

Neville Goddard Lecture



The Book Of Job

Neville Goddard Lecture - The Book Of Job 02-01-1963

Tonight we will speak on the Book of Job, possibly the most misquoted book in the world. I dare say all day long you use passages, and you aren't aware you are misquoting this Book of Job. For no one knows who wrote the book. It bears the title of its hero, as so many books of the Bible: the Book of Joshua, Nehemiah, Ezra, Daniel, Ruth . . . so many, where the name of the hero is named. That is the Book of Job. The word "Job" from famous scholars by analysis, means: "Where is my father?" You and I have heard it as "the persecuted one," but the central point of the narrative is that Job was completely innocent . . . not guilty of any offense, but simply the victim of the most cruel experiment by God.

The very last chapter reveals that it was all by God. Some scholars along the way or some scribe inserted some little story in the first chapter which is suspect, because they couldn't believe that God could do that to man. So they claim that a pact was made between Satan and God allowing Satan to do it . . . Satan the accuser, Satan the devil; but Satan disappears in the very first chapter and never reappears. He does just for a moment, but he doesn't in the forty-two chapters, not even in the epilogue. And so we know that this cruel experiment was by God.

Now, you are Job, I am Job, the world is Job . . . the world of humanity. And to approach it as if it were an object lesson in patience . . . patience under stress, under trial . . . is to go astray at the very start. That is not the purpose of the story. I hope I can get it over tonight as I see it. If I were to place it in the Bible, I would place it at the very end of the Old Testament, for it seems to lead right into the revelation of the New Testament. But I

am not rewriting the Bible or rearranging it . . . but were I to place it, that is where I would put it. It leads right into the unfolding of the vision as we find it in the gospels and the epistles. If you are not familiar with it, let me attempt to lead you through the highlights of Job.

The scene is laid in Edom and all the characters are Edomites, renowned for their wisdom. Job, the story tells us, was an upright and very rich Arab Sheikh, owning thousands of sheep, thousands of cattle, hundreds of she-asses and oxen, numberless servants and ten children . . . seven boys and three beautiful girls. So we are told in the story. In the prologue we are introduced to this much of the great hero, which is Job.

Then comes the four woes, based upon the pact between Satan and Jehovah. The first one comes in and announces in this fashion, that the Sabeans came suddenly and slaughtered all the servants who were taking care of the sheep and took away all the sheep. And while he was yet speaking, the second woe appeared and he said that death took away all the cattle and slaughtered all the servants. Then comes the third woe, and took away all the oxen, the she-asses and slaughtered all the servants. Then comes the fourth woe, that his children . . . all of them . . . were dining in the house of the oldest son, and there came this mighty wind and crushed the four corners and the house collapsed and they were all killed and he was the only one who escaped to come and bring the news to Job. And Job rent his robe, shaved his head, threw himself upon the floor, and then said: "Naked I came into the world, naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return."

Then he blamed himself, not for the act, but having said: "naked I came into the world and naked I shall return." He saw nothing to condemn in God, and so he did not see anything wrong which God had done. Then after the four woes, and everything is taken from him . . . all of his children, all his possessions, everything . . . then starts the physical, the substance of the man called Job, and it started with the boils. That is when Satan disappears from the scene and all these things follow one after the other . . . the sores from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head. Then his wife said to him: "Are you still going to be honest about it, your integrity unshaken? Curse God and die." And he said to her: "You have spoken like a foolish woman, shall God who gave us the good not give us the evil?" So nothing came from his lips that could in any way be condemnation of God.

Then came his comforters, spoken of as "Job's comforters." There were three friends and they came to comfort Job. They heard of his plight: he lost everything, being the

richest sheikh in all Edom, and they couldn't recognize him, he was such a horrible-looking creature. When they saw him, they too rent their robes and sat with him for five days, five nights, without speaking, in mourning for their friend. Job breaks the silence and he breaks it with the claim that the very day should disappear from the calendar year. "Let the day perish wherein I was born and the night which said a male boy is conceived." And then he has this tirade against being brought into this world. He didn't have to be brought, he was brought: he was brought and he finds himself now without any guilt that all these things happened to him. Now he makes the terrific defense of himself. Then comes the first comforter, who doesn't comfort at all, for he is trained . . . as Job was trained and as you and I are trained . . . to believe in divine justice.

