



## Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 17: Job 1-20

*David J. A. Clines*

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The Book of Job, among the greatest masterpieces of world literature, deserves a commentary alert both to the windings of its arguments and to the massive theological problem it raises: the conflict of faith and experience, that is, does it have to do primarily with the why of suffering, or is the chief issue rather the problem of the moral order of the world, of the principles on which it is governed?

While many feel that Job is too long, full of windy and tedious words, Professor David J. A. Clines shows in detail how every element is essential and how only the interweaving of literary and theological perspectives can reveal the richness of the writing. To this end, he supplies a uniquely comprehensive General Bibliography (as well as pericope bibliographies), unrestricted by scholarly apartheid, which includes works of sermons and popular devotions valuable for their theological and spiritual insights.

A verse-by-verse commentary, this volume never loses sight of the forest for the trees and, especially in the Explanation sections, constantly surveys the progress of the Book of Job. A particular focus is the unraveling of the arguments and the identification of the distinctive viewpoints of the book's speakers. The textual Notes, which center on explaining why the English versions of Job differ so amazingly from one another, support the author's carefully worded Translation.

In his Introduction, Professor Clines says: "Reading and close-reading the Book of Job, the most theologically and intellectually intense book of the Old Testament, is a perennially uplifting and not infrequently euphoric experience. The craftsmanship in the finest details, the rain of metaphors, the never-failing imagination of the poet are surpassed only by the variety and delicacy of the theological ideas and the cunning of this most open of texts confronting its readers with two new questions along with any answer."

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