and agents of change but at individual level. Humans should stop breast-beating but rethink and re-assess their attitude. We must recognize that our current deportment is not proper and be able to correct our individual relationships with God, ourselves and each other living being and the ecosystem. We should do away with the past enslavement, tyranny and abuse. We as individuals are part of the whole mess which is in the world. Every person is a part of it. When it comes to problem identification people begin to accuse their neighbors, the government, or her parastatals, the new age, the system, and the church. The problem of our society is not elsewhere, it is with individual persons, what one can affect- the immediate family, the extended environment and one's arena of control. The solution will accordingly, start with the individual. We must use our minds and hands, as instruments that will create new policies that will eventually usher in universal good.

There are many God-given tools and principles with which to begin this crucial individual change. One major tool is the Bible. From the *Proto-euangelion* (Gen.3:15) to the incarnation of the *logos* in the person and the ministry of Christ. The Gospel of salvation is the basic thing in solving certain human problems (Swaggart 112).

The subject of the Gospel of salvation is the *Triune God* in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. In the fifth chapter one could notice his mastery over pain and evil with sufficient patience and complete reliance on God. To understand and

apply the Gospel successfully, we must first have a correct concept of God and humans as being made in the image of God. There are a variety of spurious conceptions of God around the world. I heard of an African community where their God was stolen. He was later reported missing (*The Oracle*). Some people look at him as a celestial policeman at people's necks. Some look at him as a grandfather- an old gentleman who always waits for erring opportunities of his creatures (Erickson 263-264). We must know the nature of God as *spirit, omnipotent, omnipresent, constant, judicious, righteous,* yet a *loving* father and mother. He desires that humans obey his *will* in its entirety. He needs humans to fellowship with him. God says things and does exactly as said. He does not fail in his promises. Let us take God at his *word.* We must understand man as mortal yet in the image of God and be treated accordingly. We must obey God, love him and humans. We should be ever willing to make a universal application of the *Golden Rule*- Love for God and one another.

Respect for the *cultural mandate* can also help us respect the rest of the creation other than us. Any responsible human creature must attend respectfully to the demand of Genesis 1:28-31, where we are given charge over the universe. If a Bible passage gives us a sense of *responsibility,* this is it.

If we must change our society from a world of injustice, corruption and brutality into a normal one, we must learn and teach our children a sense of responsibility based on sound biblical values that will reflect this new reality. This is one of our great needs for today- a sense of responsibility. There is great irresponsibility in African politics; there is irresponsibility in our forces; there is irresponsibility in politics, there is irresponsibility in the business world; there is irresponsibility in work place; we have irresponsibility in marriages and families; there is irresponsibility even in the church arena (Roper 6). This constitutes the

main root of the problem in the African communities. Our government, the academia, the church and the society must imbibe this virtue for a bright future, for our ultimate reward is the ability to become architects of our reality in every moment. There must be a great sense of responsibility in one hand and self control in the other. These two are vital moral condiments for a healthy Africa. Finally, all of us must learn to live the fruits of patience and forgiveness to the fullest. Lack of these has broken many relationships with God, man, and groups. Lack of these has torn many lives and communities into shreds.

This researcher has in this chapter delineated the theological as well as the social implications of the divine economy and human agony as portrayed in Genesis 1 and Job 3 respectively. The exegetical efforts of the researcher in chapter four have provided the elucidations from which the implications are drawn. The researcher has also linked what is observed in Job 3 to the very social context of Nigeria where effects were pointed out and finally, solutions to the social assault were proffered from social, philosophical, academic to economic spheres, but the Bible's message is recommended for a better relationship to God and the ecological structures.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

AN ECONOMIC APPROACH TO THE BOOK OF JOB

7.1 SOME CLUES ON HOW TO READ JOB 3 AND ITS COGNATES

How can we read and understand the book of Job? With which frame of mind would a reader enter into the world of Job? The following clues are important guidelines in understanding the entire plot of Job and his lament in Job 3.