We all believe in divine justice, in retribution. So we look upon a person like a Hitler, who lived to the very last moment in his fifteen gloating years, or a Stalin, for his thirty odd years, having slaughtered millions . . . and what happened to Stalin? He died as you and I will die . . . a little brain hemorrhage and in no time he was unconscious, after having slaughtered millions. Where is the retribution? Where is Stalin's retribution, where is Hitler's retribution, where is any tyrant's? They live just as we live. They live on the fat of the land, murdering unnumbered millions, and then simply die as we die. Priesthoods will tell us they will have their day. God will punish them beyond the grave, or in some future embodiment if you believe in reincarnation. How could you live and how long would you have to live to repay the debt of thirteen million, when you burned them alive and slaughtered, too?

So they bring argument after argument to persuade Job he has in some way violated this code. Maybe in his youth, maybe in the past . . . and he can't remember what he has done. Maybe as a child, says he, some little infraction; but this is far beyond the proportion of anything he has done. The judgment of God, what has he done to me now? This far transcends what any just judge could put upon me for anything I might have done in my youth. They still tried to persuade him, and so, as the father said: "Even . . . handed is the justice of God."

Then came the three comforters . . . who aren't comforters at all; in fact they are like our friends. May I tell you: may you not have something physically wrong with you after having confessed you believed what I talk about. May you never be financially embarrassed after having once gone out on a limb and confessed to anyone you believed it. They will come like this Uriah Heap, and all will lament. "It shouldn't happen to you," they will say, "certainly not to you. You mean you who know what states are real and all you need to do is to get into a state and the state blossoms in your world and

you?” These are the comforters of Job. And so, “Were I in your soul rather than in my soul I would not say to you what you say to me,” said Job. But they persisted; each had three chances to deflate him and each time they tried he comes back with a direct answer. But he is so self-righteous, he shows all the things he did: he never turned away any infant, any fatherless child, any widow, any stranger from comfort, never understood . . . what I hope you understand . . . which comes in the flower called, in the New Testament, “grace” . . . that no one in this world can build himself a way to God.

You can't be good enough to earn coming into the presence of God, no man in the world. It comes by “grace,” the strange elective love, and he calls us one by one. So he did not know there is no such thing in this world as divine justice; and they still . . . in all orthodoxy the world over . . . teach and preach divine justice, retribution . . . and it isn't. There is no such thing. If I were the father of a child born demented, wherein I suffered, the mother suffered, the brothers suffered, the child suffered because of it . . . and that is divine justice? And they try to justify it by telling me that in some past embodiment he did this that or the other and that is why he is; and [we] were related in some strange way to him in the past and that is why today we all now fall into the same net.

Well, that is answered for us in the 9th [chapter] of John: ‘Master, who sinned this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ The answer given: ‘Neither this man sinned, or his parents, but the works of God might be made manifest in him.’” No retribution whatsoever. There is something different, that God has denounced him because of “grace,” because were I pure, I would never know there was such a thing as a God of mercy. God has consigned all men to disobedience that he may have mercy upon all, that not one can crow and boast of his own purity.

So, in the very end Job is still giving arguments of his own self-righteousness . . . how good he is, how kind he has been, and listing all these things that should not have happened to him. Job argued, while all these so-called comforters argued again back to him. Then in the very end he is demanding that God will appear, he wants to meet God, to confront him. He says: “I know he will slay me, I have no hope, but I will present my case to his face.” Then he makes this statement: “This will be my salvation for the godless shall not stand before him, and so if I can now persuade him to see me to present my case, then I stand before Him, and only the pure in heart can stand before him, so if I stand before him that is my salvation.” He is still, at the very end, justifying himself.

He never heard of the great story of vicarious suffering, or the author of the book never heard of it, for Job didn't write it . . . he is simply the hero of the narrative or the story. So the very end, by demanding that: "you listen to my case of how righteous I am," he still believes in retribution and is demanding by his own self-righteousness that a verdict be brought in his favor. He feels he should be acquitted, that this thing should not go on as it has gone on for so long in his life. So you see: he has not yet abandoned the belief in retribution, though he denies it when the friends argue for it. The friends try to prove to him that he is wrong, that sometime in the past . . . because there is such a thing as divine justice or he could not possibly have these sores, lose his kingdom, lose his family, lose everything . . . were it not that at some time he had earned this judgment.

