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## **The Book of Job**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The article analyzes the biblical Book of Job, arguing it was created by hunter-gatherer societies as a manual for controlling agricultural populations. The unique structure of prose and poetic dialogues reflects a process of punishment, training, and reward used to alter human behavior over generations. References to a "dragon" symbolize nomadic warriors manipulating Job. Passages displaying advanced knowledge of astronomy and biology reflect the sophistication of hunter-gatherers. The text monitors Job's evolving reactions to suffering, showing how pain can transform loyalty. This implies the Book of Job was a systematic blueprint for "domesticating" humans. If true, hunter-gatherers had techniques for manipulating agricultural communities during the Bronze Age, radically altering our understanding of early civilizations. The article asserts the Book of Job provides evidence of hunter-gatherer societies actively shaping the development of farming populations in profound and currently unrecognized ways.

Many people are familiar with the basic outline of the Job narrative. God punishes a small farmer and his loyalties are tested as several individuals come to give their advice on the matter. The individuals and Job discuss

what effect the punishments should have on Job's relationship to his God.

The book of Job is structured by a prose prologue and epilogue framing several rounds of poetic conversations between Job and five different responders - Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Elihu, and Yahweh. In the prologue, Job is clearly described as an agriculturalist living in a valley where he husbands animals and has many servants and houses.

**Job:1.1 (NIV)1 In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job.**

**Job 1.2 (NIV) He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants.**

As the prologue continues, a group of individuals that surround and protect Job call a meeting to see what should be done with him. One of the members of the meeting (the adversary) argues that Job is only loyal to his lord because the lord is protecting him. The

group decides to try a different approach. The council decides to test the limits of how much pain can be inflicted on Job before he will turn against his lord.

Job is then tested through a series of incrementally devastating attacks from losing his possessions to having his family killed to being personally assaulted.

**Job 1.14-19: And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, “The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants**

**with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”**

**Job 1.16: While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, “The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”**

**Job 1.17: While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, “The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”**

**Job 1.18-19: While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, “Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”**

Notice the description of the attack in Job 1:16 as a “fire of God is fallen from heaven” and in Job 1:19 as “a great wind from the wilderness”. Later in the document, the attacks are described in greater detail.

**Job 16.12-14: Yahweh has made me his target; his archers surround me. Without pity, he pierces my kidneys and spills my gall on the ground. Again and again he bursts upon me; he rushes at me like a warrior.**

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**Job 30.12-14: On my right the tribe attacks; they lay snares for my feet, they build their siege ramps against me. They break up my road; they succeed in destroying me. 'No one can help him, 'they say.**

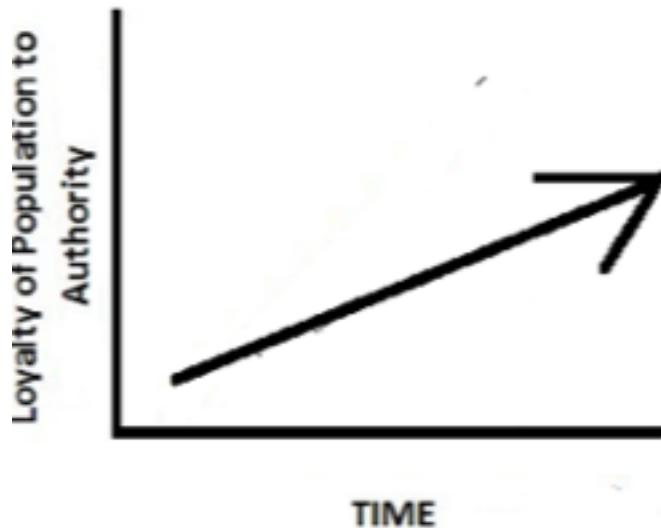
After the prologue, Job responds to the attacks he has just suffered. One by one, Job and the friends cycle through conversations as Job offers his defense and the friends argue for the attackers. Throughout the course of the dialogues, Job's responses begin to slowly shift from defiance to relative submission.

Even before the portions of the document that refer specifically to the dragon are factored into the equation, the Book of Job becomes interesting in light of the fact that highly

organized populations of hunters and gatherers were present throughout Eurasia when this document was created. Job is being physically attacked by a presence living in the surrounding wilderness with whom he continuously attempts to reason. Throughout the course of the ordeal, Job is visited by a series of individuals who speak with him about how he should respond to the attacks and his responses reflect a growing submission to authority.