7.1.1 Laments are not Always Pleasant

Job is in great pain, what he says here is influenced by his pain. The Tiv people of Nigeria say *mliam ma doon ga,* meaning*,* one does not cry to please anyone*.* This means people's laments are not done to suit others' prejudices but are carried out of the debt of their causes. Laments are not always pleasant. People in excessive agony tend to be disruptive, even to their self. This lament is issued according to the gravity of Job's pain. One in agony like Job can act foolishly at first, before coming back to normal senses. David who was called "a man after God's own heart" acted foolishly at first in the face of hard times: he ran and invented a gargantuan lie for Ahimelech that he was sent on a super-secret mission (1Sam.21:1,2), sought asylum with Philistia where he was at the top of the most wanted list! (Roper 32), he acted as a lunatic in the hands of the Philistines (21:13) and finally, he found a hole (Cave of Adullam), crawled in it where he stayed for 12 years. This lament is a normal human reaction to hard times like the one Job faced.

7.1.2 Job 3 is an Expression of Raw Grief

Job has not done something wrong as his friends judge-he expresses raw grief. He has not sinned. This is a poetic piece of writing in which he expresses the depth of his agony.

7.1.3 One Who is in Anguish Acts Foolishly at First

Job thirsts for the presence of God but he gets no sense of it. He takes several foolish steps. He seeks to take God to court but unfortunately for him he could not find the creator, (cf 23:1-9). Job 23 contains legal metaphor. Take notice of vs. 3 and 4 where Job says

מִי־יִתֵּן יֵדַעְתִּי וְאֶמְצָאֵהוּ אָבֹוא עַד־תְּכוֹנָתֹו׃אֶעֱרְכָה לְפָנָיו מִשְׁפָּט וּפִי אֲמַלֵּא תוֹכָחוֹת " If only I knew where to find him (God); if only I could go to his dwelling! I would state my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments." This idea is heightened in v.6 and 7 where Job says he will win the case and not God. Job wanted to enter into some legal arguments with God (Hartley 339). Job is the first and only Bible character to openly indict and engage litigation with God, the Great Monarch of the galaxies. But then, he ran into a big problem. The God whose hand he sought into judgment was both his opponent and judge of the same court of justice (v. 6)! Where is this God he has believed in all of his life? Job leaves no stone unturned in his search for God, attacking everything God has left his mark on: creation, tradition and wisdom (Overduin 5). Job complained vehemently maintaining his innocence almost throughout the book.

Job exhibited mixed emotions in his management of pain. Conservative biblical scholarship does not seem to notice this. Job is always portrayed as being patient throughout his ordeal (Hartley 339). The patience of Job and his amazing strength of character is often emphasized. Overduin, however, pointed out without mincing words that "…,Job … is far from patience" (5). He is hurting and he is so upset that he comes dangerously close to cursing God. He even invited the priests of Leviatan to help him curse, not exactly God, but his creation (cf 3:8), which is tantamount to cursing the creator. Job's area of Lack comes from the great pain and suffering he was in. one who gets into painful experience is likely to

engage initial foolish steps before he finally comes to his senses the rest of the way. This truth is the very experience of Job. We accept his bitterness but whatever he says is not doctrinal. But we have a great deal to learn from him.

7.1.4 Job's Deportment in Chapter 3 is Proportionate to the Measure of His Grace

The book of Job deals with the problem of suffering in rather surprising ways, without giving very clear answers. But any meaningful study must approach it from Job's very own perspective (Overduin 5). Job's light was that of tradition and careful observation, he had few or no promises to sustain him as we have in Christ. He did not experience the abiding presence of Jesus as he said, "I will be with you always", on his rough road Job bore all without this promise. Our hope in Christ is very sustaining during difficult times. Moreover, all of our pains are somewhat dulled by his agony. The worst we now experience is but a shadow of pain cast upon us.

7.1.5 Job knew a number of things, which are Sophisticated Spiritual Doctrines

Job was deeply religious yet his light was that of tradition. He did not have the full revelation of heaven that believers have today, so his future was dull. We can read 2 Cor. 4:16-18 and take heart.