Then comes the voice of God. For the first time, God speaks. God refuses to answer all the arguments of the men, refuses to answer the arguments and requests of Job. Job is stewing in his own self-righteousness, for in hell the only voice is the voice of self-righteousness. In heaven all is forgiven and the voice of heaven is complete forgiveness of sin, no matter what a man has ever done. He was in hell though, still walking the earth . . . as we are in hell, if we are filled with self-righteousness.

Then God answers him out of the whirlwind. And may I tell you: it is a perfect expression, the "whirlwind." That is how it comes. Even though it is a lovely poetical expression, when it comes, it comes from the medium of a whirlwind. You hear it and you feel it. You think it is the most frightening storm you will ever encounter, that any man could experience. When you hear it and you feel it, then God is about to speak. Either hear the words or you have the scene, and it begins to unfold . . . the most fantastic vision, more real than this room. God answers Job out of the whirlwind and he asks all the questions concerning creation. "Where were you when I created the universe?" He asks one question after the other, all pertaining to creativity. Job cannot answer, and then God shows himself, he explains himself (the 5th verse of the 42nd chapter). He now repents and covers himself in ashes and sees how audacious he has been demanding that God answer him. Then he says: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee."

His religion, like our religion before the experience, was inherited. The oral tradition of the father, the oral tradition of the churches . . . and then I heard it. I didn't experience, only heard it; mother told me, and then mother took me to church, and the minister said, or the rabbi said it. I heard it from seeming authority. My religion was inherited, and so I expected to find a different kind of a God . . . a God that man made in his own image down here, a God that he called a just God: "eye for an eye; tooth for a tooth." I couldn't

conceive of another kind of a God, a God of infinite love where there is “grace”. It doesn’t matter what a man has ever done in this world . . . not even a Hitler or a Stalin . . . everything in the world will be forgiven. “Though your sins be like scarlet they shall be as white as snow.”

Then Job returns to his friends, and Jehovah calls to the friends and he tells the friends to sacrifice, because: “You lied about me. All that you said of me was false and what Job said about me was true.” Job’s rebellion was against orthodoxy, against all ecclesiasticism, all ritual, as if this is the way to God, for he did them all and yet he suffered. He kept every law of the ancient church; he sacrificed, he did everything . . . and yet in the end he suffered as no man has suffered, and he knew that it wasn’t true. So he commended Job, because what he said of Jehovah was true and what they (the righteous ones) said of Jehovah was false. So he made them sacrifice and told them to go to Job and ask Job to pray for them. If Job would pray for them, then they would be set free; it would depend upon Job, and Job prayed for his friends and his own captivity was lifted.

That is where you come in: to completely forget yourself in the love of a friend who is in need. Without raising a finger, you lift him out of one state and put him into another; no matter what he has been in the past, you forget it and put him in another state. He was only expressing in a state, he was never the state that he expressed. We condemned him thinking he was the state. So Job prayed for his friends, lifting them out of that state of self-righteousness and divine justice, and he saw them in the state of grace. So the whole thing hinged upon man’s ability to forgive.

We are told in Luke 13, when they came to him and said Pilate courted the Galileans and mingled their blood with their sacrifices, he said to them: “Do you think that they were worse sinners than those other sinners? I tell you, no, unless you repent you shall meet a like fate. And do you think when the tower fell in Jerusalem and crushed eighteen that they were greater offenders than those who it did not crush? I tell you, no, but unless you repent you will meet a similar fate.”

When you hear someone is hurt, don’t gloat that God is getting even; God doesn’t get even. If you hear of anyone being hurt tonight, don’t say it serves him right. No retribution at all, not in this revelation. Simply a man unknowingly falls into a state; falling into a state it could be a good state or an evil state, but he reaps the fruit of the state. But he is neither good or evil. Blake said: “I do not consider either the just or the wicked to be in a Supreme State, but to be every one of them States which the Soul

may fall into in its deadly dreams of Good and Evil when it leaves Paradise following the Serpent.” Who was that serpent? God himself! For He consigned me, he consigned you . . . every being in the world . . . to disobedience, and we left through disobedience, for he said: “You shall not surely die.”