### **fig. 1**

**The Book of Job was tracking the effect of punishment and reward on the loyalty of an agricultural population to authority.**



## Prologue - Dialogues - Epilogue (Punishment) (Training) (Reward)

Whatever significance is to be given to smaller details, it cannot be denied that the Book of Job is monitoring the evolving responses of an unsuspecting victim over time and recording that the victim's responses are trending towards obedience. The central character is being put through a process of incrementally intense punishment, training, and reward. If this process were to be implemented, it would have the precise effect recorded in the dialogues. It would alter an individual's

behavior by intensifying their obedience to authority.

*The Book of Job is a blueprint for the process of how to domesticate humans. If the events recorded in the Book of Job were reenacted, they would have the effect of altering people's behavior over time.*

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As a blueprint, the central character is representing agricultural communities in general. This explanation fully accounts for the unique structure of the document. The Book of Job has three sections; a prologue, a poetic section where the dialogues take place, and an epilogue. The prologue describes the punishments and the epilogue records Job's restoration. Outlining the elements of punishment and reward, the prologue and epilogue set the parameters of the training program.

The training program was captured within the series of dialogues between Job and the visitors. The cycles of dialogue documented the population's changing responses to the



punishment. Each cycle captured the affect the training was having on a new generation of citizens. This feature explains why the visitors visit Job in descending order of age. In nomadic culture, the use of this mnemonic device represented the passing of time. The descending order of ages represented the passage of generations.

Confirmation that the Book of Job is documenting a strategy created by hunters and gatherers on how to control agriculturists is that the term “dragon” appears throughout the document in strategic locations. The dragon makes a critical appearance in the narrative in chapter 30, vs. 29. The dragon’s original message as the symbol of nomadic warriors fits perfectly into the context of the sentence and then the chapter where it is found. The dragon’s inclusion in the chapter is significant because its placement is too pivotal for happenstance. For the fullest possible context, the entire chapter is reprinted below.

Job 30.1-31: (King James Version)

**1 But now they that are younger than I have me in deri- sion, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.**

**2 Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was perished?**

**3 For want and famine they were solitary; fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate and waste.**

**4 Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat?**

**5 They were driven forth from among men, (they cried after them as after a thief);**

**6 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, in caves of the earth, and in the rocks.**

**7 Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.**

**8 They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.**

**9 And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword.**

**10 They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.**

**11 Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.**

**12 Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.**

**13 They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.**

**14 They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.**

**15 Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.**

**16 And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.**

**17 My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest.**

**18 By the great force of my disease is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.**

**19 He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.**

**20 I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not.**

**21 Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.**

**22 Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance.**

**23 For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.**

**24 Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction.**

**25 Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?**

**26 When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness.**

**27 My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.**

**28 I went mourning without the sun: When I could take no more I stood up, and I cried in the congregation.**

**29 I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.**

**30 My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat.**

**31 My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.**

Chapter 30 is often called the chapter of the mockers because mysterious characters known only as “they” appear who are never identified. This is just the first part of the chapter’s mystery. Notice the shift that occurs in verse 9 regarding Job's relationship with the “they”. In the first eight verses Job refers disrespectfully towards them stating that he

would not allow their fathers around his dogs. The relationship that is established at the beginning of the chapter is not sustained, however, as half way through Job experiences an abrupt conversion. In verse 9 Job's situation abruptly shifts as he laments "**And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword. They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.**" For the rest of the chapter, Job's relative position with relationship to the "they" continues to

deteriorate. Job seeks for their approval and they now disregard or actively harm him in return. A subject of ridicule from those he once disdained is the context in which Job delivers the line "**I stood up, and I cried in the congregation. "I am a brother to dragons..."**"

Exchanging the concept of a literal dragon with the concept of the nomadic armies fits perfectly into the context of the chapter. Once the dragon is understood in this context, many details within the text confirm that the "they" being referred to through- out the chapter are

displaced hunters and gatherers. The author explains how in a former time “they” were driven from the valleys into the wilderness. “They” were forced to live in the cliffs, caves, and rocks and were known to dig up juniper roots and other wild vegetation for food.

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A dragon appears again in Yahweh’s closing speech, but before mentioning it, Yahweh questions Job about his knowledge of nature.