In light of these clues Job 3 is prompted by his pain. The lament is apparently deconstructing and contradicting. It is an expression of extreme pain characteristic of human limitation. Screamed out to nobody in particular, in and of itself bears several implications on God's economy.

7.2 GLARING LESSONS FROM JOB

There are quite a good number of lessons we can learn from the lament: (i) that we should imbibe self-control knowing our limits even when in pain, (ii) that

humans are always humans irrespective of whatever status and location, (iii) that we may sometimes exhibit human impatience in the face of pain we must be guided by sound doctrines avoiding as far as possible going closer to cursing God, (iv) though we may experience pain, we should be willing to learn moderation in our response lest we blame God and become aggressive to the environment as Job does in the present text.

7.3 NEW TESTAMENT LINK

The writer uses this moment to link what is observed in Job3 to the heaven's and earth's life model; Jesus Christ. This will provide for readers a basis upon which to rely as we interact with the universe especially in chaotic circumstances.

One underlying question posed to the reader implicitly throughout the entire dialogue between Job and his friends; Job and God and Job to himself is this: how is one to respond to physical calamities when he cannot find any moral or theological reason for them? In the case of Job, he responds initially by complaining, by insisting on his innocence, and perhaps most importantly in the end, by prayers (Brannan 7).

Jesus also suffered for the world. His agony is multi-faceted. The suffering of Jesus begins with the incarnation, adding humanity to his divinity constitutes a serious humiliation for God the son. For the very son of God, 100% God in essence, taking on himself 100% of the human physiology opened Jesus to various aspects of untold sufferings like πείναω (hunger) (Matt.4:2), διψάῶ (thirst) (Jn. 19:28), and κοπιαὼ (fatigue) (Jn. 4:6). It is crucial to note foremost that he did not come to the highest of human circumstances. He came as a slave into a very common family, born in the very obscure little town of Bethlehem. And even more striking, he was born in the very humble setting of a stable and laid in a manger. He was born under the law. He who had originated the law, the lord of it, became subject to the

law, fulfilling all of it. He was circumcised at the age of eight days and was presented in the temple for mother's purification (Lk. 2:22-40).

The ultimate step downward in Jesus' suffering was his death. He who was ἡ ζωή "the life" (John 14:6) came purposely to die for others. It was in him that all of reality was made as noted by John: πάντα δἰ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν. ὃ γέγονεν, "through him all things were made without him nothing was made that has been made" (1:3).The giver of life and of the new life which constitutes victory over death became subject to it. He who had committed no sin suffered death which is consequence or "wages" of death. Jesus suffered not only death, but a humiliating one at that. He went through the kind of execution reserved by the Roman government for grievous criminals. It was a slow, painful death "virtually death by torture" in the words of Erickson (772).

Jesus, before his death was in a reasonable health.On a fateful Thursday and morning of Good Friday Jesus underwent great emotional stress from abandonment, humiliation and a cruel death by crucifixion. Jesus was subjected to a severe anguish. He was without sleep and breakfast, and weary from walking about 2.5 miles back and forth between the sites of different trials (Nazarene way).

In March 1965, C. Truman Davis an ophthalmologist wrote that the flag rum, a short whip with balls of lead tied near the end of each thong, "is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back and legs. At first, the heavy thongs cut through the skin only". The succeeding blows, however "cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles" (qtd. in Nazarene Way). The whip tears into the deep skeletal muscles to produce ribbons of bleeding flesh. At the mocking of Jesus, a crown of thorns was driven into his scalp, causing more bleeding. The scalp has many veins.

They tore his robe again and again opening the wounds whose dried blood was adhered to the cloth.

Finally, the journey to the Calvary begins. The heavy crossbar weighing 34-57 kg weight is put across his shoulders (*Nazarene Way*). Today, men and even some women can swing sacks of rice and soya beans weighing 50kg on their backs. But remember that Jesus was already weak, had lost a great quantity of blood was in severe pain, and under emotional strain. He stumbled and fell repeatedly that Simon of Cyrene was ordered to carry the cross part of the way.