And who told me that? God himself, who is the serpent, just a symbol of God himself. So he told me I wouldn’t die after first telling me if I ate a certain thing, did a certain thing, I would die. Then he tells me I will not really die: I will become as wise as the gods, and so he came into a world of experience where I fall headlong into different states. And after unnumbered experiences . . . falling into states and redeeming myself from states . . . he redeems me from it all and lets me into a world completely subject to my imaginative power, where I completely awake.

Here, I am in a state of sleep, so I don’t know I am in a state. I think this is my right being and so I am only in a state. Blake made the statement: “Do not let yourself be intimidated by the horrors of the world. Everything is ordered and correct and must fulfill its destiny in order to attain perfection. Seek this path and you will attain from your own Soul an even deeper perception of the eternal beauty of creation. You will attain an ever increasing release from that which now seems so sad and terrible.” Not a thing to be judged in this world, not a thing to be condemned for you to redeem. So you and I play the part of redeeming individuals here, until that moment of God’s own good grace he lifts us up out of the whole vast world of states. But until then we can redeem each other.

You don’t feel well . . . all right; I’ll look at you as though you never felt better. I’ll persuade myself you never felt better and to the degree I am self-persuaded I’ll pull you out of the one state into another. But don’t try to pinpoint it as though it serves him right (“I knew him when he was no good.”) Forget that! The being that was never any good at a certain time, you pull him out into another state, as though his sins then were as scarlet, now to you they are as white as snow. And keep on redeeming people, one after the other; regardless of how many times you fail, try it again and you will pull them out. Then one day when you least expect it, God will reveal himself to you and you will know. I didn’t know he existed. I believed it. I hope you did. “I heard of you with the hearing of the ear but now my eye sees.” It doesn’t matter what the whole vast world will say. I see something entirely different. You are not at all as they told me you were.

You are not a judge. There is no such thing as righteous judgment, no divine justice, only grace. “The law came through Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus

Christ.” So, now I see. I don’t have to be taught any more who you are . . . I see. And may I tell you: he will embrace you, because when he asks you, he answers you.

What do I mean by this vicarious suffering? It is the most difficult concept in the world, I think, for a man to grasp. Every time I have used it with someone who at the moment suffers, I invariably got the same reply. Someone said to me recently in San Francisco: “I am suffering. You said God suffers for me? Maybe he is suffering somewhere in eternity but I am suffering.” I said: “What is his name?” “God” I said: “No, that is not his name; his name is ‘I AM.’” “Who is suffering,” but “I AM.” “Good, that is God.” “No God here, I am suffering; no God, I am suffering.” It’s the most impossible thing to get over to man, that man who seems to be alive, is alive only by reason of the fact that God became him. As God became man that man become God. He sunk himself in man, that man could say: “I AM.” But that is God’s name, and all things are done by God to God, who individualized you and me, individualized all of us.

And when in his eyes the work is done, after unnumbered ages of days, his days . . . It is like putting gold in the raw state of ore into the furnace and then bringing out molten gold, pure gold. It takes heat, it takes fire, and this is the fire, these are the furnaces of experience, and we are put into the world of experience and brought out as pure gold. When we are brought out in his presence we are just right. “It does not yet appear what we shall be but we know when he appears we shall be like him.” He became what we behold: as we behold it we become it. “I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear but now my eye sees.” As you see him you are stamped with the image of eternity; you’re one with him, one with God, as God. You don’t gain the victory; you are really united with the victor. It is he who is doing it in you, in me, in all of us, and when he has completed the task, as we are told: “He who began a good work in me will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” He initiated and he will complete it.

He took eternity and put it into this clay that is man, that is himself, and he has worked upon it and brings it out and individualizes you when you become one like the thing created. That is the story of Job. It is the most glorious story, but I think if not the most misunderstood, it is not far from it. You and I have spoken it and we speak of the patience of Job. There was no patience of Job . . . he rebelled. You saw from the third chapter the rebellion. If I can this night reflect on any good thing I think was good, that is all self-righteousness. It doesn’t earn me one little step towards where I am going.