**Job 38:32 Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons or lead out the Bear with its cubs? (NIV)**

**Job 39.1-2: Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you watch when the doe bears her fawn? Do you count the months till they bear? (NIV)**

The speech by Yahweh recorded in the Book of Job provides an extraordinary piece of evidence considering it has now been established that the nomadic tribal nations of Eurasia were preserving this exact set of knowledge. Yahweh is describing his ability

to calculate when mountain goats give birth using the lunar calendar.

Yahweh declares that Job must submit to his authority first because of the disparity between their knowledge of biological cycles and secondly because Yahweh is more powerful. As evidence of his strength, Yahweh tells Job to consider his control over the dragon Leviathan.

**Job 41.19-21: Flames stream from its mouth; sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke pours from its nostrils as from a boiling pot over burning reeds. Its breath sets coals ablaze, and flames dart from its mouth.**

**Job 41.27-29: The sword that reaches it has no effect, nor**

**does the spear or the dart or the javelin. Iron it treats like straw and bronze like rotten wood. Arrows do not make it flee; sling stones are like chaff to it. A club seems to it but a piece of straw; it laughs at the rattling of the lance.**



**Job 41.9-10: Any hope of subduing it is false; the mere sight of it is overpowering. No one is fierce enough to rouse him. Who then is able to stand against me?**

Yahweh's closing words call attention to a fire-breathing dragon that is impervious to weapons and has the ability to destroy Job at any time. As a symbol for the nomadic armies, the dragon is the conceptual key allowing Job's original message to come through. Summarizing his response to Job, Yahweh claims his authority is predicated upon the fact that he knows more about the relationship between astronomy and biology and can call upon the armies of the nomadic world.

Once it is verified by the broader academic community that the Book of Job was created by hunters and gatherers, the impact on history will be severe. The Book of Job monitors the evolving responses of an unsuspecting agriculturalist through a program of punishment, training, and reward. In the hands of a nomadic tribal leader, the Book of Job is a blueprint for how to evolve a population's

behavior over time. The Book of Job proves that hunters and gatherers had developed techniques to husband humans.

Despite having no way of knowing that hunter and gatherers were using the Book of Job as a template for how to control agriculturalists, contemporary biblical scholar Carol Newsom came very close to this conclusion. According to Newsom, in order to properly read Job, an entirely unique lens is required of the reader, **“not submission to the**

**authoritative voice of the prose tale, which seeks confirmation of a truth already known, not the exercise of rational judgment, which discriminates between competing arguments, but the transformation of perception through ascetic experience.”** In other words, the book of job was an exercise that worked to transform the perceptions of a human being through the use of pain.

Once it is established that the Book of Job was originally a template for how to alter human behavior, all of history must be reevaluated

through this almost unimaginable new lens. A document from our ancient historical record is a multi-generational study of the effects of punishment and reward on the evolving loyalties of unsuspecting human beings.

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As a creation of poetic literature, the Book of Job is an enigma, but as a blueprint for altering human behavior, every detail of the book's structure and narrative makes sense. If the Book of Job was created by hunters and gatherers, it means that the nomadic tribal nations of Eurasia were manipulating multiple agricultural settlements during the Late Bronze Age. This would be inescapable.

**Archaeological discoveries made during the twentieth century have led researchers to conclude that the story of Job may have evolved from other cultural traditions, including the wisdom literature of the Edomites, Egyptian Pessimism, and Babylonian Skepticism. Samuel Noah Kramer translated a Sumerian text treating the 'Job motif' known as 'A man and his God'. Ludlul-bel-nemeqi is a Babylonian**

**text, also known as the ‘Babylonian Job’, which concerns itself with the unjust suffering of an afflicted man.**

If it were the only ancient document in existence, the Book of Job would dramatically alter the history books concerning the rise of civilization. The Book of Job proves that hunters and gatherers were vastly more advanced than anyone has ever considered. The very existence of the Book of Job demonstrates that nations of nomads were applying the techniques of animal husbandry to human beings. The presence of the

Book of Job in the historical record establishes *prima facie* that, throughout the entire rise of civilization on the Eurasian continent, nomadic tribal nations were manipulating the environment of agricultural communities in profound and frightening ways. It is through this context that the origin of the nation of Israel comes solidly into focus.