More pain was coming. In preparation to nailing to the cross, Jesus was violently thrown backward grinding his bleeding wounds roughly onto the wood possibly allowing dirt to enter them. Iron spikes measuring 5-7 inches were driven through Jesus' hands. Hands are full of sensory nerves and hence any slight stimulation of the hands can message agonizing pain through the whole body. The feet are nailed next, and Jesus is now crucified. The nailed hands carry the weight of Jesus' whole body and tear at the wounds. Meanwhile the stimulation of the nerves in the feet is also causing Jesus much pain.

Davis writes "As he slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrist, excruciating fierce pains shoots along the fingers up the arms- the nails in the wrist are putting pressure on the median nerves. As Jesus pushes himself upwards to avoid this stretching torment, he places his full weight on the nail through his feet. Again, there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet" (*Nazarene Way*). Another study reveals that since no major arteries are hit the procedure was bloodless. However, the pain coupled with the incessant bleeding of the back wounds, lead to the deterioration of Jesus condition (*qtd in Nazarene way*).

Apart from the pain described, the one major effect of crucifixion is the hindrance to normal breathing because the body pulls down on the outstretched arms and shoulders. After being in this position for quite a while, exhalation becomes shallow and labored. The upper body starts to cramp, making it even more difficult to breath. Jesus twisted himself and pushed himself up by feet in order to breath but due to piercing pains in the feet little comfort was availed. After hours of this pain, cycles of twisting, joint rendering cramps "Jesus slips into unconsciousness due to asphyxia, a lack of oxygen in the body usually caused by interruption in breathing".

At about 3.00pm on Friday, Jesus died. The exact cause of Jesus' death within six hours of his crucifixion was hastened by a combination of loss of strength, loss of blood and loss of oxygen (*Nazarene way*). The piercing of the spear on his side, which likely raptures his lungs and heart, was done to ensure death. Somewhere along this painful process, Jesus prayed for the cup of death to be taken away. Like Job, he was heard (Heb 5:7) by the resurrection of the dead and glorification rather than postponement.

There are glaring similarities between the way Job and Jesus responded to human agony.

(i) Job's afflictions came because of his obedience to God and it was painful. Both were submissive (Job. 13:15; Lk. 22:42).

(ii) Both display unshakable resolution even in the midst of very real pain: He knew the way that I take; when he had tried me.

I shall come forth like gold. My foot has held his steps, his way have I kept Job 23:10.

Jesus said**: "**My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me (Jn. 4:34;14:31)."

(iii) Both help one to understand suffering and to return to the heavenly Father for strength and grace. However, Jesus provides more than Job because his suffering was redemptive. Jesus shows that suffering can be endured not a philosophical problem to be solved. It can become redemptive (Roger, Bratcher 34).

(iv) Both men cried out of the depths of their agonies. The whole of chapter 3 of his book constitutes Job's lament. At Golgotha Jesus wafted ηλι ηλι λεμα σαβαχθανι; τοῦτ ἔστιν· Θεέ μου θεέ μου, ἱνατί με ἐγκατέλιπες;*"Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?"* (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

There are key differences between these two characters in the nature and response to suffering.

i. Job had no idea whatsoever why he had to suffer but Jesus suffered voluntarily for his father's glory and salvation of each of his people (*Baptist Bible 13*).

ii. Job was not there when God laid the foundations of the earth (38:4) Jesus was there. Jesus laid the measures thereof not Job. By Jesus all things exist.

iii. Job is impatient. He complains, severally cries, and insists on his innocence. The son of God exhibited patience in all its fullness and perfection in his earthly life.

Whenever we look in the Gospels, we behold his calm, restful patience (Kingdom Nomics). The whole life of Jesus here on earth is but a continued record of patience. In patience his childhood was spent. "He was oppressed and afflicted yet opened not his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughterer" (53:7). All the

sufferings, buffetings, shame, mockery, dishonors, griefs, pains and sorrows he patiently endured (Kingdom Nomics).

iv. Job invoked darkness during his agony yet it did not appear. On his cross at 3.00pm it is read that Ἀπὸ δὲ ἕκτης ὥρας σκότος ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης “From the sixth hour until the ninth hour, darkness came over the land”. Jesus did not call for darkness, his opponents did. His death left his opponents in darkness.