Do it because you want to do it; but to feel you are adding up and putting this in the bank for yourself . . . forget it. He was so good, he was so self-righteous, he never once

turned anyone away from his place. Whatever he did he abided by the law, all the sacrifices demanded by the law. He atoned every day for his sons, that should they have violated in any way that which Jehovah demanded, that he by his sacrifice would atone for them. Still he broke out with all the boils. And he learned in the end that we can't be good enough to earn God's gift. Self-righteousness is only the voice of hell. So you are right, Job: there is no such thing as divine justice, no retribution at all, none.

Did he not say: "Behold the Assyrian, the rod of my anger, the staff of his hand is my indignation." "I have made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of judgment, so just as I have planned it, so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand and the anger of the Lord will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his mind. In the latter days you will understand it clearly." (Jeremiah 23:20)

Only in the latter days when he reveals himself, and you will see that all the suffering you went through, a God of love put you through, just like the great artist who is putting ore through the heat to extract the gold. He wasn't concerned about the heat (just extracting pure gold for his labor) any more than the great sculptor is concerned about the clay. Job said: "You made me of clay, are you going to return me to the dust?" What does the potter think of the clay when he puts it through every form to fulfill its purpose, or what was his purpose for it? He isn't concerned. You and I are the clay in the potter's hands and he brings us out into his own image.

When you read the book in the future, see the whole drama taking place in the mind of Job. This is fantastic, where he himself is the accuser and he himself is accused. As you read it, see only one being playing all the parts, and that is Job and that is you. He is in conflict with himself, and at the very end he is integrated. He is torn apart between the one accusing him and the one defending his rights, but suddenly he becomes an integrated soul at last. At that moment of complete integration when there is no one but himself he finds God, for God becomes him that he may become God!

Now let us go into the Silence.

Question & Answer Period

Q. What would have happened to Job if he had not prayed for his friends?

A. Then he would not have known concerning the state. He would not have known he was only in a state at any moment of time when he was complaining. He could deliver those from their state, but it wasn't Jehovah who did the praying. Jehovah said to them:

“Ask Job to pray for you.” So who is Jehovah? As Blake said: “When Jesus Christ arose from the dead he became Jehovah.”

See the Bible through the eyes of Blake. In Blake’s engravings, when the left foot is forward, he uses the devil. And in the state of love it becomes a man, but the foot becomes a cloven hoof. When God is speaking in the most marvelous way, the right foot is forward; the other place, the left foot is forward. The left foot is the state which is doubt. So the symbolism is perfect with Blake in his illustration. But for sheer beauty of English, read the book. What English! Carlyle said it is the greatest piece of literature of all time.

Tennyson said of it: “It is the greatest poem ever written.” Luther . . . who gave us a great religion when he broke away at the beginning of the reformation . . . claims it is the most magnificent book of all scripture. So, he makes extravagant claims for the Book of Job. But for sheer beauty of English read the book. You are Job. I am Job, and when you ask these things: “Why did it happen to me?” Not only physical things but the loss of a friend, loss of a child. What is more heart-breaking than a father who has raised a child and loved that child, and hopes he will transcend him in time, and will leave an estate for him . . . to go to the graveside and bury him?

And he buries him, the same way Job lost his estate, lost everything, and his ten children all snuffed out. But the play is taking place in him. In the very last chapter, not only they all came, in the very end after he was redeemed . . . his brothers and sisters, all of his friends of old came to sympathize and to comfort him for the evil that the Lord had brought upon him. His seven sons and his three daughters were there, yet in the first chapter they were dead. In the last chapter they were there.

He lived 140 years. Every letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value and symbolical name. In symbolism, 100 has the letter “qoph” [pron. “koof”] . . . “the back of the head.” The hundred is simply this, and 40 is “mem” whose symbolical value is “womb.” So, here is the womb where he lived (the back of the head). In the back of the head this womb becomes man’s tomb. It infers that man is actually buried, but doesn’t know it and one day he will awake. He will awake within himself to find he is entombed. He never knew before he was entombed; he thought he was walking the earth. He didn’t realize all this was like a dream unfolding, until one day he awakes, and the tomb is his own skull. Mem-Qoph. Here is the mem and here is the 40, the womb. It is here that he is begotten by God Himself. And so he lived 140 years. Qoph-Mem.