Jesus accepted bitterness with fewer complaints. His problem was more overwhelming, yet the son of God exhibited his great fruit of patience. He did not challenge God neither did he take him to court. He did not seek to implicate the entire universe into his misfortune. Like him one must learn to trust God even in the midst of extreme pain. God does not thwart all our problems even those of his only son, but he is always with us in all of them. Christ is the only key that will help us overcome whatever challenging circumstances life may bring. One needs to learn from his methods of approach to suffering.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

CONCLUSION

This portion of the book aims at providing readers with a laconic compendium of what has already been discussed in the preceding bulk of the work. Such recapitulation will offer a good basis upon which to draw recommendations and conclusion.

8.1 SUMMARY

The author has conducted studies on the book of Job, using a synchronic lens to glean some current lessons for Nigerian Christians. The very first chapter has put in place a setting for the contents, providing knowledge on the nature of the book of Job. Chapter two hacks to the fact of the book's fascination among conservative and contemporary scholars. Chapter three exegetes Job 3, the most scaring chapter of the book, chapter four shows how dangerous Job's lament of chapter 3 of his book is to the economy of God. In chapter five, some miscellaneous traits of Job's response to his suffering are identified. Then, chapter six delineates the implications of his actions against the creation. In the same chapter, Job's actions are linked with Nigeria context, and the effects are accordingly shown, then solution to human mistreatment of the universe is proposed. Chapter seven contains a viable approach on how to read, engage, understand and interpret the book of Job. Chapter eight wraps up all of the work together, pointing out the author's contribution to knowledge and offering recommendations.

8.2 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This book is an outcome of the author's original investigation into the concept of human agony as expressed in the book Job. Some nuances in the book

are analyzed and elaborated using the exegetical tools of *Literary and narratologocal* criticisms. Through this labour, a new context is accessed. Job 3 expresses a rather aggressive assault upon the creation of God. Job has deliberately and systematically undone God's creation as recorded in Genesis 1. The order of creation as reported by the author of Genesis is almost the same order that the writer of Job reported Job undoing the creation.

8.2.1 A New Context of Job 3

1. The first reality that God ordered into being was *light*. The first thing Job ordered into his day of birth was *darkness.*
2. The second thing the creator God did was a *separation* of the *day* from the *night.* Here Job wishes that *darkness mixes* with his *day* of birth so that it becomes indistinguishable from the night.
3. Severally in the creation account God *blesses* the day, but sage Job severally in his sololiquy *curses* the day of his birth.
4. In Genesis 1 God says "Let us make man". About this Job says in chapter 3, "I wish I was not there", "Let us not make man". He exhibits disrespect for life, and even encourages abortion by wishing he were a still-born *gever* (child).
5. At the end of his creative exercise, God rested and declared the *Sabbath* for his creatures. Job in his grief refuses to rest (Job 3:26).This book has filled other gaps also apart from identifying Job's refabrications of creation, and his bid to subject the divine economy into what the book could refer to as a serious *disequilibrium*. Job 3 contains a deliberate satire of Genesis 1.

8.2.2 New Perspective on the Character of Job

Conservative biblical scholarship has all the while been inordinately emphatic on the patience of Job and his amazing strength of character. To stress his virtuous living is proper, but to down- play completely his weak points

expresses extreme bias. This book finds out that Job is far from patience. He complains bitterly and cried severally. There are strong legal metaphors in the book of Job (chap. 23); he is the first and only Bible character to openly indict and engage litigation with God. He charges God to court but unfortunately for him the same God; his opponent was the chief judge of the very court of heaven. He charges God with a serious crime of injustice on him Job. In his grief Job even announces to the world that the God whom he believed and worshipped all of his life in now missen (23:8,9)! Perhaps shying away from Job's summons to court. Job is now locating God in a special geographical location. The man with a correct concept of God now corrupts his theological quality of omnipresence! Job is hurting, upset and almost cursed God. He even invoked magicians of his day to accomplish his curses on God. There are still other segments of the book that are even more scaring; in chapter 7, he launches major critiques against God's creation. Job cannot curse God but he now confronts his creation. He makes mockery out of one of the famous creations Psalm of the Bible; Psalm 8. Job turns Psalm 8 upside down and inside out. Job is sarcastic, he portrays God's providence as a big nuisance to a suffering person (Job 7:17-19). He curses the entire creation. (v.12). For Job *sheol* becomes the realm of genuine relief. In death one is finally out of God's reach. God's presence for him is distressing. We cannot trivialize suffering. Within the intense heat of the Cross Jesus himself glibly vouched for the postponement of the Easter (Matt. 26:39).

8.2.3 Social Affinity between Job 3 and Nigeria Context

1. Job 3 expresses a lot of insanity- There is a lot of it in Nigeria too.
2. Job 3 contains harsh, brutish and inhuman deportment over the universe- there are many schemes of cruelty in Nigeria the worst is Boko

Haram with its worst expressin in the abduction of over 250 future mothers and leaders of the Nigeria.

3. There is a note of public unsafety in Job 3- there is crime and public safety problem in Nigeria.
4. Job 3 yields crisis- there are a lot of communal crisis almost all over Nigeria.
5. Job's move to connive with the priests of Leviatan to frustrate creation is typical of evil unions in Nigeria such as Niger Delta Avengers, and many other local unionisms to sabotize the political and the economic life of the nation.
6. In the prologue Job is upright but in the narrative proper as he is in pain Job becomes corrupt. Nigeria is so high in corruption. There is election rigging, embezzlement of funds and mismanagement of public amenities etc.
7. Tribal excitements, resource control, religious misgivings, land disputes, and economic frictions, can all be likened to the situation in the book of Job 3.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This very part aims at pointing out some issues from the work that are expedient or advisable then, represents them integrally as appeal for action on the part of Nigerian Christians who are directly or indirectly involved with suffering, or sufferers in the society.

(i) One should just absorb the fact that not everything will always end up very well as one usually expects. However, for God's children everything works for their ultimate good especially for the life to come. It is splendid that the book of Job ends in a positive way; this does not apply to all instances but

ultimately God allows it for his glory. Jesus the most perfect man was assassinated at the age of 33! But he came back to life on the third day for the ultimate good of his believers. One may end up badly in the best of his deportment but that is never the end of the history.

(ii) God does not always choose to heal everyone as everyone desires (c.f 1Kgs. 15:23,24; 2Kgs.13:14; 2Chron.21:19; Acts. 10:37). Like Paul live with your thorn if it becomes obvious that God would not provide healing in this life.

(iii) Satan has limited powers to harass humans (Job 1:12; 2:6). We should be encouraged that he cannot overstep the boundaries God has set for him.

(iv) A man does not have to be completely perfect to please God (c.f. God Job 31:35-37 and 42:10-16). Rely on the grace of God.

(v) Relearn to respect the Cultural Mandate. This helps one to respect/care for the rest of the creation other than one's self. Any responsible human must be willing to attend respectfully to the demand of Genesis 1:28-31, where humans are given charge over the entire universe. We must teach the younger ones a sense of responsibility on the one hand and self-control on the other.

8.4 CONCLUSION

This work has analyzed the book of Job and then, drawn implications for Christians in Nigeria. The lessons and the recommendations offered in pregnant brevity are essential for today's African communities and individuals as we struggle to survive our present religio- social and economic crises. The author reiterates that the antidote to this human misappropriation of God's economy is the "Gospel of salvation" based on an appropriate "concept of God" and of man. This knowledge is foundational to any other approach proposed for the upkeep of the universe as proposed academically, economically, philosophically and so on as

investigated in chapter six. The author calls upon the stakeholders in the universe: the government, the academia, the society and the church to ensure a normal order in the universe by taking God and his word with a sense of seriousness.

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